

T.C.
ISTANBUL MEDENIYET UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
PROGRAM OF INTERNATIONAL OTTOMAN STUDIES

OTTOMAN RELATIONS WITH SRI LANKA
IN THE LATE NINETEENTH AND
EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

MASTERS THESIS

SHIFAULISLAM MOHAMMED ISMETH

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BİLDİRİM

Hazırladığım tezin tamamen kendi çalışmam olduğunu, akademik ve etik kuralları gözeterek çalıştığımı ve her alıntıya kaynak gösterdiğimi taahhüt ederim.

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Danışmanlığını yaptığım işbu tezin tamamen öğrencinin çalışması olduğunu, akademik ve etik kuralları gözeterek çalıştığını taahhüt ederim.

PROF.DR. İSMAİL HAKKI KADI

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ABSTRACT

Ceylon is an island in the Indian ocean recognized for its strategic importance in terms of trade. Thus, she attracted merchants from every corner of the world and eventually a Muslim community was formed in the island. In 1863 during the reign of Sultan Abdul Aziz I suggestions for an Ottoman honorary consulate in Ceylon was put forward by the Ottoman ambassador in London Konstantinos Mousouros to oversee the matters of the Ottoman subjects who frequented the island. Since then for 50 years a profound relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Ceylon Muslims had grown. The objective of this study is to examine this relationship with the aid of Ottoman archive documents and local Muslim run journals published in Ceylon. The role of the honorary consuls in this context, the contribution of the Ceylon Muslims in the *Hamidiye* Hijaz Railway campaign, monetary contributions to the Red Crescent Society and other events that occurred in in the Ottoman Empire during the late 19th and early 20th century is explored. Further, the influence of the Ottoman Empire and Sultan Abdulhamid II in the realms of education and culture of Ceylon Muslims is analysed.

Keywords: Ottoman *Şehbender*, Ceylon Moors, Abdulhamid II, *Hamidiye* Hijaz Railway, Red Crescent Society, Arabi Pasha

ÖZET

Seylan, Hint okyanusunda ticaret açısından stratejik önemi ile tanınan bir adadır. Böylece dünyanın her köşesinden tüccarları kendine çekmesi adada bir Müslüman toplumun oluşmasına sebep oldu. 1863'te Sultan I. Abdülaziz döneminde, adaya uğrayan Osmanlı tebaasının meselelerini denetlemek için Londra'daki Osmanlı elçisi Konstantinos Mousouros tarafından Seylan'da bir Osmanlı fahri konsolosluğu için öneriler ileri sürüldü. O zamandan beri 50 yıl boyunca Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ile Seylan Müslümanları arasında derin bir ilişki gelişti. Bu çalışmanın amacı bu ilişkiyi Osmanlı arşiv belgeleri ve Seylan'da yayınlanan yerel Müslüman dergilerinin yardımıyla incelemektir. Fahri konsolosların bu bağlamdaki rolü, Seylan Müslümanlarının Hamidiye Hicaz Demiryolu seferine katkıları, Kızılay Cemiyeti'ne parasal katkıları ve 19. yüzyılın sonları ve 20. yüzyılın başlarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda meydana gelen diğer olaylar araştırılmaktadır. Ayrıca, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in Seylan Müslümanlarının eğitim ve kültür alanlarındaki etkisi analiz edilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı Şehbender, Seylan Müslümanlar, II. Abdülhamid, Hamidiye Hicaz Demiryolu, Kızılay Cemiyeti, Arabi Paşa

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ABBREVIATIONS

BOA Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi

BEO. Bâb-ı Âlî Evrak Odası

HR.SYS. Hariciye Siyasi

HR.TO. Tercüme Odası Belgeleri

HR.SFR.3. Hariciye Nezâreti Londra Sefareti Belgeleri

HR.TH. Türkçe Hat

HR.İM. Hariciye Nezareti İstanbul Murahhaslığı

İ.MTZ. İrade Eyâlet-i Mümtâze Mısır

İ.HUS. İrade Hususi

İ.HR. İrade Hariciye

Y.A. HUS. Yıldız Arşiv-i Hususi

Y.PRK.TKM. Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Tahrirat-ı Ecnebiye ve Mabeyn Mütercimliği

INTRODUCTION

A formal relation between the Ottoman Empire and the lush island of Ceylon was formed in the year 1863 through the initiatives of the Ottoman ambassador Konstantinos Mousouros in London. As an outcome of his proposal two honorary consulates were established in the island of Ceylon in Colombo and Galle. The position of honorary consul was held by the prominent merchants or elites of the Muslim community. Since then, for 50 years an extensive relationship has been cultivated between the Ottoman Empire and the Muslims of Ceylon. However, this association concerning the Ottomans and Ceylon Muslims during the 19th and early 20th century has not been profoundly explored previously, thus this study aims to examine this connection with the aid of the Ottoman archives documents and 19th century local Muslim run newspapers published in Colombo in Tamil vernacular such as the “Muslim Nesan”, “Muslim Guardian” published in English. Along with it contemporary Ottoman books and magazines like the Süleyman Nutki’s *Ertuğrul Fırkateyni Faciası*, (İstanbul: Matbaa-ı Bahriye, 1911), *Sebilürreşad* magazine printed in Istanbul, has been utilized to understand the events that transpired. In addition to Ottoman and Ceylon sources newspapers published in the neighbouring lands of India, Singapore and England has been examined as primary sources. Moreover, for the purpose of converting Rumi and Hijri calendar into Georgian calendar Turkish Historical Society’s (Türk Tarih Kurumu) Date conversion guide has been utilised. Therefore, in light of these sources and with an awareness to the local context of Ceylon derived from the Muslim run Tamil weeklies this study aims to reflect on the dynamics between the Ottoman Empire and the Ceylon Muslim community, what sort of influence did the Ottoman Empire create in the lives of Ceylon Muslim and how did the locals perceive the relationship with the Ottoman Empire. The author intends to respond to the above questions in the following 7 chapters of this thesis. The first chapter presents a brief introduction to the history of Ceylon covering the Portuguese, Dutch and the British period and origin of the Muslims of Ceylon along with their position during the reigns of the 3 colonisers. The second chapter deals with the concepts of Universal caliphate and Pan Islamism then introduces the establishment of

Ottoman honorary consulates in Ceylon, the need for a consulate and the duties of the Şehbender is discussed in this chapter with the aid of the Ottoman archival documents. The third chapter analyses the activities of “Ertuğrul” the Imperial Frigate’s crew in Colombo a subject that has not been widely researched. However, as result of using local Ceylon newspapers a good deal information regarding Osman Pasha and his crews layover in Colombo has been discovered. Further, the return of the survivors of the tragedy in Japan warships and their stopover in Colombo port is also studied with the support of Japanese sources authored by Nobu Misawa, “Reports about the Ottoman Empire carried on Jichi Shinpo (1890-93): Achievements of Shotaro NODA, the first Japanese journalist who was sent to the Islamic World”. The fourth chapter examines the celebrations that took place in the island of Ceylon honouring the 25th Silver Jubilee of Sultan Abdulhamid II in 1900 and 1908. It is the first-time details on the Jubilee celebrations in Ceylon has been studied while employing Ottoman archival documents and local weekly journals. In addition to it Ceylon Muslims reaction to the Greco Turkish war in 1897 and the travel journal of S.M.Tevfik has been examined. The fifth chapter explores the activities of the Egyptian exile Arabi Pasha in Ceylon, and the sixth chapter analyses the milestone of Ceylon Muslims’ education as a result of Arabi Pasha and the local intelligentsia’s efforts, besides the Ceylon Muslims attempts to commemorate Sultan Abdulhamid II. The seventh chapter examines the contribution of the Ceylon Muslims towards the construction of the Hijaz railway and funds raised for the Red Crescent society. the conclusion presents the summary of the dynamics between the Ottoman Empire and Ceylon.

Presently there aren’t any comprehensive study that directly relates with Ottoman Empire and Ceylon. However, there are certain works that deal with the Ottoman relation with the Indian subcontinent, the most extensive study on the topic is *Pan Islamism Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)*, 1997 by Azmi Özcan, which examines the Indo- Muslim attitude towards the Ottoman Empire from the inception of the Russo- Turkish war in 1877 until the end of the caliphate in 1924. The author has successfully examined the dynamics between the Ottoman Empire and British Empire along with the Indian Muslims. And how these two mighty Empires manipulated the Indian Muslims to achieve their agendas. The British government exploited the influence of Ottoman Caliph in the Indian Muslims to consolidate their

power in India and used it against Russia in its attempts to control Asia. Similarly, the Ottoman's used the Indian Muslims as shield against the Britain's policy towards the Ottoman Empire. Despite these agendas of the Empires the majority of the Indian Muslims did manage to strike a balance between their spiritual loyalty to the Caliph and their loyalty to the British. Yet there were a few numbers of Indian Muslims who publicly defended the Ottoman Sultan which attracted the displeasure of the British administration. Though this book doesn't examine the relation of the Ceylon Muslims it helps to understand the attitude of the South Asian Muslims towards their British King and the Ottoman Caliph. However, it is essential to understand the stance of Ottoman's towards the Indian Muslim and the Ceylon Muslims were fairly different. Likewise, Ceylon Muslims relationship with the Ottoman Empire was also distinct. The following research article "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Seylan Adası ile İlişkilerine Methal" authored by Ekrem Saltık is the only article till date that has examined the relationship between Ottoman Empire and Ceylon with a brief study. The author has benefited from the Ottoman archive documents and has achieved to establish an insight of the Ottoman – Ceylon relationship. However, the lack of primary sources from Sri Lanka and the limited knowledge of the local background of the Muslim community makes this article incomplete. Further, the authors inadequate examination of the Ottoman archival documents has created certain misinformation in the article. These misinformation's are pointed out in the subsequent chapters of this thesis. In addition to the above article, another research article related to Ceylon Muslims and Turkey has been published by the aforementioned writer. "Efsaneyle Gerçeklik Arasında Seylan Adası ve Anonim Hatıralardan Aile Şeceresine Türk Soylu Sri Lankalılar Meselesi" in this article the author analyses a claim made by a Muslim family in Sri Lanka, tracing their origin to a Turkic origin prince named Jamaldeen son of Sultan Alaaddin from Konya. Coincidentally the first Ottoman honorary consul of Ceylon Hussein Lebbe Marikar descends from this particular family tree. Nevertheless, the author has pointed out that during the 8th century there were no Turkish rulers in the Anatolian geography. Moreover, Sultan Alaaddin reigned Konya centuries later and the name Jamaldeen is phonetically similar to the Islamic scholar Mevlana Celalettin epithet as Rumi. He further points out that in Madurai South India there was a ruler named Celâleddin Ahsen Şah (Jalal-ud-Din Ahsan Khan) and Alaeddin Şah (Ala-ud-Din

Shah) thus, the author concludes the claim of Turkic origin to be a collective memory of the Ceylon Muslims.

The limitation of this thesis is the lack of primary sources narrating the opinions of the Ceylon Muslims. However, the author has analysed and employed the accessible local primary sources from the National archives of Colombo and unpublished Ottoman archive documents. Therefore, this thesis could be considered as a point of embarkation for further research in the Ottoman – Ceylon relations.

CHAPTER I: BRIEF HISTORY OF CEYLON

Sri Lanka¹ an island situated in the Indian ocean has been known for its strategic location in terms of trade. Various voyagers as well as traders from around the world frequented this lush island, From the Arab traveler Ibn Battuta to Chinese monk and traveler Fa Hien, from the Italian merchant and explorer Marco Polo to the British voyager Robert Knox this tiny island has not escaped the sight of people from around the world throughout the history.² Ceylon has been a sovereign island ruled by Buddhist kings however, occasionally the island did face threats of invasion by South Indian dynasties some of them succeeded and established their kingdoms mainly in the northern part of the Island. The island faced its very first western arrival in 1505 consequently the Portuguese invaded the island in order to take control of the lucrative spice trade route.³ The island thereafter was constantly under the threat of western invasions the Britain's championed the Dutch and in 1818 took control of the whole Island thus until 1948 the island was a British colony⁴.

In 1505 when Portuguese first arrived at the port of Ceylon Fernando Cotrim Portuguese representative conveyed King Parakrama VIII's councilors Portuguese intention of trade and in return they would protect the island from invasions, the Sinhalese King Parakrama VIII and his advisors saw this as a welcoming approach did not have any reasons to believe the Portuguese would be a threat to the kingdom⁵. The second visit of Portuguese happened in the year 1518. During this visit the Portuguese were more powerful in the Indian ocean, had established ports in several areas in India including Goa. The Arab traders who were aware of these developments objected the

¹ Ceylon became the Republic of Sri Lanka with the constitution proclaimed in 1972. However, in this thesis the former name Ceylon has been used. As it is appropriate to the time period considered in the discussion.

² On the travellers See, Edited by H.A.R. Gibb, *The travels of Ibn Batutta, AD1325-1354* Volume IV, (Routledge: C.F. Beckingham,1999). Fa Xian, *Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms: Being an account by the Chinese monk Fa-hsien of travels in India and Ceylon (A.D. 399-414) in search of the Buddhist*, (Binker North, 1877). Marco Polo, *Travels of Marco Polo*, (Penguin,2004). Robert Knox, *An Historical Relation of The Island Ceylon in The East Indies*, (Dods press, 2007 first published 1681)

³ David Hussey, *Ceylon and World History*, (W.M.A. Wahid & Bros, 1932), pp.1,2

⁴ G. P. Malalasekera, "Ceylon," W. Norman Brown (Ed), *India, Pakistan, Ceylon*, University of Pennsylvania Press. (1960), p. 187

⁵ David Hussey, *Ceylon and World History*, 5

arrival of the Portuguese to the island and advised the king the same. However, the King understating the strength of the Portuguese decided to have them as his guest rather than his enemies in the island. Thus, they made a trade agreement and was allowed to build a fort at Colombo.⁶ Not long after the struggle between the Portuguese and Sinhalese began, in 1540 due to internal disputes between the Sinhalese kings the Kotte ruler Bhuvanekabahu sought after the Portuguese protection against his rival. Further he made his grandson Dharmapala to be his rightful heir, successor and the Portuguese recognized him and pledged to protect him. In return the Portuguese were able to continue their interests easily including missionary activities. Amidst the continuous struggle for throne between the Sinhalese kings, Portuguese continued to expand their missionary activities in the island.⁷ As for the Kingdom of Kotte it had turned into a powerless kingdom under the rule of Dharmapala who had converted to Roman Catholicism (1557) hence he was under the influence of the Portuguese. In 1580 he decided to bequeath his kingdom to King of Portuguese on his death. Subsequently, the Portuguese who came as traders had taken control most parts of the island in the name of Dharmapala. Nevertheless, their success and strong position in the island encouraged them to seize the whole of it thus make it their chief colony and center of the Eastern trade.⁸

In 1619, the Portuguese successfully consolidated their power in the Northern region of the Island Jaffnapatnam. As a result, they were able to appoint a puppet to the throne of two major kingdoms of the Island Kotte, Jaffnapatnam and on several occasions tried to annex the Kandyan kingdom. However, the Kandyan kingdom retained its sovereignty, was a safe haven for the people including the Moor merchants who fled from violence and discrimination of the Portuguese.⁹ It was during the period of Portuguese control in Ceylon the Muslim merchants appealed to the Ottoman mission that was sent to Aceh.¹⁰ In the following years Portuguese gradually lost its sea power to Dutch and English seamen venturing into the Indian ocean, thus they had

⁶ David Hussey, *Ceylon and the World History*, 4-9

⁷ K. M. De Silva, *A history of Sri Lanka*, (Los Angeles: C. Hurst & Company London University Of California Press Berkeley And, 1981), pp. 101-104

⁸David Hussey, *Ceylon and World History*, 21-24, 52,53

⁹ K. M. De Silva, *A history of Sri Lanka*, 101-109,117,118

¹⁰ Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, (Oxford University Press, Feb 25, 2010), pp. 124,125

given up on their dream of conquering the whole island of Ceylon. Keeping their rivals, the Dutch at the bay was their key priority.¹¹

The hostility between the Portuguese and the Dutch escalated when King Philip II banned the Dutch from entering the Lisbon harbour thus the Dutch were in a dire need to find alternatives to purchase their spices and other Asian goods. It was during this period the Dutch began to uncover sea routes to Asia and by 1595 they succeeded in their quest. In 1602 the Dutch found the VOC the Dutch East India Company. The VOC was officially recognized by the Dutch ruler, and they worked in his favour in the Asian region. This official recognition gave the VOC the power to make business dealings, control and build forts and appoint governors in the name of the Dutch ruler. Through establishing themselves in Batavia, Dutch became a strong contender to the Portuguese and their trade in the Indian ocean. It was in this course of time the Dutch began to show friendly alliance towards the Sinhalese King who was already displeased towards the Portuguese and their activities in the coastal regions of the Island.¹²

In 1639 the Ceylonese King Rajasingha II was able to take control of the Portuguese fortress in Trincomalee, Batticaloa region with the help of the Dutch. The Muslim traders played a prominent role in getting the help of Dutch. In return the Dutch were given the sole trading rights of Ceylon cinnamon and a harbour in the East of the Island. The King also promised to reimburse the costs of the campaigns nevertheless this agreement turned out to be a ploy against the Kandyan kingdom which led to bitter relations with the Dutch. With the capture of Jaffna, the last Portuguese stronghold in Ceylon in 1658 the Dutch were able to chase away the Portuguese from the island and take control of the coastal regions and main harbours of Ceylon. With the end of Portuguese power in 1658 Dutch established their monopoly over Ceylon and its spice trade. Though at the beginning they displayed friendly alliances towards the King of Ceylon. The Dutch were shrewd enough to make a stronghold in the island and did not hesitate to invade it when the right time came.

¹¹ David Hussey, *Ceylon and World History*, 108, 109

¹² K. M. De Silva, *A history of Sri Lanka*, 113, 114

Since their policy for the East was to gain political control over spice producing regions and if possible, to monopolise the trade¹³.

Ever Since the domination of Dutch in the maritime areas such as the ports of Galle and Negombo which were considered as some of the richest cinnamon lands of the island. There were constant problems, battles and negotiations between the Dutch and the King of the upcountry. In 1796 the British arrived in the island, and they were able to drive away the Dutch resulting in the end of nearly a two-century old Dutch occupation in Ceylon.¹⁴

In 1762 the Nayakkar dynasty in the Kandyan kingdom decided to seek assistance from the European powers to expel the Dutch. Thus the King invited the English East India Company from Madras. However, this mission did not turn out fruitful to the King since Pybus mission could not offer the King assistance to fight against the Dutch. As they feared to offend the Dutch who were neutral during the Seven Years' war. Nevertheless, the Pybus mission was an intelligence operation for the English to understand the political issues and the military capacity of the Kandyan kingdom.¹⁵ With the end of the fourth Anglo – Dutch war 1780-84 Britain was able to secure free commercial access to the waters of Eastern Archipelago. Thus, the decline of Dutch power in Europe directly affected its colonies. They were now more vulnerable to the attacks of the major European powers who were seeking to expand their power in Asia. The English East India company faced major threat from the French. They were aware that Dutch possessions in Ceylon might be used against them in their battle against Tipu Sultan who had the support of the French. Tipu Sultan was the Sultan of Mysore, first Indian ruler who dispatched envoys to Western Europe including the Ottoman Sultans Abdul Hamid I, Selim III opposing the British invasion of India.¹⁶

¹³ Ibid, 120-121, 133

¹⁴ K. M. De Silva, *A history of Sri Lanka*, 157

¹⁵ Ibid, 157, 158

¹⁶ Tipu Sultans correspondence between Ottoman Sultans See, Hikmet Bayur, "Maysor Sultanı Tipu ile Osmanlı Padişahlarından I. Abdülhamid Ve III Selim Arasındaki Mektuplaşma", *Belleten*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, (cilt XII, Sayı 47, Temmuz 1948), pp.617-654

Therefore, the British were well aware of the strategic importance of the Trincomalee harbour in Ceylon since it played a vital role in the ultimate supremacy of the Indian peninsula. However, the capturing of the Dutch territories by the French revolutionary armies in 1795 and the establishment of the Batavian republic resulted in the fleeing of Prince Stadtholder William who sought asylum in England. Britain got hold of this opportunity and the famous Kew letter was then written. The letter ordered the colonial governors to handover the colonies to the British for safekeeping.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the governor of Ceylon Van Angelbeek did not comply with the orders and resisted against the British. This resistance resulted in the defeat of Governor Angelbeek when the British captured the Trincomalee harbour in 1795. Eventually they took over every other harbour in the coastal region of Ceylon, by 1796 the coastal regions came under the control of Britain.¹⁸

Meanwhile with the end of the Dutch rule in Ceylon the Kandyan's realised the British did not only aide them to get rid of the Dutch, but they have successfully taken control of the Dutch possessions in the island. The displeased Kandyan ruler began to resist the foreigner alas the English were able to invade the upcountry kingdom in 1815. By taking advantage of the prevalent power struggle and internal conflicts in the Kandyan kingdom. Thus, making Sri Vikrama Rajasingha the last King of Ceylon. In 1818 the British took control of the whole island. The British rule lasted in the island until they regained independence in 1948.¹⁹ It is during the British rule the Ceylonese made their official contact with the Ottoman Empire.

During the 19th century Ceylon was a full-fledged British colony ruled by a governor appointed by the Crown. The British unlike their predecessors in Ceylon didn't inflict religious persecution upon their subjects and granted them the freedom of worship.²⁰ The economy of the island was thriving with booming of plantation industry established mainly with foreign capital.²¹ Along with the economic advancement the need for educated people in service of the government arose,

¹⁷ K.M.De Silva, *A history of Sri Lanka*, 184,185

¹⁸Lennox A Mills, *Ceylon Under British Rule, 1795-1932 with an account of the East India company's embassies to Kandy 1762- 1795*, (Routledge, 2012), pp. 19 - 22

¹⁹ Ibid, 235

²⁰ G.C. Mendis, *Ceylon under the British*, (The Colombo Apothecaries' Co., Ltd. Educational Publishers, 1952), pp.32,38,39

²¹ K.M.De Silva, *A history of Sri Lanka* , 248,268

Christian missionary schools appeared in the island. At the inception it was assumed that it weakened the faith of children who attended it. Since these schools were not only western but also had Christian content. As a result, the Muslim community of Ceylon remained regressive in education as they kept their children away from English schools and offered them only traditional madrasa education which was predominately learning the holy Quran and Arabic.²² It was amidst these conditions the Ceylon Muslims relation with the Ottoman state emerged. Subsequent chapters of the study would discuss the condition of the Muslims during the British period. Besides how their relationship with the Ottoman state helped them and improved their position including in the field of education.



Figure 1 Sri Lanka, *Encyclopædia Britannica*.
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Sri-Lanka/images-videos#/media/1/561906/208686>

²² Vasundhara Mohan, *Identity Crisis of Sri Lankan Muslims*, (Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1987), pp.15-17

1.1 Muslims of Ceylon

Though Ceylon had caught the attention of the world for centuries it was in 1863 the Ottoman state formed its official relationship with the Island through its Muslim community.²³ The Muslims also identified as Ceylon moors were initially foreigners to the Island, they were itinerant traders who later became an indispensable and vital part of the Sri Lankan society and history. Sri Lanka being a crucial link to the West and East attracted Arab, Persian, and African merchants who frequented the Island even before the birth of Islam. Sassanian Emperors maintained diplomatic relations with the court at Anuradhapura in the 5th century A. D.²⁴

Furthermore, archival, and archaeological evidence belonging to the 9th and 10th centuries proves that by then a sizable Muslim community was residing in the coastal region of the Island and they also travelled to the interior towns for trade. Most of these seafaring merchants did not travel with their families hence they wedded local women who along with their offspring's embraced Islam. Thus the traders formed their Muslim communities along the coastline of the Island. Following the Arabs, the Island also witnessed the arrival of South Indian Muslim traders who also settled in the coasts of Ceylon and reproduced a similar community like the early Arabs but on a smaller scale.²⁵

Until the arrival of Malays from the Java peninsula during the Dutch and British period, the majority of the Muslim community was mainly divided into two ethnic groups²⁶, the descendants of early Arabs who married native Sinhala and Tamil women were known as "Ceylon Moors" the later immigrated South Indian Muslims were referred as "Coast Moors." Furthermore, the Ceylon Moors claim their ancestry to the house of Hashim. According to their collective memory the earliest settlers from

²³ BOA, I.HR.204/11694

²⁴ Lorna Dewaraja, *The Muslims of Sri Lanka One thousand years of ethnic harmony 900-1915*, (Colombo: The Lanka Islamic Foundation, 1994) pp. 4, 13

²⁵ Ibid, 26-27, 42-43

²⁶ For more on Malays of Sri Lanka See, B.A. Hussainmiya "Princes and Soldiers: The Antecedents of the Sri Lankan Malays, Dr. M.A.M Shukri (Ed), *Muslims of Sri Lanka Avenues to Antiquity*. (Beruwa: Jamiah Naleemiah Institute, 1986)

Arabia belonged to this house and they fled from the tyranny of Caliph Abd Al Malik bin Marwan in the 8th century. Consequently settled along the coastal regions of Sri Lanka; Trincomalee, Jaffna, Mantota, Mannar, Kudiramalai, Puttalam, Colombo, Beruwala and Galle. However, it has been discovered that Ceylon moor community is a result of different waves of migrations that took place from Arabia. The Ceylon moors distinguished themselves from their South Indian brethren they called themselves as “Sonahar” and the South Indian Muslims were recognised as “Samman Karan” (Sampan in Malay is known as boat and Karan in Tamil is for men).²⁷

It was the Moor community who the Ottomans had relations with predominantly, the moors both the Arab and Indo Arab descendants were accomplished traditional traders they being maritime merchants had technical expertise and business contacts beyond the Indian ocean. The Muslims were mostly involved in trading precious stones, pearls, gems, spices, and ivory that were highly sought after in Europe and Persian Gulf. Thus, they populated the coastal regions of the Island built their warehouses and occupied the harbours and ports with their trading ships. The Sinhalese living in the villages were pleased with their farming lives and were uninterested of trading, the Muslim traders paid the best rate for the country’s produce and supplemented the Island with experiences, skills thus they were able to win the confidence of the people as well as the Sinhala Kings.²⁸

Not only did the Muslims engage in trading activities they also played a major role in the foreign relations of the country by being part of the royal court as translators and advisors to the Kings on foreign trade policies and events taking place abroad. Their linguistic ability to speak Tamil and other South Indian languages and foreign languages such as Portuguese, the international links they had, and the internationalism of their faith Islam made them natural diplomats’ and lobbyists. As a result of their influence and loyalty in the 13th century the Sinhala King sent Al Haj Abu Uthman to

²⁷ Lorna Dewaraja, *The Muslims of Sri Lanka One thousand years of ethnic harmony 900-1915*, 4, 23-27, 42-47

²⁸ Sir James Emerson Tennent, *Ceylon, An Account of the Island Physical, Historical and Topographical, with Notices of Its Natural History, Antiquities, and Productions*, (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1859), p.608

the Mamluk court to negotiate trade relations between the two countries.²⁹ Similarly, a merchant named Periya Mudali Marikkar of Gorakaduwa in Beruwala had brought down a group of seven South Indian wavers from the village of Saliapattanam as a technical assistance to the countries waving production. the elated King rewarded the merchant with lands, honours and privileges which remained in the same family for centuries. The King decreed that all the descendants of Periya Mudali Marikkar was relieved of the service of carrying palanquins for the Crown and the dignity of the family should be maintained at all times, they were also given the privilege of erecting mosques for their worship if needed lands were granted for the construction. The descendants were also granted privileges in the trading activities. Its worthy to note that the family was able to maintain their reputation even after 600 years a descendant of the merchant was appointed as a native Superintendent of the Medical Department by Alexander Johnstone.³⁰

In the course of time by the 12th and 13th centuries the Muslims had established a monopoly over the Islands trade and economy. They possessed an island wide network to collect all the marketable products of the country for export, moreover they had won the confidence of the Sinhala King and his subjects. Since the Muslims did not have any political ambitions, they were loyal to the king and he in return gave them protection and freedom to engage in trade in his domain. Not only did they receive the liberty to engage in trade, but they also had the opportunity to be tried by their own laws when dispute arises in matters of business. Likewise, they also followed their own laws with regard to marriage and inheritance.³¹

The religious tolerance prevalent in the country enabled the Moors to retain their Islamic identity and to maintain contacts with the Islamic world not only for commercial but also for religious and cultural purposes. A 10th century Arabic inscription found in the National Museum in Colombo reveals that the Arab community living in Colombo requested the Caliph of Baghdad to send a religious teacher to educate them about the tenets and practises of Islam. In response the Caliph

²⁹ H. W. Codrington, "A Sinhalese Embassy to Egypt," *The Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*, Vol. 28, No. 72, Parts I., II., III. and IV. Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka (RASSL), (1919), p.83

³⁰ Lorna Dewaraja, *The Muslims of Sri Lanka One thousand years of ethnic harmony 900-1915*, 39

³¹ Ibid, 35-39, 59

sent a learned devout Muslim Imam named Khalid Ibn Abu Bakaya to Colombo to teach Islam to the Muslim community and to build a mosque. Bakaya died in Colombo in 948 AD and the Caliph sent another group of learned to the Island to engrave an inscription on his tombstone. It is noteworthy to mention that the relationship between Sinhalese and Muslims were not merely commercial but cultural too. Thus, it is evident the Muslims of Colombo were in a highly influential position to request the Caliph to send a respected Imam further this mission became successful due to the cooperation the Sinhala Kings had with the Caliphs of the Baghdad and due to their religious tolerances towards the Muslims. Arab author Idris in the 12th century mentions a council of 16 at the Royal court, consisting of four Buddhists, four Muslims, four Christians and four Jews showing that people of all faith were welcome and that there was no religious discrimination that they were able to hold such influential possessions. The Sinhalese and the Muslims had a cordial relationship which continued for a thousand years without any major disagreement till 1915.³²

The Kings also showed their good will to the Muslims living in the country by donating lands to build mosques the Kandyan Kings donated the lands for the Katu Palliya in Kandy, Maddulbova and Kahatapitiya Mosques. The *Bhikkus* Buddhist monks also granted the Muslim villagers to build their worship place in their monastic lands. For example Pangollamada Mosque was built on the land belonging to the Degaldoruve vihara.³³ Not only did they donate their lands but also shared their holy land Adams peak at first with the Arab travellers who came as pilgrims then with the Muslim settlers. Ibn Battuta mentions that the Sinhala Kings and his subjects had high esteem towards Muslim dignitaries and pious men. Since the King and the people visited Shaikh Usman who had his mosque outside the royal city of Konkar. There were also number of Muslim shrines and holy men residing around the capital city and along the path to the holy mountain. An Arabic inscription belonging to the 13th century is found next to a Sinhala inscription as a memorial to the Muslim pilgrims of Adams peak it states “Muhammed, May God bless him...the father of Mankind”. The existence of an Arabic inscription next to Sinhala Buddhist inscription in a holy land

³² Lorna Dewaraja, *The Muslims of Sri Lanka One thousand years of ethnic harmony 900-1915*, 24-29

³³ Ibid, 15,16

proves the religious harmony and tolerance the Sinhala society had towards the Muslims.³⁴

Likewise, the Muslims had always supported the Sinhala Kings and the people by giving a fair profit for their commodities, by negotiating and advising in foreign trade matters and invasions. It was the Muslims who warned the King regarding the possible threat to the country when the Portuguese were seen in the shores of the Island. Since the Muslims were very well aware of their intentions of territorial aggrandisement. When the Portuguese tried to intrude the country, the Muslims stood by the Sinhalese and fought side by side, provided them with firearms and used their influences with the South Indian powers to get military assistance. Thus Zamorin of Calicut sent three prominent Moors of Cochin with forces to help the Sinhala King Mayadunne (1521-1581) of Sitavaka. Later on, Muslims were persecuted mercilessly by the Portuguese and Dutch due to the support they extended to the Sinhala Kings against the European powers. However, this also led the Muslims to move to the interior of the country and to get assimilated with the native people³⁵.

With all the privileges and liberty granted to them by the Sinhala kings the Muslim community had well established itself by the 16th century. They were successful traders, had integrated themselves with the local community and adjusted with the local customs and condition of living. As a result they became an indispensable sect of the Sri Lankan population. It was due to their influential position and monopoly in the trade when the Portuguese first arrived at the Island in 1505 the Muslims intended to chase them away as it is well-known that the Portuguese and Muslims were commercial rivals. Nevertheless, its known due to internal disputes between the Kotte kingdom and Sitawaka that the Portuguese were able to set their foothold in the Island.³⁶ The Portuguese rule in Ceylon adversely affected the Muslim commercial activities. Similarly, the Dutch who were also interested in trade began to restrict the Muslims not only in international trade but also in retail and brought about various restrictions affecting Muslims immigration, residence, and land ownership in

³⁴ Ibid, 30-33

³⁵ Ibid, 15,33,5,6

³⁶ Vasundhara Mohan, *Identity Crisis of Sri Lankan Muslims*, 13,14

Dutch regions in Ceylon. They also continued the Christian missionary which had started in 1534 under the Portuguese, however the Muslims were resilient in their faith thus there were not many converts from the Muslim community. By the 18th century the restrictions imposed by the Dutch towards the trading activities of the Muslims were relaxed, yet this did not mean they enjoyed the same extent of freedom they had during the reign of Sinhalese Kings.³⁷ In 1818 Ceylon entirely became a British colony by overthrowing the Nayyaka dynasty in Kandy.³⁸

Unlike the other European powers, the British state didn't sponsor the proselytization. Yet the Christian missionary was still active in the Island, but it didn't pose a serious threat to the people. Thus the Muslims once again came forward to improve their trade commerce by utilising the novel opportunities offered by the British reign. The Muslims began to involve in various business opportunities such as the coffee plantation in 1820, fishing and gem mining, construction, transportation, cinnamon in 1833 and rubber plantation during the end of 19th century.³⁹

These new prospects under the British rule created an economic advancement and provided new employment opportunities. Muslims who were experts in trading seized this opportunity, it was The gem industry which led to the foundation of an elite Muslim community. Though they were not owners of gem mining lands in Rathnapura the gem cutting, polishing, evaluating, and selling were done by the Muslim gem traders.⁴⁰ Gem traders like O.L.M. Macan had an international clientele and was patronised by the British royalty and nobility.⁴¹

³⁷ Vasundhara Mohan, *Identity Crisis of Sri Lankan Muslims*, 14,15

³⁸ G.C. Mendis, *Ceylon under the British*, 6

³⁹ Vasundhara Mohan, *Identity Crisis of Sri Lankan Muslims* 15,16

⁴⁰ Ibid, 15

⁴¹ Lorna Dewaraja, *The Muslims of Sri Lanka One thousand years of ethnic harmony 900-1915*, 151

Furthermore, it was from these elite Moor families that the Ottoman Honorary consuls were appointed. Though the Muslims achieved economic prosperity they kept their children away from education. Since they didn't want their children to attend Christian missionary schools as they feared the nature of education offered by such schools. Thus, the Muslim communities' education was limited to the traditional schools of Islamic learning.⁴² The following chapters will discuss the formation of an Ottoman consulate in Ceylon and the affairs of the Muslim community after the appointment of an Ottoman consul.

⁴² Vasundhara Mohan, *Identity Crisis of Sri Lankan Muslims*, 16,17

CHAPTER II: CONSULATE AFFAIRS

2.1 The Universal Caliphate

The Ottoman Empire's position in the Islamic world shifted significantly when they became the protectors of Mecca and Medina the two most sacred cities in Islam. Since the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the Mamluks and Ottomans were on a cold war as the Mamluks did not recognize the superiority of the Ottomans in the Turko-Muslim world. The Egyptian dynasty constantly supported the Ottoman enemies and allied with "the unbelievers against the warriors of the faith," thus, the Ottomans justified their attack against their orthodox Islamic counterpart.⁴³

In 1517 Selim I defeated the Mamluks, this victory once again changed the dynamics of the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan achieved another political legitimation apart from the title of a Gazi and Conqueror. The Ottomans became the guardians of the two holy places in Islam and earned the title of Caliph which gave them the power to rule the larger Muslim world. Thus, it is understandable the conquest of Egypt was far more influential and had greater impact than that of the conquest of Constantinople in 1453. The conquest in 1517 paved way to assume the political leadership of the entire Islamic community. Ottomans gained the position of universal Empire by being the guardian of the holy places (*Khadimu'l haramayn al-sharifayn*), the protector and provider of pilgrims. Moreover, being the protector of Sunni Islam strengthened the position of the Ottoman state. By securing the support of the ulema the Ottomans accomplished to establish Istanbul as the center of the orthodox Islamic world. The Ottomans also had the holy lands of Christians, Jews under their control and by being the Caliph, the Sultan also extended his protection to Muslims within and beyond his domain.⁴⁴ Consequently, the Ottoman Sultan undertook the political leadership of the

⁴³ For Ottoman Mamluk relations See, Cihan Yüksel Muslu, *The Ottomans And The Mamluks Imperial Diplomacy and Warfare in the Islamic World*, (London; New York, I.B.Tauris,2014) Andrew C. Hess, "The Ottoman Conquest of Egypt (1517) and the Beginning of the Sixteenth-Century World War" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1. (Jan.,1973), pp. 69-70

⁴⁴ Ibid, 55-76

entire Islamic community this new political legitimization led the way to the Pan Islamic policies that appeared at the latter phase of the Empire.

This newly assumed role of the Ottoman Sultan “universal caliphate” served as the most important instrument of foreign affairs with other Muslim nations and communities. The Ottomans became the largest Muslim kingdom in the world thus the Muslim rulers not only presented their traditional congratulations and felicitations to the Sultan but also accepted his supremacy.⁴⁵ Further, the Muslims began to seek help from the Ottomans when they were threatened by the western powers, when the Portuguese attacked the hajj pilgrim route of Indian Muslims, they sought the help of the Ottomans who they considered as the strongest Muslim power of the era and the guardians of the holy places. In this instance Ottoman Sultan Suleyman I sent his soldiers to drive away the Portuguese. The success of this operation increased the prestige of the Ottomans in the eyes of the Indian Muslims. Moreover, when India became a colony of Britain the relationship between the Indian Muslims and Ottoman Sultan intensified, now the Ottomans were not only a strong Muslim ruler but also their Caliph the only savior. Thus, the relationship between Britain and Ottomans also took a shift, since Britain was aware of the attachments the Indian Muslims had with the Ottomans.⁴⁶ This was the beginning of a sentiment that would turn into an ideology referred as Pan Islamism in centuries to come which not only influenced the Indian Muslims but also, the Ceylon Moors, Muslims from distant lands and the Ottoman domains.

2.1.2 The beginning of Pan Islamism

Pan Islamism is a topic that has been dealt by various scholars based on a particular perspective of a country or region in the Muslim world that is Turkey, North Africa, Iran, India and elsewhere of which he is mostly aware. However, there are no studies that adequately reveals the exact details of its rise and developments during the latter half of the 19th century. A general definition of Pan Islamism is that it is a religio-political motivated ideology rather than a racial or national and its objective is the

⁴⁵ For more on Ottoman Caliphate See, Hüseyin Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined: The Mystical Turn in Ottoman Political Thought*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018) Azmi Özcan, *Pan Islamism Indian Muslims, Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)*, (Leiden; New York; Koln: Brill, 1997), pp. 3,4

⁴⁶ Ibid, 4,9,10 For more on Ottoman expansion in Indian ocean See, Salih Özbaran, *Ottoman Expansion towards the Indian Ocean in the 16th Century*, (Istanbul, Bilgi University Press, 2009)

realization of the unity of the Islamic world under a leader (Imam, Caliph) of the Muslim world.⁴⁷ In this chapter we focus on the Pan Islamic developments that took place in Turkey and whether or not it contributed to the formation of honorary consulates in former Ceylon.

The word Pan Islamism was first coined by the Europeans in the mid 1870's and probably adopted in imitation of Pan- Slavism which was also popular during the same period.⁴⁸ However, later studies on this subject provides evidence that an Ottoman equivalent to Pan Islamism known as *İttihad-ı İslam*, *İttihad-ı din* and *Uhuvvet-i din* had been in usage in relation to correspondence between the Ottomans and rulers of the Muslim world from India, Central Asia, Indonesia etc., long before the term was used by the westerners. In the middle of 19th century, the Ottoman Empire was no longer a great power in the Europe, and it was suffering from a series of political, economic, and military setbacks at the hands of the western powers. It was amidst these trials the newly emerged Ottoman intellectuals some of whom were later known as "Young Ottomans" coined the ideas of Pan Islamism in search of a solution to the Muslim brethren who were suffering at the hands of the Europeans and for the survival of the Ottoman Empire as a mechanism to resist the European pressure and to preserve the integrity of the Empire, since it was the only recourse to the Muslims. It should be noted that the Young Ottomans first expressed their ideas of Pan Islamism in the late 1860's when they were in London. However, this ideology was not a new discovery it is only a retrieval and exploration of potentials of Islam, political tendencies and attachment of Muslims that has been developed ever since the Ottomans earned the title of universal caliph.⁴⁹

By the end of 1872, the fruiting of the Pan Islamic feelings began to appear domestically and abroad. One of its first demonstration was the Porte taking an active interest on the affairs of the Muslims in distant lands, particularly the Central Asia. In 1873 when the envoy of Amir of Kashgar, Yakub bey, who established an independent state in Eastern Turkistan in 1867 after defeating the Chinese appealed for Sultans help

⁴⁷ Dwight E. Lee, "The Origins of Pan-Islamism," *American Historical Review*, (Jan,1942, Vol.47, No 2), pp. 278-279

⁴⁸Dwight E. Lee, "The Origins of Pan-Islamism,"280

⁴⁹ Azmi Özcan, *Pan Islamism Indian Muslims, Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)*, 23-35

and displayed his allegiance to the Caliphate. Sultan immediately responded approvingly and offered his assistance to Yakub bey with the condition of him continuing his loyalty and submission to the Ottoman Empire. It is noteworthy that this move of Sultan was also encouraged by the British who were concerned over the Russian advancements in Central Asia. However, at the same time the Achenes Muslims sought for Sultan's support against the Dutch but their call for help was not answered positively⁵⁰. With no doubt Porte taking such a bold step in the case of Yakub bey confirms that he had the European diplomatic backing particularly from Britain.⁵¹

It is evident the Britain's policy towards Russia was a crucial factor in the developments of Pan Islamism during the reign of Sultan Abdul Aziz I and the early years of Sultan Abdulhamid II. It is also essential to consider the fact that the Porte and Great Britain were rulers of Muslim subjects thus their interests were linked. Britain exploited the Pan Islamic feelings in its favor to gain the loyalty of its Muslim subjects towards the regime which was the Caliph's friend and when it needed the support of Muslims against Russia.⁵²

2.1.2.1 Pan Islamism during Abdulhamid II

When discussing Pan Islamism, it is impossible to overlook the period of Abdulhamid II, it was during his reign the Pan Islamic ideology took a political outlook and almost became a state policy.⁵³ Abdulhamid II took over the Empire when it was experiencing the failures of the *Tanzimat* and consequences of European instigation on the non-Muslim Ottoman subjects, the uprising in Bulgaria 1876 and Ottoman counter measures had caused strong anti-Turkish, anti-Muslim feelings in Europe as well in non-Muslim Ottoman subjects. The Empire had to face another blow when the Russo Turkish war broke out on 24th April 1877.⁵⁴ It was during this period Britain once again exploited the Pan Islamic feelings of her Muslim subjects since she could

⁵⁰For Ottoman Empire's and Sultane of Aceh relations See, Prof. Dr.İsmail Hakkı Kadı, "An Old Ally Revisited: Diplomatic Interactions Between the Ottoman Empire and the Sultanate of Aceh in the Face of Dutch Colonial Expansion", *The International History Review*, 43:5, pp.1080-1097

⁵¹ Azmi Özcan, *Pan Islamism Indian Muslims, Ottomans, and Britain (1877-1924)*, 38-40

⁵² Dwight E. Lee, "The Origins of Pan-Islamism," 284-286

⁵³ Ibid, 279

⁵⁴ Azmi Özcan, *Pan Islamism Indian Muslims, Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)*, 41-43

not openly support the Ottoman Empire due to the tensions in her own land⁵⁵ Britain began to bolster the feelings of Indian Muslims to stand in solidarity with the Ottomans against Russia and to maintain healthy relations with Britain.⁵⁶ The aftermath of war came with great territory losses with a population of more than 5 million and half of it was Muslims. Soon after this Porte decided to shift his policies as the unity of Ottoman nation had failed and the state began to focus on its Muslim element. Though Britain previously supported the Pan Islamic developments when Gladstone came to power in 1880's the dynamics of the duo Britain and Porte shifted drastically. Thus, the Ottomans no longer had a European backing and had to protect its own integrity.⁵⁷

It was amidst these circumstances Abdulhamid II began to utilize the Pan Islamic tendencies towards political purposes. To maintain the integrity of the Empire through the unity of the Muslim subjects and to resist the European powers by mobilizing the Muslims in support of the caliphate. Although the title of caliphate has been formerly used as an instrument in foreign affairs and the Sultans claim to be the universal caliph of Muslims beyond its sovereign lands was internationally recognized for the first time in 1774 by the treaty of *Küçük Kaynarca*. It was during the reign of Abdulhamid II that this title and power was extensively utilised to propagate the sentiments of Pan Islamism.⁵⁸

It was the key to his domestic and foreign policies, in order to keep up the Caliph's prestige and influence over the Muslims in his domains and far lands special measures were taken to appoint Arab notables to high positions in the government to preserve their loyalty, he also personally selected and appointed religious officials to former Ottoman territories he used it as an opportunity to maintain his influence over the Muslim subjects. It is also known that he also expressed his concerns when Muslims were maltreated at the hands of the Europeans, sending gifts, Qurans, inviting notables to Istanbul from the far lands were also a part of his strategies. Undoubtedly, he also used the presence of Ottoman consuls in distant lands to cultivate Pro-Ottoman

⁵⁵ Gladstone a liberalist accused the conservative government of supporting the Muslim Ottomans, He published a pamphlet, "Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East," in 1876. See, Azmi Özcan, *Pan Islamism Indian Muslims, Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)* p.42

⁵⁶ Dwight E. Lee, "The Origins of Pan-Islamism," 285, 286

⁵⁷ Azmi Özcan, *Pan Islamism Indian Muslims, Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)*, 44-46

⁵⁸ Ibid, 29, 46

feelings, it is understood he also took special interest in choosing and appointing the ambassadors and consuls.⁵⁹ Though Pan Islamism sentiments heighten during the reign of Abdulhamid II the inception of an Ottoman Ceylon relation began prior to it during the early years of Pan Islamic ideology.

2.2 The need for an Ottoman consul in Ceylon

In the year 1863 Ottoman diplomat Konstantinos Mousouros,⁶⁰ who served as the ambassador in the London embassy made a request to the Porte to appoint two consuls to the island of Ceylon to oversee the Ottoman subjects living there and to take care of the dealings of the businessmen who frequented the Island. While suggesting two individuals to the post, He also mentions that one of the candidates Sultan Bawa residing in Point de Galle an important port city in Ceylon was already informally supervising the Ottoman interests in the city.⁶¹ Mousourous's concerns coming from London may suggest that Britain was already keen on the activities of Ottoman subjects in the British colony of Ceylon. In addition, the informal duties conducted by Sultan Bawa also indicates the Muslims of Ceylon were informed and interested in having dealings with the Ottoman Empire and its subjects. Thus, an active willingness from the Muslims of Ceylon and an immediate necessity to oversee the Ottoman subjects and their interests, served as a crucial factor to the establishment of honorary consulates in the island of Ceylon in 1864. Nevertheless, this episode also suggests that there might have been a possible British interest behind these developments considering Ceylon being its colony. The subsequent chapter will be on the topic how the candidates were chosen to the position of consul and their appointments. Moreover, this thesis will focus on the impact that was created on the Ceylon Moors as a result of Ottoman relations.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 47-55

⁶⁰ Konstantinos Mousouros (1807-91) known as Kostaki Musurus Pasha in Turkish served as the Ottoman ambassador in Athens (1840-47), Vienna (1848), and London (1851-85). See, Christine M. Philliou, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution*, (University of California Press, 2011), Sinan Kuneralp, "Bir Osmanlı diplomatı: Kostaki Musurus paşa, 1807-91", (Ankara: *Belleten*, Volume: XXXIV Issue: 135, July 1970)

⁶¹ BOA, İ.HR.204/11694

2.2.1 Establishing Ottoman Consulates in Colombo and Galle

Prior to 1863 there is no evidence of a direct diplomatic contact between the Ottoman Empire and Ceylon. Though there are claims that an Anatolian prince named Jamaldeen from Konya arrived in Ceylon in 800 AD, settled down in Beruwala and practiced medicine⁶², there is no substantial proof to back this claim. Therefore, it is possible to consider it as a collective memory of the Ceylon Moors and keenness to trace their roots with Turkey⁶³. In addition, in the year 1564 an Ottoman envoy was dispatched to Sumatra by the second vizier Sokollu Mehmed, under the leadership of Lutfi. His primary mission was to accompany the artillery experts to Aceh and to gather intelligence regarding the region. Consequently, hearing the arrival of an Ottoman envoy Muslim communities from around the Indian Ocean including the Ceylon Muslims who were tortured and abused at the hands of the Portuguese sent an envoy to Lutfi who was at Aceh. Lutfi returned to Istanbul at the end of 1566, presented his report on the intel gathered during his stay. According to it Muslims from various parts of the Indian Ocean had begun to recognize the Ottomans as their overlord and protector. Furthermore, he states the local Muslims had built dozens of mosques in the region including in Ceylon 14 mosques⁶⁴ were built and the *hutbe* was read in the name of His Imperial Majesty. Besides Lutfi also reveals the details of the emissary that was sent to him by the rulers of Ceylon, Calicut. He states they proclaimed to profess the religion of Islam along with their infidel subjects if the Ottoman fleet arrived at their kingdom.⁶⁵ Hence, the above account serves as one of the earliest moves of diplomatic contact between Ceylon and Ottoman Empire. However, there had remained a commercial link between the two regions preceding to this encounter. Since a considerable number of Ottoman subjects who were dealing with trade most

⁶²Sri Lankan Muslim Genealogy, "Sultan Alauddin - Family 90", www.worldgenweb.org/lkawgw/gen090.html

⁶³ See, Ekrem Saltık, "Efsaneyle Gerçeklik Arasında Seylan Adası ve Anonim Hatıralardan Aile Şeceresine Türk Soylu Sri Lankalılar Meselesi" *Türkiyat Mecmuası-Journal of Turkology* 32, 1 (2022), pp. 93-115

⁶⁴ İsmail Hakkı Kadı, A.C.S. Peacock, *Ottoman-Southeast Asian Relations Sources from the Ottoman Archives*, Volume 1 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2020), p.47

⁶⁵ Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, Oxford University Press, (Feb 25, 2010), pp.123-129

likely from the Arab provinces of the Empire frequented the island and some of them also made it their permanent dwelling.⁶⁶

When the Ottoman diplomat Konstantinos Mousouros made an appeal to the *Hariciye Nezareti* (Foreign ministry). In his letter dated 18th November 1863 he explains that although there is a considerable number of Ottoman subjects residing and traveling to Ceylon for trade purposes, an official representative from the Empire has not been appointed to oversee the requirements of the Ottoman subjects. Thus, he requests for the appointment of two *Şehbenders* (Consul) in Colombo and Galle, two main port cities in Ceylon. While making his request for the appointment of the consuls Mousouros Pasha also refers to two individuals for the post in the respective cities. Hussein Lebbe Marikar, a wealthy moor businessman from Colombo and Sultan Bawa Jaman, a reputed businessman from Galle who was already working in favour of the Empire.⁶⁷ Consequently in January 1864 the above mentioned individuals were chosen for the post of consul and their *ferman* (exequatur) were sent to Ceylon.⁶⁸ However, a letter sent by the British foreign office on July 30th 1864 informs the demise of Sultan Bawa of Galle in February 1864. In addition, returns the *ferman* of Hussein Lebbe Marikar and request for a new *ferman* with the accurate name of Hussein Lebbe Marikar the Colombo consul in order to issue her majesty's exequatur in his favour.⁶⁹

Though Hussein Lebbe Marikar was appointed to the post in the year 1864, he was first provisionally recognized by the Ceylon governor if there was no objection in his appointment until the arrival of exequatur.⁷⁰ It is understood through the letters available in the archives that he received his official *ferman* in the year 1865.⁷¹ Thus, the first Ottoman consulate in Ceylon was established in Colombo in the year 1864,

⁶⁶ See, Lorna Dewaraja, *The Muslims of Sri Lanka One thousand years of ethnic harmony 900-1915*, (Colombo: The Lanka Islamic Foundation, 1994), for further information on the arrival of Arab traders and their settlements in Ceylon

⁶⁷ BOA, İ.HR.204/11694. According to local sources the name of the first Ottoman consul in Colombo is Hussein (Hassen) Lebbe Marikar. however, the Ottoman Ferman refers to his name as Hussain Aba Marikar
BOA, HR.SFR.3.85/3/6. This has been clarified through a letter sent by the British foreign office on 30th July 1864

⁶⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.85/3/1.

⁶⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.85/3/6.

⁷⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.86/20/1.

⁷¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.85/3/11. On the 7th of February 1865, a letter along with the ferman and her majesty's exequatur is sent to Hussein Lebbe Marikar

even though initially there were plans to appoint a consul in the city of Galle after notifying the demise of Sultan Bawa new nominations weren't made.

However, a letter dated the 10th of December 1873 written by Ahamadu Lebbe Marikar Sultan Bawa Hadjie Abdullah of Galle who is identified as Sultan Bawa's son who was nominated as the consul of Galle in 1863 reveals that Ahamadu Lebbe was offered the post of consul in Galle on 4th July 1864 however, he did not accept the offer since he was not residing in Galle at the moment. 9 years later he makes a request to appoint him as the consul of Galle while mentioning that he is an agent for the Singapore steam company limited and has the authority to grant passports to passengers travelling to Constantinople and other parts of Arabia from Galle. Interestingly this letter is posted to Lord Stanley of Alderley⁷² in London hence it confirms that the British did have a certain influence in the appointing of consuls in Ceylon.⁷³ Lord Stanley during his visit to Ceylon in 1859 was fraternizing with Ceylon Moors in Colombo and Kandy where he was eating rice and curry crossed leg on the floor, going to mosque⁷⁴. Therefore, it is apparent Hussein Lebbe Marikar, later Ibrahim Didi had acquainted him during his stay in Ceylon and sought his assistance in securing their posts as Ottoman honorary consuls.

Moreover, Ekrem Saltık on his article "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Seylan Adası ile İlişkilerine Methal" states since 1864 Sultan Bawa served as the honorary consul in Galle and in December 1873 his nephew Abdullah bin Sultan Bawa (Ahamadu Lebbe Marikar Sultan Bawa Hadjie Abdullah) was appointed to the post⁷⁵. On the contrary, the above research conducted proves otherwise.

⁷² For more on Lord Stanley See, Jamie Gilham, *Loyal Enemies: British Converts to Islam, 1850-1950*, (Oxford University Press, Jun 15, 2014) Lord Stanley of Alderley (1827- an English peer of the realm is one of the earliest British converts to Islam (1859). He converted to Islam during his travel abroad and he is the first Muslim member of the house of lords (1869). In 1850 he joined the British embassy in Constantinople as a first paid attaché. The author identifies Lord Stanley as a Turcophile this also suggest that he might have had good contacts with the Ottoman diplomats to make recommendations and he also visited Ceylon in 1859 where he was seen dressed like a Turk with a fez and kept company by the Muslims in Kandy

⁷³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.219/78/1

⁷⁴ *The Wexford Constitution*, 18th June 1859

⁷⁵ Ekrem Saltık, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Seylan Adası ile İlişkilerine Methal," *Türkiyat Mecmuası - Journal of Turkology*. Advance online publication. 2020, p. 10

2.3 The Şehbender and the duties assigned to him

The first Ottoman *şehbender* (consul) in South Asia was appointed in Bombay in the year 1848 due to a similar purpose as Ceylon, which is to observe the affairs of the Ottoman traders in India.⁷⁶ Thus, it is understood that the initial purpose of appointing *şehbender*'s was commercial activities in the regions outside the Ottoman domain. The word *şehbender* originates from the Persian word “*Şeh*” meaning king and “*Bender*” which means trading place.⁷⁷ Hence, *şehbender* is an official appointed by the state in regions beyond its domains to represent the state and to defend, oversee its subjects personal and commercial affairs and he is commonly known as Consul. In the case of Ceylon, the consuls were chosen from the local Muslim community, men who were respectable and affluent were appointed to the post. Though their appointments were made by the Sublime Porte they were not enrolled to a payroll hence they only functioned as honorary consuls.⁷⁸ It is understood the reason behind appointing such wealthy men in this respect Muslim merchants is that they have a sound influence over the society and they are able to take control of the necessary expenditures of running a consulate like the payment of the rent, salaries of assistants if any available. Unlike the other salaried consuls, the honorary consuls are allowed to conduct their private businesses to gain an income. Through the archive letters it is noted that the consul of Ceylon along with other consuls from Bombay, Singapore reported and corresponded with the London embassy.⁷⁹ The consulate of Ceylon was situated in Colombo and Point De Galle, In Colombo in the year 1899 it was located at No 70 old moor street Ceylon.⁸⁰ and in the 1891 it was located at No 4 main street Ceylon⁸¹, year 1914 the address of the consulate was as follow the Imperial consulate

⁷⁶ Diren Çakılcı, “Hindistan’da Osmanlılar: Bombay Osmanlı Şehbenderliği”, *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, (vol.25/autumn, 2015), p. 84

⁷⁷ Prof. Dr. İsmail Hakkı Göksoy, Zübeyir Tetik, “Osmanlı Devleti’nin Batavya Başşehbenderi Hacı Rasim Bey’in Hayatı, Faaliyetleri Ve Meclis-İ Mebusan’a Sunduğu Arzuhalı”, *ASEAD CİLT 6 SAYI 5 S 211-229 Yıl* (2019), p.212

⁷⁸ “Saltanatı Seniyye Şehbenderlerine Dair Nizamnamei Dahilidir”, (*Tertip: 1 Cilt: 2 (Zeyl) Sayfa: 192*)

(1 Haziran 1298), p. 35

⁷⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.280/21/15

⁸⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.480/58/1

⁸¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.383/39/1

Fort, Colombo.⁸² However, there is no information regarding the address of the Galle consulate.

When it comes to the duties of the honorary consuls in the case of Ceylon it is understandable that they performed remarkably similar functions to that of a salaried consul. The utmost duty being faithful to the Sultan and act in his favour, he also performed chancery services like issuing birth, death, marriage certificates and dealing with visa, passport and issuing bills of health, other commercial transactions of the Ottoman subjects and charging custom duty from the vessels setting out to the Imperial ports from Ceylon. In return of a payment stamps sent from the Foreign ministry is stamped in these documents, the documents without the stamps does not ensure authenticity. On the 21st of May 1901, consul Abdul Majid effendi informs the London ambassador that several British subjects and others travelling to Turkish ports such as Syria, Jedda and Alexandria on several occasion had their passports signed by the Ceylon government only. Although previously the consul countersigned them affixing a Turkish stamp for which a sum was charged. Thus, he queries how it is possible to land at the Turkish ports without a properly vised passport, he suggests this might be occurring due to the negligence of the officers in the Turkish ports who are not concerned if the passports are countersigned by the consul or not. In addition to it he mentions that he issues bill of health only when Ceylon produce such as hides and horns are exported, however there are also other Ceylon produce such as tea being exported but he has not issued a bill of health for similar items. Hence, he requests the Ambassador to enlighten him in this matter, and to inform the officers responsible in the Turkish ports to be more cautions regarding the passports from Ceylon.⁸³ The Ambassador replies to the above letter mentioning that he has informed the appropriate department at Constantinople about it, hence he would forward the ministerial reply as soon as he receives it.⁸⁴ Subsequently, on the 23rd October 1901, the Colombo consul Abdul Majid informs the London ambassador that there is a necessity to publish a notification in the “Ceylon Government Gazette” that the individuals travelling to Ottoman domains from Ceylon must get their passports “vised” stamped by the

⁸² BOA, HR.SFR.3.710/15/1

⁸³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.501/40/6/1-2

⁸⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.510/13/1

Turkish consul in Ceylon, since it is impossible to report to the Ottoman authorities about the travelers departing from Ceylon to Ottoman territories without the passports being appropriately vised. Besides there are around 500 travelers annually departing from Colombo to Ottoman lands. Thus, such a restriction would bring matters into systematic order and the consulate work would be performed without any hindrance, benefitting the Ottoman government as well the British authority.⁸⁵ Consequently, on the 25th of November 1901, Ottoman ambassador to London Anthopoulos Pasha, requests the British foreign office to publish the specific notification in the “Ceylon Government Gazette”,⁸⁶ thus it is clear the Ottoman state took such immigration matters serious as it’s an element of their security policies, additionally a means of income too.

Once again, a letter dispatched from Colombo consul on the 28th of January 1903 informs the negligence of the pilgrims travelling to Mecca without getting their passports properly stamped by the Turkish consul in Colombo and request the authorities in the Ottoman ports to check the passports of the pilgrims from Ceylon since not getting it stamped from the consul causes a loss of revenue to the government. Along with it the consul also attaches an extract from the Ceylon Government Gazette No 5826 of 3rd January 1902 informing that the passports should be duly vised by the Turkish consul in Colombo in order to travel the Ottoman domains.⁸⁷ Further on a letter dispatched from Colombo on the 7th June 1904, the Consul mentions of an incident where a woman’s religion was by mistake written as Israelite and she requests to correct it stating she is a Protestant. A new passport was issued for 50 piastre, thus the Consul sends both the passports in question of lady Rose Sehratz to the embassy of London. Thanks to this error we are able to witness a passport issued from the Colombo consulate and the amount charged for it in the year 1904. Yet one of the most intriguing question in this event is whether the woman was genuinely a protestant or not.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.510/24/1-2

⁸⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.510/30/1

⁸⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.537/3/1-2

⁸⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/22/1/1-2

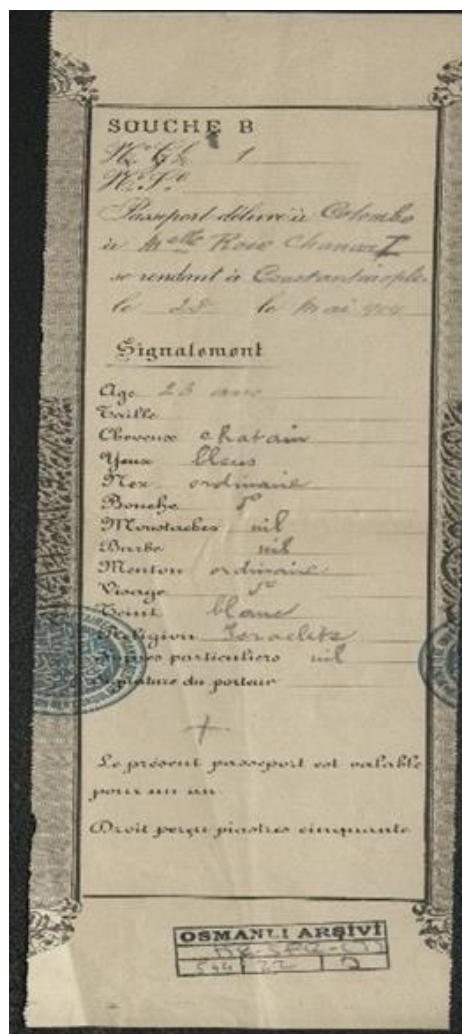


Figure 3 The passport mentioning the religion Israelite. BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/22/3

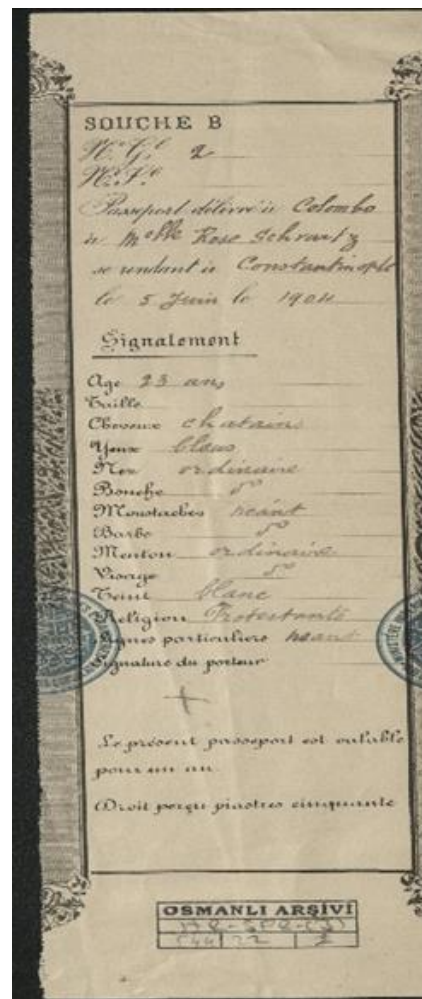


Figure 2 The passport mentioning the religion Protestant. BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/22/2

In another instance on the 4th of August 1904, the Consul Macan Markar responded to the Ambassador regarding following instructions given to him on dispatching passports issued to the Ottoman subjects. Along with this letter he attached passports of passengers from Cape Town bound to Ottoman territories Syria, Constantinople, Beirut and for pilgrimage to Mecca.⁸⁹

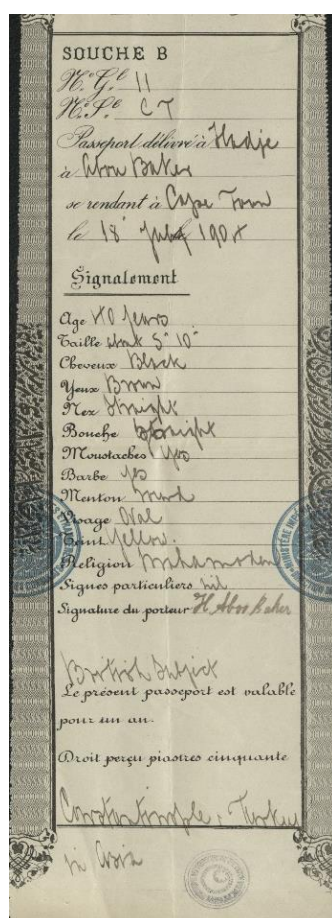


Figure 4 Passport of a Passenger named Hadjie Abu Bakr bound to Constantinople. BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/26/3

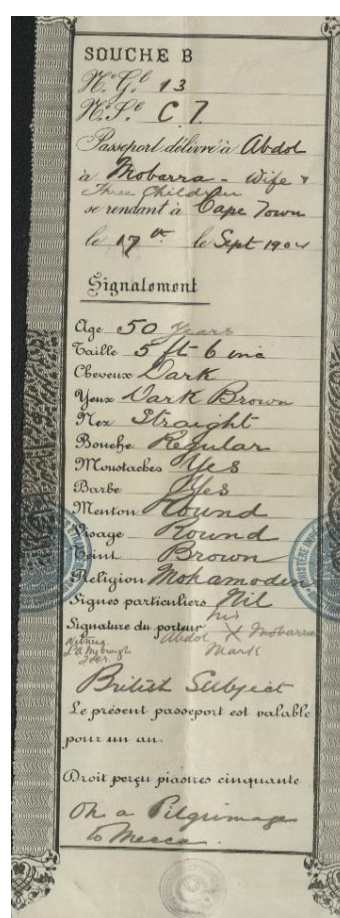


Figure 5 Passport of a Passenger named Abdul Mobarra, his wife and three children bound to Mecca for pilgrimage. BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/26/5

⁸⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/26/1-9

The Consul also received new and updated circulars regarding managing consular matters as well as other important decisions made by the government, unfortunately detailed copies of circulars sent to the Ottoman consul in Ceylon has not survived. However, certain letters do reveal details of regulations made by the state in relation to issuing passport and visas. One such circular was received by the Colombo consulate on the 6th of May 1904 instructing to not to issue passports or visas for Armenians arriving from America and Russia.⁹⁰ Subsequently, on the 21st of December 1904, the Consul confirms of receiving the circular letter of the 21st of the same month instructing not to issue passports to Armenians.⁹¹ In another letter on the 1st of February 1905, Macan Markar confirms receiving the circular regarding issuing passports to Ottoman subjects in relation to ships,⁹² most probably he indicates Ottoman subjects working on ships.

Concurrently, he also received a circular regarding ships carrying explosive materials planning to cross the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. Further on the 14th of September 1905, he confirms that he would strictly refuse visa to the former Cartel Meanisky in the service of the Imperial embassy in Vienna.⁹³ Along with it he informs he would be following the instructions given to him on the circular of 11th august and will be vigilant in discovering the individual named “Ovaghim” and if he disembarks in the Colombo port he will notify His Excellency without delaying.⁹⁴ The above mentioned individual and the event of carrying explosives on a vessel may possibly be connected to the smuggling of illegal weapons, explosives into the Ottoman lands through ships, which the Sublime Porte tried to prevent with much effort.⁹⁵ Besides in another instance a letter from the 13th of July 1906 confirms of not issuing passport, visa to individuals with uncertain identity.⁹⁶ In another letter dated on the 11th of June 1908 the Colombo consul confirms that no passports or visas were issued from his

⁹⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/21/1/1

⁹¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/47/1/1

⁹² BOA, HR.SFR.3.551/47/1

⁹³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.553/91/1/1

⁹⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.553/91/2/1

⁹⁵ Süleyman Uygün, “Bir Fransız Buharlı Deniz Nakliyat Kumpanyası Etrafında Osmanlı-Fransız-Ermeni İlişkiler”, *Akademik Bakış*, cilt 8, sayı 16, (Yaz,2015), pp.130-131. The article mentions of a Armenian known as Ovaghim who was an employee of a Russian transport company and was involved in arms dealing and distributing sedition papers, he was arrested by the police in the year 1896

⁹⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.560/53/1

chancellery for individuals who are prohibited to enter the Ottoman domain.⁹⁷ It is evident the consuls did have a paramount responsibility since they issued passports and visas and an error in it had chances of breaching the security of the state and a possibility of illegal migration.

Numerous letters have been exchanged between the Foreign ministry and the Ceylon consul in regard to receiving and requesting stamps that were used to vise passports and other official documents. From a letter dated on the 22nd of May 1882, Colombo consul Hussein Lebbe Marikar acknowledges receiving a set of stamps with the following denominations “50 stamps of 50 piastres each, 50 of 20 piastres each, 50 of ten, 50 of five, 50 of 20 paras and 50 blank stamps”.⁹⁸ Another letter dated on 6th January 1893 along with the draft of the transmission of 26.0.11 sterling revenues to the Foreign ministry. The Colombo consul Abdul Majid requests for a new set of stamps since the season for Jeddah pilgrimage is approaching and the consulate has not received any new stamps as of 14th April 1888.⁹⁹ On the 4th of October 1904, Macan Markar requests for a new sets of chancellery stamps with the following denominations “ 10 stamps of 50 piasters each, 20 stamps of 20 piastres each, 10 stamps of 10 piastres each, 20 stamps of 5 piastres each.”¹⁰⁰ Following this request of new set of stamps on the 4th October 1904, the Consul informs that he has a shortage of 20 piastres stamps. Thus, he mentions the following annotation on the passports issued by the government of Ceylon to the 9 passengers embarked on a pilgrimage to Mecca. “Received the value of 20 piastres for the stamp in accordance with the tariff no order 2.” Further he inquires the Ambassador whether he approves of the way he has managed this situation and if a similar situation occurs in the future what does he advises him to do. The above accounts suggest several passengers set sail to Ottoman lands from Ceylon for assorted reasons including for Hajj pilgrimage.

⁹⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.589/47/8

⁹⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.292/49/1

⁹⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.413/2/1

¹⁰⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/41/2/1

Apart from matters related to issuing passport and visa, the Consuls also regularly updated the Foreign Ministry regarding their proceeds and expenses made in running the consulate, among the numerous letters found in the archives the accounts of the consulate are one of them. However, not many of the copies of the actual accounts have survived, only the briefing is available in the letters dispatched. Fortunately, a decipherable clear copy of the account of Galle consulate pertaining to the year 1883 is available. The proceeds received by issuing bills of health to vessels bound to Ottoman domains in the year 1882- 1883, fee from issuing passport for pilgrimage and the expenses incurred by the Galle consulate is documented in it. Total of 9 vessels embarked from the port of Galle and they were predominantly headed to Jeddah, each ship was charged ¹⁰¹Rs 10.50 for a bill of health, a total of Rs.9.75 was obtained from issuing passports to pilgrims. The expenses incurred by the consulate for the year 1882 as follow printed passport book cost Rs. 12.50, consulate bill of health book cost Rs. 12.50, printed memorandum cost Rs.1.75, sign board (tughra) made of copper with denomination of post engraved affixed in the front of the office cost Rs. 19.55, flag staff put up in the office for the purpose of hoisting the national flag cost Rs. 73.50, and two national flag cost Rs. 28.25. accordingly, the total income earned for the year 1882 up to 18th June 1883 is Rs. 104.25 and the total expenditure for the month April and May in the year 1882 is Rs. 148.05. Further an account statement belonging to the Colombo consulate for the year 1901 to June 1903 is available.

No.	Date	Name of Vessel	Rank	Name of Commander	When issued	Amount	Date	Description of Expense	Amount
1	May 16/82	Columba	1st Lt	Captain Balderson	18/82	10 50	Apr 22	Cost of a printed passport	
2	Jun 16/82	Burdaun	2nd Lt	" R. J. Turner	"	10 50	"	Cost	12 50
3	" 18/82	Columba	1st Lt	" Turner	"	10 50	"	Cost of the Current C. List	
4	Apr 15/82	Portul	3rd Lt	" Chack	"	10 50	"	Cost of Health Book	12 50
5	" 16/82	Portul	1st Lt	" H. H. H. H.	Marshall	10 50	May 15	Cost of Printed Memorandum	1 75
6	" 17/82	Portul	1st Lt	" Turner	Marshall	10 50	"	Cost of "Tughra" on Sign	
7	May 16/82	Portul	1st Lt	" H. H. H. H.	Marshall	10 50	"	Cost on which the	
8	Apr 16/82	Portul	1st Lt	" Turner	Marshall	10 50	"	Memorandum of the Post in	
9	Apr 16/82	Portul	1st Lt	" Turner	Marshall	10 50	"	expended affixed on the	
10	Apr 16/82	Portul	1st Lt	" Turner	Marshall	10 50	"	front of the office made	
11	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	of copper	19 55
12	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	The Cost of the flag staff	
13	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	put up in the office for the	
14	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	purpose of hoisting the	
15	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	national flag	73 50
16	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Cost of the national flag	28 25
17	"	"	"	"	"	"	"		
18	"	"	"	"	"	"	"		
19	"	"	"	"	"	"	"		
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Figure 6 Accounts of Galle consulate for the year 1882-1883. BOA, HR.SFR.3.292/75/2/2

¹⁰¹ Rupees monetary unit used in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and other South Asian countries like India, Pakistan

The Imperial Ottoman Government. Constantinople. In account with the Ottoman Consul Colombo

1901	To Paid Clerk's Salary for 8 months viz from 1 st May to 31 st December at Rs 25/- per annum Rs 164 0 11/2	10 13 4	1901	By value of stamps used as per statement for 1899, 1900, & 1901 (to end of May) remitted in 31 st May 1901 - 250 Piasches at 2 1/2	2 8 9
1902	" Clerk's Salary for 1 year Rs 240/- at exchange 1/4	16 0 0	1901	Dec 31 - value of stamps used from 1 st June to 31 st Dec as per statement forwarded	
1903	" Clerk's Salary for 6 months viz from 1 st January to 30 th June Rs 120/- at exchange 1/4	8 0 0	1902	31 st Dec 31 - 350 Piasches at 2 1/2	3 5 7
	" Interest of 5% on Rs 1897 as per Balance Sheet rendered in 31 st Dec 1899 - 25 Piasches		1902	31 st Dec 31 - value of stamps used from 1 st Jan to 31 st Dec as per statement forwarded	12 11 3
	" Amount of interest 5% on Rs 1897 - 18 Piasches at 2 1/2 per Piasche	1 5 6	1903	31 st Dec 31 - value of stamps used from 1 st Jan to 30 th June 1903 as per statement herewith 270 Piasches at 2 1/2 per Piasche	2 10 7
	" Balance due as per Balance Sheet dated 31 st March 1899 - 690 Piasches at 2 1/2 per Piasche	6 9 4		" Balance	2 11 0
		42 8 2			42 8 2
	" Balance	24 16 0			

6 x 66
Colombo 28th Sep. 1903
M. H. H. H.

OSMANLIAN
H. S. P. A. (3)
528 60 2

Figure 7 The accounts of the Colombo consulate year 1901-1903. BOA, HR.SFR.3.528/60/2

Along with sending the accounts to the Foreign ministry and to the London ambassador who was responsible of the honorary consulates in Ceylon, the Consuls also remitted the proceedings of the consulates to the Ottoman banks regularly.¹⁰² In the year 1886, Hussein Marikar effendi requests to obtain a payment for chancery expenses, thus Rustem Pasha informs such a claim can be accepted by the Sublime Porte according to the circular issued on the 14th of May 1884. However, he would communicate this matter to the ministry and let Hussein effendi know its decision when it arrives.¹⁰³ On the 16th November 1886, the Sublime Porte informs Rustem Pasha, that the ministry approves the response given by him to Hussein effendi and the provisions stated in the circular of 14th May will not be applied to Hussein effendi until the date it was communicated to him.¹⁰⁴ Subsequently, Rustem Pasha forwards the above response to the Consul on the 24th November 1886, states the 14th May 1884 circular will be applied to his consulate only after the date it was communicated to him that is 22nd March 1886. Further, he states to prepare the future accounts in accordance with the above circular which defines what proportion of the consulate fees are to be

¹⁰² BOA, HR.SFR.3.544/27/1

¹⁰³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.324/80/1

¹⁰⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.325/38/1

kept by the Consul and what part is to be remitted to the Imperial treasury.¹⁰⁵ Hence the Honorary consuls were able to retain a part of the profit earned by the chancery service to cover their consulate expenditures. As stated above the Consuls were obliged to remit the cash to the Ottoman bank, on a letter dated 25th July 1905 the Colombo consul notifies that he has received the instructions and at the end of the month he will deposit the revenue of the consulate to the Ottoman bank.¹⁰⁶ Subsequently on the 24th August 1905, he deposits a sum of 250 piastres proceedings belonging to the 31st of December 1904. However, on the 21st of October 1905, the S. Mousourous Pasha the London ambassador informs remittance of such nature must be deposited directly to the Bank (illegible term) consulate.¹⁰⁷

The consulate also periodically received circulars regarding the consulate revenues and transmitting it to the Imperial bank.¹⁰⁸ Besides receiving circulars the consul Abdul Majid also requested to furnish him with new rules and regulations, Turkish government gazettes which might be helpful in consulate work. He requested the Ambassador to direct the letters sent to him in English instead of French since translating the correspondence in French is expensive and he has to pay a high salary his clerk.¹⁰⁹ Further dispatches from Colombo reveals the annual expenditure of the consulate in the year 1909, according to the letter on the 23rd September 1909 the annual expenditure of the consulate consists of postage stamps and stationery which was a total of 150 piasters per year.¹¹⁰ In a circular sent by the Sublime Porte on the 1st of August 1911, the honorary consulates under the British government were informed to send their half year accounts to the Foreign ministry on the 1/14th March and 1/14th September of each year, even in a state of complete absence of operations they aren't exempted from transmitting the accounts. In such instance they must enter the word "null" in the revenue column. It is to be noted that this particular circular was only sent to the consulate at Point de Galle addressed to the Consul Haji Ali Didi effendi.¹¹¹ Though the above circular didn't have the Colombo consulate in the list on

¹⁰⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.325/48/1/1-2

¹⁰⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.553/79/1

¹⁰⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.551/25/1-2

¹⁰⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.553/80/1

¹⁰⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.508/28/1

¹¹⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.599/30/1

¹¹¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.632/20/34, 3.632/20/35 Haji Ibrahim Didi

the 23rd October 1913, the Colombo consul dispatched the half year accounts of his consulate as follow 1st of March 1912 to 30th June 1913, 1150 piastres equals £11.10 and from 1st July 1913 to 30th September 1913, 540 piastres equals 5.9.1 £.¹¹² Consequently on the 3rd November 1913, Tevfik Pasha confirms of receiving the remittance of £11.10 ¹¹³ and on the 16th January 1914 he confirms the remittance of £5.9.1 has been received.¹¹⁴ The last available receipt of remittance sent from the Foreign ministry to Colombo is on the 27th February 1914, for the value of 294 piastres and 18 paras.¹¹⁵ Thus, although the honorary consulates of Colombo and Galle were situated further from the Ottoman lands, the Foreign ministry and the London embassy at all times were well informed of the affairs that took place in these two constituencies and the Consuls were obliged to notify the higher authorities in all matters including finance. Apart from these the consulate also followed the national holidays of the Ottoman Empire and 23rd July the day the second constitutional monarchy was declared was also considered as a holiday together with the Bayram festivals.¹¹⁶

2.3.1 Fraudulent cases overseen by the Consulate

The consulate in Ceylon also cooperated with consulates in neighboring countries in events related to the Ottoman state and subjects. A series of letters from the 15th of October to 16th December 1903 has been exchanged between the Ottoman consulate general Bombay, Madras consulate, British consulate Pondicherry and Colombo consulate regarding an imposter traveling around India and then to Ceylon in collecting money. A fraudulent named Abdullah Yusuf identifying himself as a Prince of Imperial Ottoman and Dr. Colonel Abdullah Yusuf was roaming in India and collecting money and he was forced by the authorities to leave India. The Consular general of Bombay sends a letter dated December 1903 (date not mentioned), enclosed with the suspects photograph to the Colombo consul as the fraud might have arrived in Colombo thus to track his actions, movements and inform the Foreign ministry immediately.¹¹⁷ On the 8th of December 1903 the Colombo consul replies to the

¹¹² BOA, HR.SFR.3.696/53/4

¹¹³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.696/64/1

¹¹⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.703/8/1

¹¹⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.703/31/1

¹¹⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.604/47/1

¹¹⁷ BOA, HR.TH.295/52/3

Consulate general in Bombay the whereabouts and activities of this individuals he says:

The identical man is at present in Kandy.... for the last 3 or 4 months knocking about in Colombo like in India collecting money from almost all the “Mohamedians” and I think except Queen’s house he has visited all Govt offices etc. under different pretenses. And he dresses almost daily in assorted styles with medals etc. when he newly visited me, I also helped him a great deal... you will see that this time he is applying to me for a certificate of nationality from evidently for some trickish purpose, so I did not answer his letters.¹¹⁸

The deceit while staying in Kandy had sent a letter dated 3rd December 1903 threatening the Colombo consul demanding for certificate of nationality if not, he will fall into the hands of the police, further adds if the Consul did not send a certificate, he will go to the police thus making it an unpleasant situation to the consulate affairs.¹¹⁹ Subsequently, Consulate general in Bombay replies to the Colombo consul’s letter of 8th December 1903 and instructs him not to deliver any document or subsidiary to the vagrant, to deny formally all his titles and warn everyone about him thus there will not be any victims. Meanwhile he will inform the Foreign ministry in Constantinople about the situation.¹²⁰ On the 16th of December 1903 the Colombo consul writes to Bombay consulate general to inform that Abdullah Yusuf visited him and informed about his departure to Singapore on the 16th of December and he adds that a freemason gentleman has bought his tickets on one of the Japanese boats.¹²¹ Hence, This lengthy conversation ends with this letter without giving further details about the action or decisions made against this fraud.

¹¹⁸ BOA, HR.TH.295/52/9/2

¹¹⁹ BOA, HR.TH.295/52/4

¹²⁰ BOA, HR.TH.295/52/10/1

¹²¹ BOA, HR.TH.295/52/13

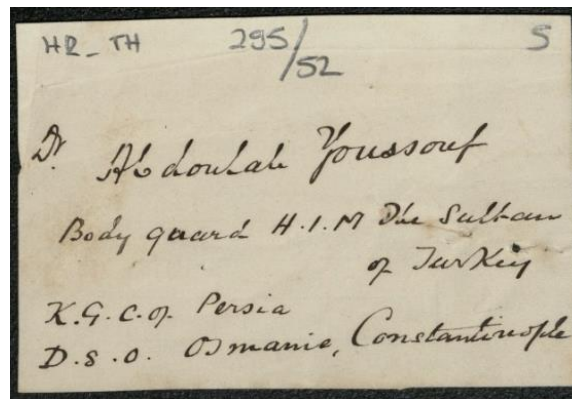


Figure 8 The visiting card of the imposter. Sent to the Colombo consulate along with his letter. BOA, HR.TH.295/52/5



Figure 9 The photograph of the imposter dressed in an Ottoman official uniform. BOA, HR.TH.295/52/8

On another instance according to some lengthy correspondences in the year 1904 February between the Bombay consulate general, the Ottoman ambassador to London, the Foreign ministry, and the Colombo consul Abdul Majid. It is understood that the Colombo consul had to deal with fraudulent cases where an Individual named Hussain Tahsin claimed to collect funds to the Hejaz railway project and visited India and then to Ceylon. While in Ceylon he visited mosques and distributed Qurans saying it was a gift from the Sultan, he also asked for funds mentioning his funds have exhausted and promised to repay or give it to a charitable institution in Constantinople. This Individual has visited the consulate to get his passport vised when his request was declined, he threatens to harm the Colombo consul and also used foul language towards him. After a complaint made by the consul to the Inspector general of police then to the Police magistrate in person, the accused was summoned, and he apologized for his behaviour and the magistrate accepted it. The Colombo consul mentions the above particulars and encloses some paper cuttings regarding this incident in his letter date on the 9th of February 1904.¹²²

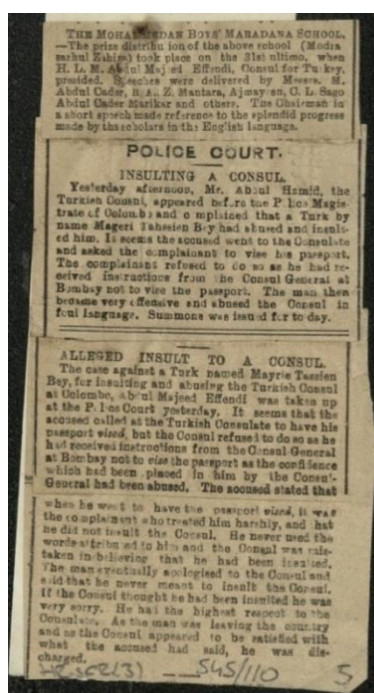


Figure 10 The paper cutting of the alleged attack that took place in the Colombo consulate. BOA, HR.SFR.3.545/110/5

¹²² BOA, HR.SFR.3.545/110/4

Referring to both the incidents in the year 1903 and 1904 it is evident that from time to time the consulates had to deal with imposters who came from Ottoman domains stating that they were Prince or officials appointed to collect funds in the name of the Empire. It is apparent that the consulates in Ceylon as well as in India has coordinated in such occasions, always tried to steer off such individuals and to take necessary actions locally. Further to inform the authorities in the Foreign ministry. Further it is understood it is due to the popularity of the Sultan and his Empire such imposters portray themselves as significant individuals from the Constantinople and has the means to reach the Sublime Porte. This story is more alluring to the public who support and empathise the Ottomans thus such narratives are handily used to trick them. Moreover, such individuals are a threat to the security as well a menace to the reputation of the Empire. Hence, the Consul didn't only deal with chancellery and diplomatic matters but also fraudulent cases.

2.3.2 Trade and miscellaneous activities overseen by the Consulate

The consulate also brought in opportunities to generate revenue to the Ottoman state through trade and commerce. Letter dated on the 30th of June 1904 mentions of a trading house in Colombo is going to make a shipment to the Turkish port in Trabzon asked for the Consul a document relating to this cargo. The Consul informs such a form isn't available, but he is willing to affix his visa on the manifest of goods loaded. Thus, inquires the Ambassador if the visa is sufficient along with accordance of 10 tariff.¹²³ Following it on the 29th august 1904, the Ambassador responded to issue a certificate of origin to the exporters of the product, in accordance with article 10 of consular instructions and a visa is sufficient.¹²⁴ In another letter dated on the 24th may 1905, Consul Macan Markar informs the Ambassador that he is unable to fulfil his request as Cotton isn't cultivated in Ceylon.¹²⁵ Considering the response given above it is possible the Ambassador would have queried the Colombo consul on Cotton trade. Since the Ottoman Empire was one of the main raw cotton suppliers to the European nations before the Industrial revolution and it was a significant commercial commodity

¹²³ BOA, HR.SFR.3. 571/31/5/1-2

¹²⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.548/8/1/1

¹²⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.550/58/1/1

in the Ottoman economy throughout the centuries.¹²⁶ The Ottoman Empire also tried to build commercial relationship with the advantage of having Consuls in the Asian region in this case particularly with India and Ceylon. On the 14th of April 1892, a letter is sent to the Ottoman ministry of finance regarding exporting salt from the Salif and Foça fields to India and Ceylon. The Ottoman authorities viewed this as an encouraging opportunity since an export of large quantity of salt to India and neighbouring country sold at a high rate would result in a profitable income and would create more employment.¹²⁷ The Ceylon consul was also notified regarding trade agreements that took place between the Ottoman Empire and other states, in the year 1907 the consulate was informed regarding two commercial treaties the Ottoman Empire made with Serbia and Greece.¹²⁸

Meanwhile, the Consuls also dispatched books regarding Ceylon which they thought might be useful to Sublime Porte, since providing intelligence information about their constituency was also one of the critical duties they were requested to perform. On the 29th of August 1883, the Galle consul Ibrahim Didi posted a book named “The Ceylon Directory” to the Foreign ministry. He mentions the book has details about the plantation of coffee, tea, cinchona, cocoa, and other production of the Island. Further he adds the book also gives accurate information regarding plantation, mercantile and government establishments and in addition provides information on various revenues, expenditures, taxation, export and import trade and shipping of the colony and also about the cultivation of Liberian coffee, cocoa and other new productions that are being tried.¹²⁹ Not only did they provide information related to trade and commerce but they were also asked to keep an eye on the local press and publication in order to report on false defamatory news published against the Ottoman Empire and the Sultan. As a result, on the 14th of January 1890, the Colombo consul dispatches an article that was published in the Ceylon Observer on the 11th of January 1890, tarnishing the image of the Ertuğrul frigate stating that it has been detained in

¹²⁶ Sevinç Mihci, Hakan Mihci, “Reflections on the Ottoman raw cotton Production and export during the 1850-1913 period”, *H.Ü. İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, (Cilt 20, Sayı 2, 2002, 43-71), pp.46,65

¹²⁷ BOA, BEO 209/15657

¹²⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.580/6, 3.575/27

¹²⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.292/75/1-2

Singapore for not being able to pay the port tax.¹³⁰ However, Rustem Pasha informs the Consul that the above claim is false on the 26th of February 1890.¹³¹ Furthermore one of the primary responsibility of the Consul was to oversee the affairs of the Ottoman subjects living and travelling to Ceylon. In response to a circular sent by the ministry related to the deceased Ottoman subjects on 1st of February 1905, Macan Markar informs the ministry that there aren't any deceased Ottoman subjects in Ceylon for the past 10 years and since he took charge of the office.¹³² In another occasion the ministry dispatches a circular on the Ottoman subjects inheritance that should be followed by the Consul.¹³³

In addition to briefing the Sublime Porte on matters directly related to Ottoman Empire the Consul also reported the conditions of the Muslims living in Ceylon and issues they face. In the latter of year 1905, the Ceylon Muslims gathered in solidarity to seek justice for their grievance which was famously epithet as the "Fez Question." The issue at hand was the Supreme court of Ceylon prohibited the first "Mohamedan" advocate in Ceylon to cover his head with the traditional headgear "Fez" in the said court and ordered in the contrary to his customs to follow the "Non Mohamedan" advocates and to uncover his head at court. Nevertheless, the practice of covering the head with Fez is a tradition that is allowed in India and other parts of the His Majesty's dominion and in Ceylon the right of covering the head of the "Mohamedan" advocate hasn't been questioned previously before the said order was made. Thus, the Ceylon Muslims feared that this new order would in future deprive them from their right to wear their national headgear in the public places as well in other functions. In order to protest this new order, the Muslims formed a Fez committee on the 27th of October 1905 in which the Turkish consul Macan Markar was a member. Muslims from around the island displayed their solidarity to the cause in addition to Muslim and non-Muslim advocates from the neighbouring India too joined the "Ceylon Mohamedans" in their cause to uphold their rights. The Ceylon Muslims made a petition against this regulation and consequently A Mass meeting was held in Colombo on the 31st of December 1905, to discuss this issue. The minutes of this meeting was published on a

¹³⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/2/1, HR.TH.96/25

¹³¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/35/1/1

¹³² BOA, HR.SFR.3.554/5/1, 3.553/54/1

¹³³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.554/18/1

booklet of which a copy was sent to the Sublime Porte.¹³⁴ This episode that took place in Ceylon is not merely a Muslim defending his right, but it is also a Pan Islamic solidarity against the colonial powers. In fact, it was the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire who they recognised as the Caliph patronised wearing the Fez and making it a hallmark of Muslim identity. As result even though the fez wasn't an indigenous headgear of the Ceylon Muslims it gave a sense of identity to the Muslims of Ceylon and a link with their brethren around the other parts of the world. Following the historic gathering at the Maradana mosque in Colombo on the 31st of December 1905. Afterwards the matter was taken up to the King Edward VII and the ruling of prohibiting wearing a fez was repealed.¹³⁵ Thus, the event didn't only end with the success of the Ceylon Muslims, but it also strengthened their allegiance with the Sultan and their Pan Islamic sentiments were heightened.

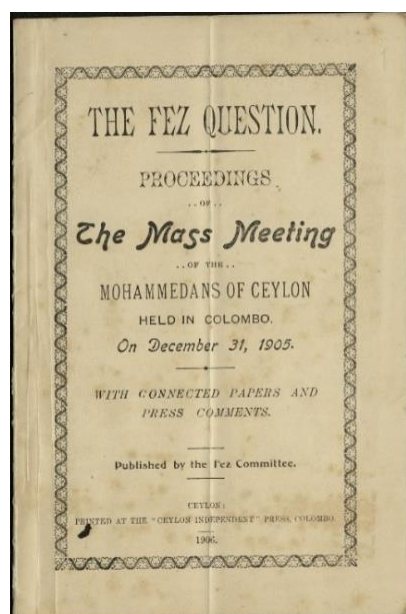


Figure 11 The cover of the booklet published the Fez committee. BOA, Y.A.HUS. 501/196/4/1

¹³⁴ BOA, Y.A.HUS. 501/196/4/1-26

¹³⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS. 499/69/3/1, Tanweer Fazal, *Minority Nationalisms in South Asia*, (Routledge, Oct 18, 2013), p.115

Further the Muslims in Ceylon directly conveyed to the Sublime Porte regarding their difficulties. On the 14th of June 1906, the Sublime Porte writes to the Colombo consul Macan Markar regarding a certain individual named Burhanuddin of Colombo, who has requested in a letter addressed to His Excellence Mouhtar Pasha, a sum of money to come to Constantinople to expose the situation of the Muslims of the Island. Thus, the Grand Vizier has requested to inquire on this matter and enlighten both on the personality of this applicant and on the nature of the complaints that he has formulated against the local authorities in such vague terms.¹³⁶ In response to it on the 26th of July 1906, Macan Markar effendi informs the Sublime Porte about the details he has collected concerning the person in question. He states the individual is a common man and that he has received an anonymous letter regarding him after the inquiries he made. It appears the person in question on another occasion has sent a letter to the Consul general in Bombay under another name, alleging that Muslims weren't receiving fair treatment and thus he was ruined. However, when asked for a further interview on the complaints the individual refused it and requested for a loan of 1000. Subsequently, Macan Markar informs His Excellency that there is no reason to misjudge the local authorities who give the same care for British subjects, or not and to Muslims, Christians.¹³⁷

Excluding the above duties and responsibilities the Consul also made courtesy calls to the important personals arriving from the Ottoman domains and also entertained such personals in their residences. In a letter dated 21st May 1901, Colombo consul Abdul Majid informs that he was able to meet and pay his respect to Hussain Enver Pasha who was bound to China on a mission, in the German mail steamer "Sachhsen" as it was in the harbour due to a delay. He also mentions of attaching a newspaper article from the "Times of Ceylon" with regard to the Turkish mission to China.¹³⁸ Enver Pasha and his delegate arrived in Colombo on the 4th of May 1901, where they met a group of local Muslims and visited mosques. This delegate to China was suggested by the German Kaiser Wilhelm II to advise the Chinese Muslims not to join in the Boxer Uprising (1898-1901) an uprising against foreign invasion in

¹³⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.566/67/1/1-2

¹³⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.566/67/2/1-2

¹³⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.501/40/6/1-2

China, however when the Turks reached China at the end of May 1901 the uprising was already suppressed.¹³⁹ Besides this event the Colombo consul also hosted the Turkish consul general of Singapore Ahmet Attaullah effendi on his way to his destination in October 1901.¹⁴⁰ Further details on his visit will be stated in the following chapters of the thesis.



Figure 13 Samples of the Stamps used in the Colombo consulate in the year. BOA, HR.SFR.3.480/58/3

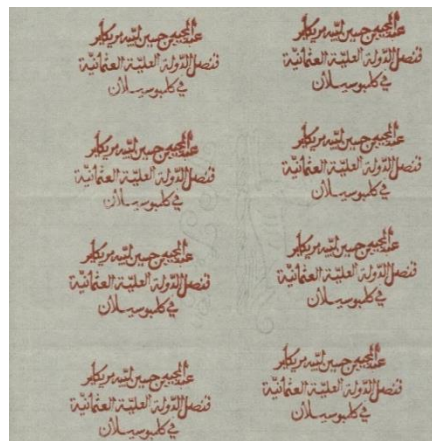


Figure 12 Samples of the Stamps used in the Colombo consulate in the year 1899. BOA, HR.SFR.3.480/58/2

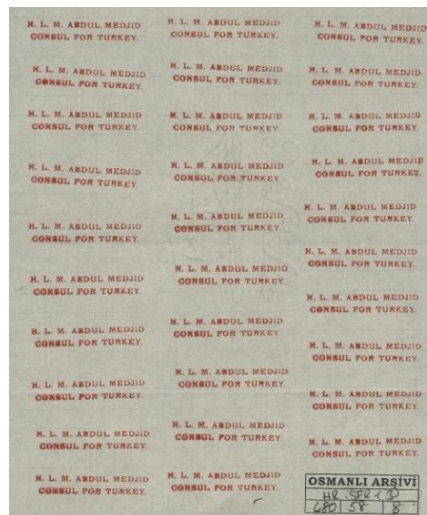


Figure 14 Samples of the Stamps used in the Colombo consulate in the year 1899. BOA, HR.SFR.3.480/58/8

¹³⁹ Hee Soo Lee, "The 'Boxer Uprising' In China and The Pan-Islamic Policy of The Ottoman Empire From A European Perspective", *Acta Via Serica*, Vol. 3, No. 1, (June 2018), pp.105-107

¹⁴⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.508/69/1

2.4 The Ottoman Consul's of Colombo and Galle

The talks for the establishment of the consulates in the isle of Ceylon began in the end of the year 1863, hence the first Consul for Colombo and Galle were appointed in the year 1864. Yet due to the demise of Sultan Bawa ¹⁴¹who was nominated to be the Consul of Galle, the Galle consulate wasn't established in the year 1864.¹⁴² The very first Honorary Consul of Ottoman Empire in Ceylon was Avuducandu Marikar Hussein Lebbe¹⁴³ who hailed from Colombo and was one of the active leaders of the Muslim community. He has rendered his service to draft the "Muhammadan code of 1806" and actively took part in the management of the Colombo Grand Mosque at New Moor Street and in the establishment of a Muslim burial grounds in Maligawatte, Colombo.¹⁴⁴ Thus, its apparent Hussein Lebbe Marikar was a prominent and influential gentleman among the Moor community in Ceylon and he was appointed as the Consul of Colombo in 1864 officially in 1865 after receiving the *Ferman*¹⁴⁵. He served as the Consul for 25 years since his appointment on the 7th of February 1865 until his demise in 1890 and later his son succeeded to the position of Consul.

An unusual event took place in the year 1879, Hussein L. M sent a letter to Mousourous Pasha the London ambassador of the Ottoman Empire on the 12th of September 1879 stating that he has served in the position of consul for 14 years and seeks for his retirement due to old age. Thus, request to appoint his son Abdul Cando Marikar Othman Hadjie who is a 31-year-old tradesman in Colombo.¹⁴⁶ His request was accepted by the Sublime Porte on 30th December 1879¹⁴⁷ and a letter written on the 31st of January 1880 informing the appointment of Abdul Cando Marikar Othman Hadjie and requesting to grant him the exequatur of His Majesty with the enclosed

¹⁴¹ Sultan Bawa hails from Galle and his family claims its ancestry from caliph Abu Bakr, it is assumed that they arrived in Ceylon through Yemen. Sri Lanka Moor Family Genealogy, "Sultan Bawa - Family #99", <http://www.worldgenweb.org/lkawgw/gen099.html>

¹⁴² BOA, HR.SFR.3.85/3/6

¹⁴³ Also known as Hassen/ Hussein Lebbe Marikar

¹⁴⁴ Sri Lanka Muslim Family Genealogy, "Avuducandu Marikar - Family #106", <http://www.worldgenweb.org/lkawgw/gen106.html>

¹⁴⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.85/3/11. On the 7th of February 1865, a letter along with the ferman and her majesty's exequatur is sent to Hussein Lebbe Marikar

¹⁴⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.271/8/1/1, 271/11/1-2

¹⁴⁷ BOA, İ.HR.281/17326/2/1

translation of his *ferman* was dispatched by the London embassy to the foreign secretary Marquess of Salisbury.¹⁴⁸

A puzzling petition was written by few merchants from Colombo on the 12th April 1880, requesting not to replace Hussein Lebbe Marikar stating that he has acted in the best interest of the Muslim community for the last 15 years and replacing him will not do good to the Empire, thus request to let him continue in his office.¹⁴⁹ The letter was enclosed with Hussein Lebbe Marikar requesting the same that is to continue in office.¹⁵⁰ As a response to the above letter Mousourous Pasha inquires about the petition and ask for an explanation from Hussein L.M.¹⁵¹ Meanwhile another letter on the 23rd June 1880 from the British foreign office inquires whether the appointment Abdul Cando Marikar Othman Hadjie has been revoked since Hussein Lebbe Marikar informs “that he has never applied to resign or retire..” and no information has been provided by the Turkish embassy on this regard.¹⁵² On the 18th September 1880 Hussein Lebbe informs that he didn’t request to appoint his Son as the Consul and the signature on the letter didn’t belong to him and requests to continue in office.¹⁵³

Thus, the Sublime Porte responded on the 4th December 1881 that Hussein Lebbe Marikar has been reinstated in office.¹⁵⁴ On the 28th December 1881 the London ambassador informs the foreign office regarding this decision and attaches Hussein Lebbe Marikar’s new *ferman* to reinstate him and requests to return Abdul Cando Marikar’s *ferman*.¹⁵⁵ There is no further information to who actually wrote the letter in the name of Hussein Lebbe Marikar requesting to appoint his son Abdul Cando Marikar Othman as the Consul on the 12th of September 1879. However, one could presume it was Hussein Lebbe himself who wrote it and later on changed his mind hence sought to continue in office or it was his Son who conspired against him. In addition, the article written by Ekrem Saltık under the title “Osmanlı Devleti’nin Seylan Adası ile İlişkilerine Methal” states Abdul Cando Marikar Othman Hadjie

¹⁴⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3. 276/69/2/1-1, 276/69/3/1

¹⁴⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3. 276/76/1/1-2

¹⁵⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/37/1/1

¹⁵¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.276/76/2/1-2

¹⁵² BOA, HR.SFR.3. 276/79/1-2

¹⁵³ BOA, İ.HR.285/17745/2/1

¹⁵⁴ BOA, İ.HR.285/17745/3/1

¹⁵⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.280/44/3/1-2 Abdul Cando Marikar Othman

replaced his father's position as the Honorary consul in Colombo.¹⁵⁶ However, further research into the subject proves that this is not accurate.

Foreign Office, February 6, 1865.
**The Queen has been pleased to approve of
 Mr. Henry Calice as Consul at Liverpool for His
 Majesty the Emperor of Austria.**
**The Queen has also been pleased to approve of
 M. Hussein Lebbé Marcair as Consul at Colombo
 for His Imperial Majesty the Sultan.**

Figure 15 The appointment of Hussein Lebbe Marikar published in the *London Gazette* February 7th, 1865. p.590
<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/>

The second appointment of a Consul in Ceylon took place in the year 1881, to the port city of Galle one of the prominent ports in Ceylon. After the demise of Sultan Bawa who was nominated to the Consul post in Galle in the year 1864, his son Ahamadu Lebbe Marikar Sultan Bawa Hadjie Abdullah requests in the year 1873 to be appointed as the Galle consul however, this request was not fulfilled.¹⁵⁷ It was after almost 17 years from the first nomination, on the 26th of May 1881, Lord Stanley of Alderley recommends the appointment of Hadjie Ibrahim Didi bin Hadjie Ali Didi¹⁵⁸ as the honorary consul of the Ottoman Empire to the port city of Galle. Ibrahim Didi was a wealthy merchant hailing from Maldives Sultan's family¹⁵⁹, and was residing in Galle, Ceylon.¹⁶⁰ The London embassy agrees with the nomination of Ibrahim Didi and states the appointment is beneficial to the Muslim subjects in the city and he could

¹⁵⁶ Ekrem Saltık, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Seylan Adası ile İlişkilerine Methal," *Türkiyat Mecmuası - Journal of Turkology*. Advance online publication. 2020, p. 10

¹⁵⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.219/78/1

¹⁵⁸ BOA, İ.HR.285/17745/2/1 In this particular document and in his ferman his name is referred as Hadjie Ali Didi however, BOA, HR.SFR.3. 283/23/2/2-1 through another letter on the 17th of January 1882 it is understood his name is as mentioned above Ibrahim Didi bin hadjie Ali didi.

¹⁵⁹ Ibrahim Didi's Grandfather Ahmad Didi is the brother of Maldives Sultan Muhammad Muinuddind January 1835. He was an influential political figure and also an advisor (prime minister) to the Sultan Muhammad Imaduddin, who was his nephew. In 1882 Ibrahim Didi was also honoured with the post of Justice of Peace. Further Ibrahim Didi also became one of the trusted advisors of the Sultan. Harry Charles Purvis Bell, *The Maldive Islands: An Account of the Physical Features, Climate, History, Inhabitants, Productions, and Trade*, (Ceylon: F. Luker, acting government printer, Jan1882), pp.36,37,82

¹⁶⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.283/23/2/1-2

attend to their needs and ease their health-related issues.¹⁶¹ Thus, Ibrahim Didi was officially appointed as the Consul to Galle on the 20th of July 1881.¹⁶² However, he received his exequatur from the British government on the 18th April 1882.¹⁶³ It is understood due to a confusion in Ibrahim Didi's name there was quite a long delay in granting him, Her Majesty's exequatur.¹⁶⁴

On his article related to Ottoman relations with Ceylon Ekrem Saltık incorrectly states Hadji Ali Didi father of Hadji Ibrahim Didi was appointed as the Honorary consul in Galle in 1881 and he was replaced by his son Hadji Ibrahim Didi in 1882¹⁶⁵. As a consequence of an exhaustive examination of the Ottoman archive sources it is identified that Hadji Ali Didi was not appointed as an Ottoman honorary consul, and it was a confusion of names as stated in the above paragraph.

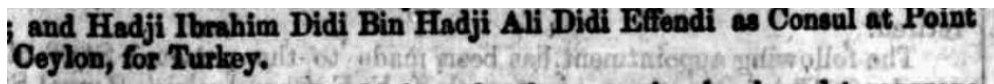


Figure 16 Queen's approval of Hadji Ibrahim Didi as consul. *The Colonies and India* 28th April 1882

On the 26th April 1884, a letter dispatched from the Foreign office informs that Ibrahim Didi the Turkish consul in Galle has departed to Maldives on a private affair and he has provisionally appointed his son Abdul Hamid Didi bin Ibrahim Didi as the acting Consul for Turkey in Galle.¹⁶⁶ Through letters signed by Abdul Hamid Didi as the acting Consul¹⁶⁷ and London ambassador's letter on the 1st November 1900 inquiring whether Ibrahim Didi has returned to his post¹⁶⁸, it seems that Ibrahim Didi had been away from Ceylon for an extremely long duration. Considering the letters available in the Ottoman archives he was away for a period of 16 years. Subsequently, on a letter dated on the 27th of November 1900 acting Consul of Galle Abdul Hamid

¹⁶¹ BOA, İ.HR.285/17745/2/1

¹⁶² BOA, İ.HR.284/17668/3/1

¹⁶³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.283/50/1

¹⁶⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.283/23, 283/19, 283/31

¹⁶⁵ Ekrem Saltık, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Seylan Adası ile İlişkilerine Methal," p. 11

¹⁶⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.302/38/1-2. In this letter his name is mentioned as Ahmad Didi bin Ibrahim Didi. BOA, HR.SFR.3.488/14/2/1. However, in letters written by him his name is signed as Abdul Hamid Didi bin Ibrahim Didi

¹⁶⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.488/14/2/1

¹⁶⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.488/14/1/1

Didi informs that his father hasn't yet arrived in Ceylon, and he is expecting his arrival within a month.¹⁶⁹ It appears Ibrahim Didi did return to Ceylon in the year 1900 perhaps as mentioned by his Son on the letter dated 27th of November 1900, he would have returned in December 1900. However, not too long on 4th May 1900, Ibrahim Didi once again appoints his son Abdul Hamid Didi as the acting Consul in Galle stating that he has to leave the station immediately due to some urgent private matter.¹⁷⁰ Along with the letter he encloses a circular issued by the British colonial secretary's office regarding the recognition of acting consular appointments.¹⁷¹ On the 18th of June 1901, Abdul Hamid Didi was recognised as the acting Consul at Galle.¹⁷² There is no information whether Ibrahim Didi returned back to his post or whether Abdul Hamid Didi was appointed as the Honorary consul in Galle replacing his Father. However, it is understood Ibrahim Didi was one of the trusted advisors¹⁷³ of the Maldives Sultan later became the Grand Vizier¹⁷⁴ thus, it might be the reason for his travels to Maldives frequently. Another interesting query that arises in this scenario is why didn't the Sublime Porte appoint another Honorary consul or the acting Consul Abdul Hamid Didi replacing Ibrahim Didi. Since he was away from the station for a longer period and an important criterion of being an Honorary consul is that the person appointed should be stationed in the place appointed.

The third appointment of a Consul to Ceylon took place in the year 1890, with the demise of the Colombo consul Hussein Lebbe Marikar his son Abdul Majid became the successor to his office. Prior to his demise Hussein L.M. had dictated to his secretary Mohamed Ishak to write a letter on the 10th of November 1890 to Rustem Pasha the ambassador to London. Informing that he is suffering from an illness that he fears he might not recover and requests the Ambassador to recommend his son Abdul Majid Marikar who is a trader of gems and other Ceylon produce to be his successor.¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.488/15/1/1

¹⁷⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.507/19/1/1

¹⁷¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.507/19/2/1

¹⁷² BOA, HR.SFR.3.507/33/1/1, 507/33/2/1

¹⁷³ Harry Charles Purvis Bell, *The Maldivé Islands: An Account of the Physical Features, Climate, History, Inhabitants, Productions, and Trade*, (Ceylon: F. Luker, acting government printer, Jan 1882) p.82

¹⁷⁴ François Pyrard, *The Voyage of François Pyrard de Laval: to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Molluccas and Brazil*, (Hakluyt Society, 1890) p.528

¹⁷⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.373/99/1/1-2

Nevertheless, it is to be noted Abdul Majid wasn't the Son who was previously appointed as the successor of Hussein Lebbe Marikar for a brief period following a letter claimed to be sent by him in the year 1879. On the 12th of November 1890, the secretary to the Colombo consulate Mohamed Ishak informs the demise of Consul Hussein. L.M. on the 11th of November 1890, he also gives information on the late consul's funeral proceedings which took place the next day with the attendance of "nearly 5 to 6 thousand Mohamedan, Christian, Hindoo and Buddhist gentries". He requests to notify His Excellency minister for Foreign affairs at Sublime Porte, this unfortunate news. Further he once again requests the Ambassador to recommend the son of late Consul, Abdul Majid Marikar to the post of Colombo consul. Besides he also notifies the Pasha that he has been the Private secretary and the Secretary to the consulate for the last 12 years and he is the Son in law of the late Consul, and that he will be in charge of the consulate until the appointment arrives.¹⁷⁶ On the 17th of November 1890 Abdul Majid effendi writes a letter to Rustem Pasha enclosing his application to the post of Consul and requests to forward it to His Majesty the Sultan and recommend him to the post his late Father held for the last 25 years. He also attaches a paper cutting from the "Ceylon Observer" published on the 13th of November 1890 regarding the funeral of Hussein Lebbe Marikar the late Consul to Colombo.¹⁷⁷

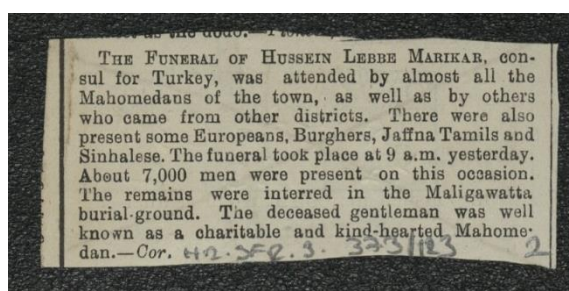


Figure 17 The paper cutting from the Ceylon Observer.
BOA, HR.SFR.3.373/123/2/1

¹⁷⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.373/101/1/1-2

¹⁷⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.373/123/1/1-2

On the 6th of December 1890, Rustem Pasha replies to the Secretary of the consulate in Colombo, conveying his condolences to the family of the late Consul Hussein L.M. Also notifies that he will write to the Sublime Porte informing the melancholy occurrence and suggest appointing the late Consul's son Abdul Majid effendi who has been connected to the consulate for a long time, to the vacant position. Meanwhile he requests the Secretary to take care of the affairs of the consulate and report to him any matter of importance until a decision is made by the Imperial government.¹⁷⁸

Further on the 17th of December 1890 Rustem Pasha writes to Abdul Majid effendi regarding his application to the vacant post of Honorary consul in Colombo. He informs that it is contrary to the etiquette and customs to address a letter to His Sultan and such letters should be directed either to the 1st secretary of His Imperial majesty or to the Minister for Foreign affairs. Thus, he couldn't transmit the letter and returns it to Abdul Majid effendi. However, he states that he has forwarded Abdul Majid effendis application to Constantinople and has recommended the Minister of Foreign affairs to consider his application. Therefore, informs to wait till a decision is arrived.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/38/1

¹⁷⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/39/1/1-2

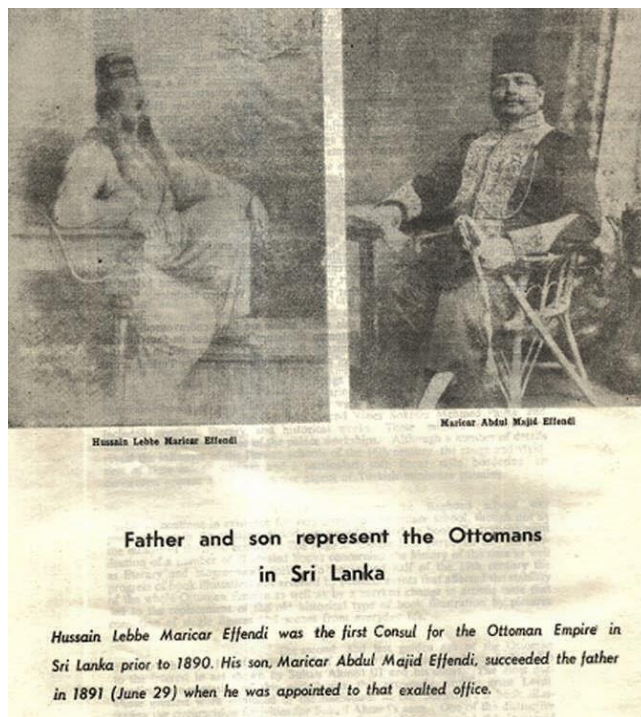


Figure 18 Hussein Lebbe Marikar (Left) Abdul Majid effendi (right) dressed in ceremonial uniform. M. B. Mohamed Ghouse, Y. L. M. Zavahir, *International Exhibition of Islamic Arts and Culture*, (Sri Lanka: Moors' Islamic Cultural Home, 1983), p. 88



Figure 19 Ibrahim Didi Ottoman honorary consul in Point de Galle. *The Graphic*, 16th October 1885, p. 415

Meanwhile, three moormen from Colombo appeals for the vacant post of Honorary consul in Colombo. On the 28th of January 1891 and the 11th of February 1891, M.C. Abdul Rahman, who is the first Ceylon moor member of the Legislative council¹⁸⁰ and a prominent figure in the Ceylon Muslim community. Expressed his willingness to be appointed as the Honorary consul at Colombo thus sends a letter to the Turkish Ambassador Rustem Pasha.¹⁸¹

On the 5th of February 1891, S.L.M. Mahmood Hadjar, a wealthy moorman hailing from Colombo writes to the London Ambassador stating his eagerness to be appointed to the position of Consul in Colombo. He briefly states his qualifications, the wealth he possesses and the voyages he has made, he received his education in English at the Wesley College Colombo, besides English he is also fluent in Arabic, Tamil, and Sinhala. He owns a property worth of Rs. 120,000. And he has travelled for more than a year around Egypt, Constantinople, Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Syria further during his stay in Istanbul he was able to make acquittance with Osman Pasha the heroic defender of Plevna and Falool Pasha. Along with this information he attaches 2 recommendation letters from the German consul and Italian consul in Ceylon.¹⁸²

Lastly a group of merchants from Colombo made an appeal to the Sublime Porte requesting to appoint Haji Zainudeen bin al haj Muhammed al Saylani to the post of Consul in Colombo. Stating he is an eligible candidate who comes from a respectable, wealthy family, owns an extensive trade and he is well versed in Arabic, English. In addition, he has also visited few Muslim countries including the Islamic caliphate in the Hijri year 1303 (1885-86). The application is written in Arabic and attached along with it few merchants' signatures.¹⁸³ Subsequently, on the 18th of February 1891, Rustem Pasha replies to Mahmood effendi and Abdul Rahman that he has transferred their applications to the Foreign ministry at Constantinople. However, he states that he has previously transmitted an application of another gentleman too.¹⁸⁴ Considering the letter sent by Rustem Pasha to the Foreign ministry the Sublime Porte

¹⁸⁰ Vasundhara Mohan, *Identity Crisis of Sri Lankan Muslims*, (Delhi: Mittal publications ,1987), p.22

¹⁸¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.382/18/1, 382/27/1-2

¹⁸² BOA, HR.SFR.3.383/34/1-2, 383/34/2

¹⁸³ BOA, HR.TO.395/92/3/1-2

¹⁸⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.382/18/1

confirms the appointment of Abdul Majid effendi as the Honorary consul to Colombo on the 28th of January 1891.¹⁸⁵ On the 24th February 1891, the Foreign ministry transmits the letter of confirmation along with the translation of the *ferman* of Abdul Majid effendi issued on the 17th February 1891, requests the Ambassador to obtain the exequatur of Her Majesty.¹⁸⁶ Until the appointment of Abdul Majid effendi, the secretary to the late Consul Mohamed Ishak effendi was appointed as the acting Consul¹⁸⁷ On the 11th of May 1891 Abdul Majid effendi was provisionally recognised as the Honorary consul pending the exequatur of Her Majesty.¹⁸⁸ Subsequently on July 6th of 1891, Abdul Majid effendi was officially appointed with the Queen's exequatur.¹⁸⁹

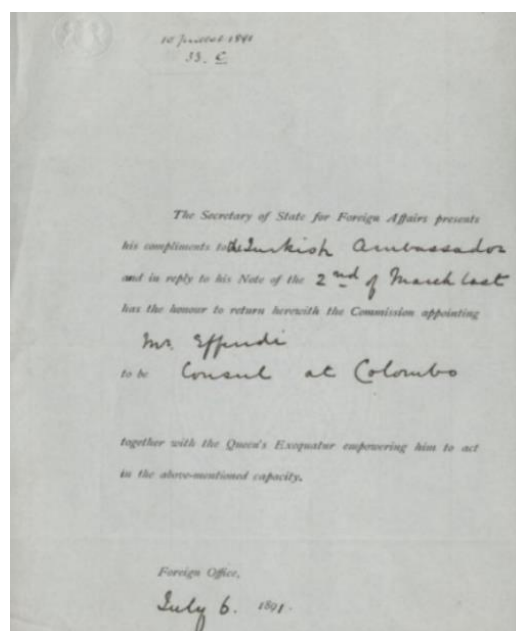


Figure 20 Letter from British foreign office confirming the appointment of Abdul Majid effendi. BOA, HR.SFR.3.378/80/1

¹⁸⁵ BOA, I.HR.320/20638/4/1

¹⁸⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.379/29/1/1-2, 379/29/ 2/2

¹⁸⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.383/39/2/1

¹⁸⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.383/39/3/1

¹⁸⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.378/80/1

Following it on the 31st of march 1891 Rustem Pasha informs Abdul Rahman the Imperial government has appointed Abdul Majid effendi as the Honorary consul.¹⁹⁰ And on the 16th of June 1891, in reply to the application of Zainudeen, *Sadrizam* Kamil informs the decision has been made to appoint Abdul Majid effendi the son of late Colombo consul.¹⁹¹ As a conclusion the above accounts proves the post of Honorary consul to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan was a highly sought after position in the Muslim community in Ceylon. However, it also sheds some light upon the selection process of the Honorary consul at least in the instance of Ceylon. According to the evidence based on the letters transmitted by Rustem Pasha states he would suggest the Son of late Consul to the vacant post as he has been connected to the consulate for a long time and rather than appointing an unknown person it is advantageous to appoint a person who is more familiar with the duties of the consulate.¹⁹² Thus, the candidate who is more familiar with the system and who has close acquaintance with the authority as well with the former Consul is given preferential against candidates who certainly hold prestigious positions such as a member of the Legislative council as in the case of M.C. Abdul Rahman.



Figure 21 Family portrait of Zainudeen, who was an applicant to the post of honorary consul in Colombo. The gentleman and his sons are seen wearing a fez.
Arnold Wright, *Twentieth century impressions of Ceylon*, (London: Lloyd's Greater Britain Publishing Company, Ltd), p.501

¹⁹⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.382/27/2/1

¹⁹¹ BOA, Y.A.HUS.248/18/1

¹⁹² BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/38/1., I.HR.320/20638/3/1-2

The fourth and the final appointment of a Consul was made in the year of 1903. However, the reason for this appointment is rather unusual than the previous appointments. On the 16th of February 1903 *İntihab Memurın* commission reaches the decision of dismissing Abdul Majid effendi from the post of Honorary consul in Colombo due to unpalatable behaviour and to appoint Mohamed Macan Markar who was nominated to the position by the London ambassador.¹⁹³ Further, the reason of dismissal isn't stated elaborately thus we don't have adequate information as to why Abdul Majid effendi was dismissed despite being nominated to the position by the London ambassador himself. Subsequently on the 19th of April 1903 the Foreign ministry sends the London ambassador the French translation of the *ferman* and requests to obtain the King's exequatur for Macan Markar the new Consul in Colombo.¹⁹⁴ On the 5th of October 1903 Stephen Mousourous Pasha the London ambassador conveys Macan Markar his new appointment as the Vice consul in Colombo.¹⁹⁵ It is important to underline in his letter S. Mousourous Pasha mentions the new appointment as the "Vice consul", though the previous letters from the Foreign ministry states "Honorary consul". Further, it implies the post of Honorary consul was replaced with the post of Vice consul. Moreover, it suggests although a decision of dismissing Abdul Majid effendi was made on the 16th of February 1903, it hasn't been executed yet.

Meanwhile on the 30th of September 1903, Abdul Majid effendi on his letter to the Ambassador states he has come to know the appointment of a Vice consul in Colombo hence requests him to enlighten on the subject.¹⁹⁶ The subsequent letter from Abdul Majid is from the 1st of December 1903, here he requests the Ottoman ambassador to recognise the service render by his late father Hussein Lebbe Marikar and his own service to the Ottoman government. Since neither of them have received any sort of medals or high ranks, though the late consul Hussein L.M was promised a

¹⁹³ BOA, I.HR.383/26/1/1. The document refers to dismiss consul Hussain Effendi however Hussain effendi was the former consul, and it was his son Abdul Majid effendi who was the consul during the year 1903

¹⁹⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.533/67/1/1

¹⁹⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.537/70/1/1. Ekrem Saltık on his article related to Ottoman Ceylon relations states H.A. Ibrahim Didi as Macan Markar's brother however, this is an error. "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Seylan Adası ile İlişkilerine Metha", p. 21

¹⁹⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.528/60/1/1

high rank by the late Rustem Pasha for his generous contribution of RS10,000 to the Ottoman government to aid the wounded soldiers during the Turco Russian war in 1875 due to his father's untimely demise this promise wasn't realised.¹⁹⁷ Further he adds the late Consul spent most of his vast fortune in upholding the position as he had to entertain personals from Turkey, Egypt, India, and other Muslim regions during their stay in Ceylon, he also helped other Muslim passengers and medicants who reached for his assistance from various parts of the World. In addition to his Father's service as a Consul for 25 years, Abdul Majid refers to his current position as the Consul and his service for the past 13 years. Thus, he requests for a medal, any other decoration, or a high rank such as the Consular general in recognition of his service to the Majesty the Sultan and the Ottoman Empire.¹⁹⁸

Consequently, on the 19th of May 1904 Tevfik Pasha from the Foreign ministry states that Abdul Majid effendi has been relieved from his post and inquires what does the Ambassador requests. The response of the Ambassador to Tevfik Pasha or Abdul Majid effendi isn't available, nevertheless on the 25th of May 1904 Abdul Majid effendi informs that he has handed over the stamps and other items belonging to the consulate to Macan Markar effendi thus offers his farewell.¹⁹⁹ Though the decision to dismiss Abdul Majid effendi was made on the 16th of February 1903 based on the correspondences it is understood that he continued his service till May 1904. On the 7th of July 1904 Macan Markar effendi confirms that Abdul Majid effendi after being dismissed from his post has handed over to him the circular letters, consular seal, and the stamps.²⁰⁰ Following it on the 20th of July 1904 Macan Markar effendi verifies that he has received the exequatur obtained from the government of Britain.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.336/33/1-2, 336/34/1-2. On the 11th of February 1887, Rustem Pasha states he would inform the Sublime Porte the desire of Hussein effendi to be recognised for his services rendered as the consul in Colombo, On the 30th of April 1887, Hussein effendi states that he is grateful to Rustem Pasha for nominating his name for a mark of distinction which he deserves for his service rendered

¹⁹⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.723/42/1/1-3

¹⁹⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.723/42/6/1

²⁰⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.548/2/1/1-2

²⁰¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.548/5/1/1-2

The King has approved of Mahmoud Macan Marikar Effendi as Consul of Turkey at Colombo.

Figure 22 King's approval of Macan Markar as consul of Turkey. *Homeward Mail* 27th June 1904

Macan Markar's appointment as the Consul of Turkey in Colombo was not welcomed by everyone, Appeals have been made to Sheikh el Islam of the British Isles Abdullah Quilliam²⁰² of Liverpool in regard to the posting of Macan Markar by Mr. Mahmood the secretary of the Hameediah society²⁰³ in Colombo. On the 27th of May 1904 he writes to Abdullah Quilliam voicing his and the Ceylon Muslims's disappointment on the appointment of Macan Markar to the position of Vice consul in Colombo.

"Recently, a petty Jeweller boy of Galle, named Mohamed Macan Marikar, of the age of 16 years, happened to be at the Delhi Durbar, and it appears that whilst selling his Jewellery there, he somehow or other became acquainted with a certain respectable British gentleman, and by his influence or recommendation secured the appointment of Turkish Vice-Consulship, only a month ago. This boy and his relations are all permanent residents of Galle, a minor place at the distance of 72 miles from Colombo. He is neither a rich man nor person of any social status, but one who often travels from Galle to Colombo, in the pursuit of his avocation of selling Jewellery. There was nothing particularly distinguishing about him to entitle him to secure the post, and all the respectable Colombo Mohammedans felt indignant, and regretted very much to hear him called the "Turkish Vice-Consul"; and even the existing Colombo Turkish Consul, J.L.M. Abdul Madjid Bey, felt it

²⁰² Abdullah Quilliam (1856-1932) was brought up as a Methodist Christian, during his travels to North Africa he got the opportunity to learn Islam thus he converted to it in 1887 and in the same year he established the Liverpool Islamic society and started to preach Islam. In 1894 He was given the title of Sheikh el Islam of the British Isles by Sultan Abdulhamid II. He supported the ideas of Pan Islamism and believed Islamic unity will be realised by the Muslim's allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan who was the caliph. See, Muhammed Recai Çiftçi, "Adullah Quilliam," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: TDV yayınları, 2016), EK1: pp.11-13

²⁰³ Hameediah Society also known as The Jamiyathul Hameediah Society is the executive board formed during the establishment of Al Madrasathul Hameedia in the year 1900. See, Sri Lanka Moor Family Genealogy, "A brief History of the Colombo Grand Mosque", <http://www.worldgenweb.org/lkawgw/cgm.html>

derogatory to his respectability to associate with this Vice- Consul: hence, he resigned this week, handing over his Consulate business to the so-called Turkish Vice-Consul, Mohamed Macan Markar. And there is rumour current here, that this Vice-Consul is to be appointed to the place of the now vacant Turkish Chief Consulship of Colombo. These tidings have irritated all the rich, respectable, and considerate Mohammedans of Colombo, so much so that all at one felt it their duty to object such an appointment, even by a memorial if necessary.”²⁰⁴

After stating the distress of the Muslims in Colombo regarding Macan Markar being the Turkish vice consul and now going to be promoted to the post of Consul. Besides, he also made a statement regarding the former Consul Abdul Majid. “Abdul Majid was appointed as the Turkish Consul...although he was neither a man of learning nor of money.”²⁰⁵ Implying the Muslims weren’t pleased with the aforementioned Consul too. Hence, the Ceylon Muslims were discontented with the former and current appointments of Consul. He further made suggestions of individuals who might be ideal to the post:

In Colombo there are men who built the Madrasatol Hamidia in Commemoration of the Jubilee of His Imperial Majesty, the Sultan. Again, it was my late father, P.T. Sinne Lebbe Marikar, who remitted large sum of money from Colombo, through Hassain Naseeb Effendi, the then Turkish Consul at Bombay, to be utilized for the War expenses at the time of the Russo-Turkish War. That whilst there are several very rich and respectable Moormen in the principal town of Colombo, and whilst there are in Colombo such respectable men who visited Constantinople in the year 1885, and discoursed with such prominent and distinguished men as Gazee Osman Pacha, Fadel Pacha, Hassain Naseeb Effendi, and others, is it not the greatest disgrace and a slur to the whole “Mohammedan” community, to see an ordinary boy, of the interior, to be brought forward and placed on the highest rung of the ladder, to be called and respected as the Turkish Consul for Colombo? It is therefore, I, on behalf of the Mohammedan Community of Columbo, beg of you to interfere in this matter, soon as possible, and to intercede even with the Turkish

²⁰⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.548/7/2/1-2

²⁰⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.548/7/2/2

Ambassador at London, and to object to such an appointment if it is about to take place. It is the fervent desire of the whole of the “Mohammedan” Community of Colombo, to have a Turkish Gentleman of Constantinople appointed as a Turkish Consul for Colombo, or, if this be deemed impossible, one of the respectable and rich “Mohammedans” of the town of Colombo may be selected to fill the vacancy.²⁰⁶

It is understood that the distress among the Muslims’ in Colombo sprung mainly because Macan Markar was not a resident of Colombo thus the inhabitants in Colombo felt it wasn’t acceptable for an individual outside the city to be appointed to a post in Colombo. However, based on the evidence of the letters available in the Ottoman archives we are aware that Abdul Majid effendi did not resign from his position rather he was dismissed by the authorities in Constantinople due to unpleasant behaviour. In addition to it there is no information available on who recommended Macan Markar to the London ambassador, and unlike stated on Mr. Mahmood’s letter Macan Markar was not 16 years in 1904, and it is also known Macan Markar received his education in Wesley college Colombo²⁰⁷ and his father O.L.M. Macan Markar had a flourishing jewellery business with stores located in Galle and Colombo and the business was patronised by British royals and foreign customers.²⁰⁸

**Mr. José Campion as Consul of Cuba at Gibraltar ;
Mr. Ofilio Hazera as Consul of Nicaragua at
Manchester ;
Mahmoud Macan Marikar Effendi as Vice-Consul
of Turkey at Colombo ; and
Mr. Frank Yeigh, Mr. George Tanguay, Mr. C.
A. Douglas, and Mr. Charles B. Linton as
Vice-Consuls of Paraguay, respectively, at
Toronto (Ont.), Quebec, Ottawa, and Hamilton**

Figure 23 Macan Markar appointed as the vice consul of Turkey at Colombo. *The London Gazette* 24th June 1904, 4034
<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/>

²⁰⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.548/7/2/3

²⁰⁷ Sri Lanka Moor Family Genealogy “Muhammed Macan Markar”,
<http://www.worldgenweb.org/lkawgw/mmacanmarkar.htm>

²⁰⁸ Allister Macmillan, *Extract from Seaports of India and Ceylon*, (New Delhi; Chennai, Asian Educational Services, 2005) p.481,482

[The following Notice is substituted for that which appeared in the London Gazette of September 25, 1903.]

Foreign Office,
September 19, 1903.

The KING has been pleased to approve of Mahmoud Macan Marikar Effendi as Consul of Turkey at Colombo.

Figure 24 Macan Markar appointed as the consul of Turkey at Colombo.

The London Gazette 24th June 1904, 4034

<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/>

Hence, there is adequate information pointing out that Macan Markar was possibly residing in Colombo during his appointment and had received a sound education as well owned a thriving business. Subsequently in the future he also secured prominent positions and ranks such as the first elected Muslim of the Legislative council in 1924, elected member of the State council in 1931-1936, Minister of Communication and Works and he was knighted in 1938. Furthermore, he also carried out numerous philanthropic contributions for the upliftment of Ceylon Muslims. It was Macan Markar who also owned the sumptuous bungalow epithet “Villa Stamboul”²⁰⁹ in Galle Road Colpetty a highly prominent residential area in Colombo, he hosted various significant personalities at his residence including Sir Henry Manning governor of Ceylon and Lady Manning in 1921²¹⁰ and S.M. Tevfik a Turkish author who wrote to the *Sebilürreşad* magazine about his voyage to India under the heading “*Hindistan Mektupları*”.²¹¹ Taking these facts into account the claims made by Mr. Mahmood on his letter to Abdullah Quilliam appears to be rather misinformed.

²⁰⁹ At present the road villa stamboul is located is named as Stamboul Place

²¹⁰ Sri Lanka Moor Family Genealogy, “Oduma Lebbe Marikar - Family#97”,

<http://www.worldgenweb.org/lkawgw/gen097.html>

²¹¹ Adem Efe, “Sebilüreşad,” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: TDV yayınları, 2009), Cilt 36: pp.251-253

Additionally, various articles and interviews in present claims that Macan Markar was the Vice consul in Galle prior to his appointment in Colombo²¹², however there is no archival proofs to back this statement, as stated earlier in the beginning of this chapter the Consul of Galle since the year 1881 was Ibrahim Didi who was a Maldivian residing in Galle and when he was away from Galle his son Abdul Majid Didi was the acting Consul in Galle. Thus prior to Macan Markar's appointment and during his tenure Ibrahim Didi held the position of Turkish consul in Galle. Further in the book "Twentieth century Impressions of Ceylon" written by Arnold Wright, published in the year 1907 under the heading foreign consuls refers to Macan Markar effendi as the Vice consul of Turkey in Colombo and Abdul Majid Didi as the Turkish consul in Galle.²¹³

There is no available response to Mr. Mahmood's letter to Abdullah Quilliam however, on the 7th of July 1904 the Sheikh el Islam did forward this letter to the London Ambassador²¹⁴ nevertheless, no actions were taken to replace the Consul. Yet again on the 14th of July 1904 a request is made by Zainudeen from Ceylon stating his desire to apply for the vacant position of Honorary consul in Colombo due to the resignation of the former Consul Abdul Majid. He elaborates regarding his current position in the Colombo municipal council and that he owns a business and is able to uphold the position of Consul further attaches details of a company named Messrs A. Durant & Co²¹⁵ of 32 Gresham Street, London E.C. for a character reference.²¹⁶ It was Zainudeen who also wrote to the Sublime Porte in the year 1891 stating his eagerness to be appointed to the Consul post after the demise of late Consul Hussein Marikar. However, both his attempts to be appointed to the post of Consul was unsuccessful.

²¹² Seen in the article "An old Turkish connection restored", published in *Sunday Times* (Sri Lanka), 30th October 2016. <https://www.sundaytimes.lk/161030/plus/an-old-turkish-connection-restored-215189.html>

²¹³ Arnold Wright, *Twentieth century impressions of Ceylon*, 138

²¹⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.548/7/5/1

²¹⁵ A. Durant & Co is a trading company operated in former colony of South Africa owned by Robert Scaritt Young Lawton and Augustus Durant both residing in no 89, Gresham Street London, East London. *The London Gazette*, (June 29, 1883), p. 3352

²¹⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.548/7/6/1

On the 15th of September of 1906 Macan Markar effendi wrote to S. Mousouros Pasha the London ambassador, requesting permission to travel to Mecca to perform Hajj pilgrimage and during his absence to recognise his brother Macan Markar Samsideen as his substitute.²¹⁷ Subsequently on the 20th October 1906 , the Foreign ministry informed that 4 months leave has been granted to Macan Markar effendi and he is authorised to handover the management of the consulate in Colombo to his Brother during his absence.²¹⁸ Macan Markar responded to the letter informing he will entrust the management of the consulate to his Brother and he is to set sail in the “Mooltan” Steam on the 29th of November 1906.²¹⁹ On the 25th April 1907, Macan Markar informs the London ambassador that he has returned to work on the 22nd of April 1907, and sends his warm thanks to the governor general of Hejaz Hamid Rashib Pasha and his officials, for their kind hospitality.²²⁰

On the 14th of May 1908 Macan Markar effendi requested the Foreign ministry to grant him a decoration in recognition of his service to the Imperial government and to maintain his rank, along with that he states that the former consulate was situated in an obscure location, now his office is situated in the most beautiful hotel in the city where he has a brass pavilion and sign erected and the subjects of the Empire are always welcome there. Following this letter on the 7th of July 1908 Tevfik Pasha forwards a copy of this letter and inquires Rifat bey the ambassador of London his opinion on the matter and what should be done.²²¹ Rifat bey responses favourably in recognising the services of Macan Markar effendi.²²² However, there are no adequate information with regard to Macan Markar receiving a decoration.

Nevertheless, in the year 1909 Macan Markar effendi toured the Europe and during his journey he visited Istanbul. Where he had the opportunity to have an audience with Sultan Mehmed V and he was also received by the *sadrazam* (Prime minister) and the Minister of Foreign affairs. Macan Markar wrote an elaborate letter regarding his journey to Istanbul and expressed his gratitude to the London

²¹⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.565/99/2/1

²¹⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.565/99/3/1

²¹⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3. 565/99/4/1

²²⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.575/10/1/1

²²¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.589/13/1/1, 589/13/2/1

²²² BOA, HR.SFR.3.589/14/1/1

ambassador, the Prime minister and to Minister of Foreign affairs for their warm hospitality during his stay in London and Istanbul. Besides, he informs the Ambassador, the Ceylon Muslims were thrilled to hear about his audience with Sultan Mehmed V and alike the Indian Muslims they were supporters of Sultan Abdulhamid II. However, after Macan Markar's visit to Istanbul and to Berlin where he met Enver bey, he was able to explain the Ceylon Muslims the significance of the new administration and the importance of a Parliamentary system to the Ottoman Empire. Further the virtuous personality of the Padishah hence, he asserts the Ceylon Muslims are aware of the benefits this change would bring to the Ottoman Empire. In addition to it he also conveyed the good wishes of the Sultan to the Muslims of Ceylon and ordered the Mosques in Ceylon to convey the greetings of the Sultan to the community during the Eid prayers. The Consul further reports the service rendered by Abdul Azeez effendi the editor of "The Muslim" newspaper where he publishes the developments of the Ottoman Empire.²²³

The voyage of Macan Markar effendi to Europe and his activities throughout his stay in London and Istanbul were published on "The Muslim" paper dated 1st October 1909 according to it Macan Markar is the first Ceylon Muslim to have an audience with the King and the Caliph since he was presented to King Edward VII and Sultan Mehmed V. Further, it states the Consul got an opportunity to be photographed with the Ministers of Foreign affairs along with the brother of Ahmed Niyazi bey. In addition to this the editor mentions the consul understood the happenings of the 31st of March event during his visit in Istanbul since it took place while he was in Aden. The consul also met the Ottoman ministers at the Parliament, and he was convinced the Ottoman government is in the hands of capable officials. Apart from the political situation he also conveyed the overall situation of Istanbul the road yet narrow and filled with dogs. He further believes the Young Turks would take forward Istanbul to the status it deserves. Nonetheless, he did not fail to recall the beauty of the Bosphorus and the grandeur of *Yıldız* palace with various exotic flora and fauna. The editor makes a distinct remark on the new portrait hang on the wall at the office of the Consul in York street, he says the new Sultan Mehmed V unlike the former Sultan had a short

²²³ BOA, İ.HUS.179/48

grey beard and his portrait indeed reflects the righteous characteristics referred by the Consul. A Sultan who not only cares for his subjects but also a Caliph who worries for the welfare of the Islamic fraternity.²²⁴ According to this publication it is perceived the Ceylon Muslims allegiance towards the Ottoman Empire did not waive when a Sultan was deposed, and the loyalty was directed towards the title rather than an individual.

Subsequently, even though Consul Macan Markar was away on a journey the consulate affairs continued under the management of Samsideen effendi who already had the experience of taking care of the consulate administration in the year 1906, when Macan Markar had left for Hajj pilgrimage. The letters dispatched between 15th May to 1st September 1909 is initialled by Samsideen as consulate manager.²²⁵

Despite the attempts to remove Macan Markar from his post as the Turkish honorary consul in Colombo he continued in office till 1914. There are no documents available citing the end of his tenure however, based on the availability of Ottoman archive documents the last despatch made from Colombo consulate is during the year 1914. Thus, it makes Macan Markar the last honorary consul of Ottoman Empire in Colombo.²²⁶ According to the archival documents Hadjie Ibrahim Didi bin Hadjie Ali Didi continued to be the Consul in Galle, the end of his tenure is not known nonetheless, the last document available in the Ottoman archives concerning the Galle consulate is a letter dispatched to Galle consulate by the London Ambassador Tevfik Pasha on the 17th of July 1913.²²⁷

In addition to it a letter dispatched on the 21st august 1923 by the Swedish legation in Constantinople, regarding the request of American consulate in Colombo to transfer the archive belonging to the former Turkish consulate in Colombo, which has been in their safekeeping since November 1914. To the Consulate general of Netherlands in Calcutta who has interest in Turkish affairs in India including Ceylon. Further the archive of Ottoman consulate in India had been handed over to the consulate general of Netherlands in Calcutta in the year 1918.²²⁸ Yet again on 22nd

²²⁴ *The Muslim*, 1.10.1909

²²⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.599/16/1, 594/27/1, 604/49/1

²²⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.710/15/1/1. The letter is addressed to the Ottoman ambassador in London and written on the 3rd of March 1914

²²⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.696/31/4

²²⁸ BOA, HR.İM.81/49/1

December 1923 the American embassy in Constantinople inquires Dr. Adnan bey the wishes of Turkish government as to the disposition of the archive and if it approves to hand over it to the Dutch Consul general in Calcutta, if yes whether it is willing to bear the expenses necessary for its shipment.²²⁹

The Foreign ministry on the 4th of February 1924 requested the American embassy in Colombo to retain archives in their care for a while.²³⁰ There is not any accessible follow up at the Ottoman archives, since the above dispatch regarding the archives of the Ottoman consulate in Colombo. As a result, this subject must be further researched at the American archives and the Netherlands archives to learn the ultimate fate of the documents of the Colombo consulate.

The following chapters of the thesis will be dealing with the duties performed by the consul during their tenures such as collecting funds for the Hamidiye Hijaz railway project, notifying the Ottoman government matters in connection with their interest like the arrival of Ertuğrul frigate, Arabi Pasha and other activities carried out by them.

²²⁹ BOA, HR İM.92/61/3

²³⁰ BOA, HR İM.96/49/1-2



Figure 25 Portrait of Macan Markar effendi in his official uniform (standing on the right) along with the officials of the Ottoman Foreign ministry during his visit to Istanbul 1909.



Figure 26 Macan Markar posing with a Fez and his Jewellery store. Arnold Wright, *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, (London: Lloyd's Greater Britain Publishing Company, Ltd, 1907), p. 462

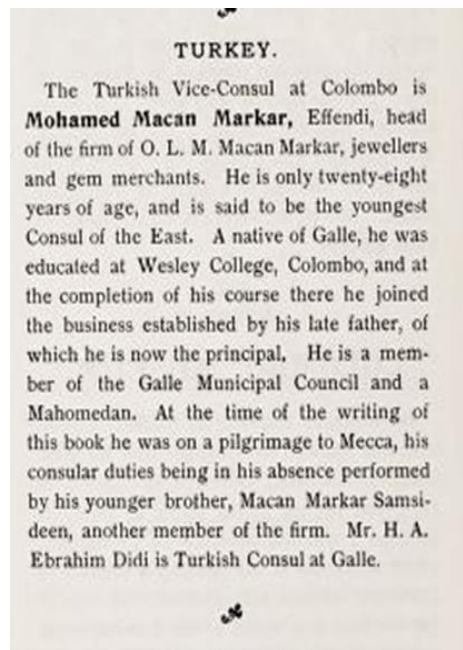


Figure 27 Turkish consuls during the year 1907. Arnold Wright, *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, (London: Lloyd's Greater Britain Publishing Company, Ltd, 1907), p. 138

CHAPTER III: “ERTUĞRUL” THE IMPERIAL FRIGATE

At the outset of Ottoman, Japanese diplomatic relationship Sultan Abdulhamid II as a gesture of goodwill dispatched the Imperial frigate *Ertuğrul* with an envoy headed by Osman Pasha along with a crew of 609 members, intending to have an audience with the Meiji emperor and to deliver the letter from Abdulhamid II along with the highest honour decoration of the Ottoman Empire as a sign of friendship and reciprocation of Prince Komatsu's visit to Istanbul in 1887.²³¹ On the 15th of July 1889, the *Ertuğrul* frigate departed the port of Galata en route to *Yokohama* port.²³² On its sailing of 11 months traversing towards Japan, the frigate anchored in several Asian ports including Bombay, Ceylon, and Singapore. Osman Pasha and his crew were warmly greeted by the Muslim communities at these ports, and the local Muslim newspapers gave significant reportage on the arrival of the Imperial frigate.²³³

The frigate reached the *Yokohama* port on the 7th of June 1890, regardless of its successful journey to Japan on its home voyage 16th September 1890 *Ertuğrul* frigate was caught in a severe typhon and capsized in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of *Wakayama*. Out of the 609 crew members including Osman Pasha, only sixty-nine of them survived the tragedy and were rescued by the local fishermen.²³⁴ The Japanese who were appalled by this disaster, collected donations for the families of the martyrs and victims. Hence, under the order of the Meiji emperor, the funds and survivors returned to Istanbul on two Japanese battleships *Hiei*, *Kongo* which reached on 2nd January 1891.²³⁵ During both these travels the ships anchored at Colombo port and what transpired during their layover in Ceylon is barely known today. However, the letters dispatched by Osman Pasha during his voyage to the *Bahriye Nezareti* (Ministry

²³¹ Selçuk Esenbel, “A "fin de siècle" Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: The Life of Yamada Torajirō and His "Toruko gakan", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, 1996, Vol. 59, No. 2, pp. 239,240

²³² Hiroshi Nagaba, “Japan and Turkey historical process for diplomatic relations”, *PERCEPTIONS: Journal of International Affairs*, 2 (1997), p. 3

²³³ Kaori Komatsu, *Ertuğrul Faciası: Bir Dostluğun Doğuşu*, (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 1992), p.7, Selçuk Esenbel, “A "fin de siècle" Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: The Life of Yamada Torajirō and His "Toruko gakan", 240

²³⁴ Hiroshi Nagaba, “Japan and Turkey historical process for diplomatic relations”, 3

²³⁵ Nobuo Misawa, “Relations between Japan and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century: Japanese Public Opinions about the Disaster of the Ottoman Battleship *Ertuğrul* (1890)”, *Japan Association for Middle East Studies*, 2003, p.11

of the Marine) comprise every aspect of the travel. And reports dispatched by Japanese journalist Shotaro Noda of *Jiji Shinpo* newspaper reflect on the journey of the Japanese battleships that carried the survivors back home.²³⁶ Thus, permitting us to explore the first-hand experiences of the *Ertuğrul* frigate's stopover at the Colombo port in 1889 and Japanese battleships layover in Colombo in 1890.

3.1 The Arrival of the Frigate to the Colombo port

The Imperial frigate reached the Indian port in Bombay on the 20th of October 1889, Ottoman sympathisers and local Muslims in Bombay ardently welcomed Osman Pasha and his crew. The frigate received thousands of visitors during its stay in Bombay port. Osman Pasha stated that there were five to six thousand visitors to the Imperial frigate every day since its arrival, and among them were not only local Muslims who had travelled from various parts of the country by train but also notable guests like *rajas*, prince too, visited the Sultan's frigate.²³⁷ Hence local newspapers published on the popularity the Sultan's ship had attracted in Bombay.

Departing from Bombay, the frigate under the commandment of Osman Pasha reached the Colombo port on the 1st of November 1889. The Muslims of Ceylon, who were anticipating the arrival of the frigate, gathered around the Colombo fort to welcome Osman Pasha and his crew. The arrival of the frigate to Colombo corresponded on a Friday thus Osman Pasha and the officers attended the Friday prayers at the local Mosque in Colombo, where they were greeted by the warm reception and hospitality of the Ceylon Muslims.²³⁸ The local newspaper "The Muslim Friend" reports on the arrival of the frigate at the Colombo port and states the customary 21-gun salutes were not performed immediately following the arrival of the frigate. Since it was a Friday, auspicious activities are considered to be performed after the Friday prayers, thus at 3.30 pm, 21-gun salutes were performed and the local authority responded to it with another 21-gun salutes.²³⁹

²³⁶ Nobuo Misawa, "The First Japanese Who Resided in the Ottoman Empire: the Young Journalist NODA and the Student Merchant YAMADA", pp. 55,56

²³⁷ Süleyman Nutki, *Ertuğrul Fırkateyni Faciası*, (İstanbul: Matbaa-ı Bahriye, 1911), p. 37

²³⁸ Ibid, 40

²³⁹ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1889.11.06

The Imperial frigate was anchored at the Colombo port for 1 week and during its stay in Ceylon around two hundred thousand Muslims visited the frigate from Kandy, Galle and cities all around the Island by train. The admiration and regard *Ertuğrul* frigate received in Colombo was competitive to the one displayed in Bombay.²⁴⁰ Muslims residing further away from Colombo sent representatives with hundreds of autographed letters to the frigate and some of them requested to host banquets to the Naval officers.²⁴¹ Such was the appreciation Osman Pasha and his crew received in Colombo. According to the local newspaper Muslim Friend there were 606²⁴² Naval officers on the frigate, and they were capable of conversing in English however merely few knew Arabic.²⁴³ The Naval officers made extensive arrangements in order to receive guests to the frigate from their experiences gained in Bombay. Hence, they were capable to host two thousand visitors at once. The Starboard side of the frigate was designated for the entry of the visitors and Port side was designated for the exit. Sign and direction boards were hung in every part of the frigate to guide the visitors. And on days the frigate was crowded with people as the weather is warm the Naval officers served the guests with sherbet. Apart from these health and safety precautions were also organized by the Naval officers, two big lifeboats with Naval officers were at command in case of an emergency and physician Yasef effendi²⁴⁴ was sent to the health administration to find out whether there is any contagious disease among the residents of the nearest towns. In addition as a health precaution a carpet damped in antiseptic was placed at the entrance of the port.²⁴⁵ *Ertuğrul* being the first Ottoman frigate that arrived in Ceylon the attention and attraction it received from the local crowd isn't unanticipated. Nevertheless, the affection was reciprocated by the Ottoman officers, Pasha and his team were able to display their Turkish hospitality in spite of being far from the Ottoman lands.

²⁴⁰ Süleyman Nutki, *Ertuğrul Fırkateyni Faciası*, pp.40,41

²⁴¹ Arif Hikmet Fevzi Ilgaz, Hasene Ilgaz, *Ertuğrul Fırkateyni Yüzüncü Yıl Armağanı*, (Türkiye Şehitlikleri İmar Vakfı Yayınları No3, 1990), p.71

²⁴² Various sources provide different numbers on the crew Suleyman Nukti reports it as 607.

²⁴³ *The Muslim Friend*, 1889.11.06

²⁴⁴ Ambassador R.Hüsrev Gerede,“ Mübarek Ertuğrul Şehitlerimiz ve Muhteşem Anıtları”, 413 sayılı *Donanma Dergisinin Eki*, (İstanbul 1956) p. 11

²⁴⁵ Arif Hikmet Fevzi Ilgaz, Hasene Ilgaz, *Ertuğrul Fırkateyni Yüzüncü Yıl Armağanı*,70,71

Osman Pasha and his crew not only received visitors to the frigate, but they were also invited to several banquets and dinners hosted by prominent leaders and traders of the Ceylon Moor community. Pasha and the crew went on a city tour and called upon the Ottoman honorary consul Hussein Lebbe Marikar. The following day the Honorary consul paid a visit to the frigate attired in his official uniform, he was well entertained and was served appetizers. On his departure he was honoured with 7-gun salutes. Osman Pasha too joined the Honorary consul on his horse carriage to parade the streets of Colombo.²⁴⁶ On the third day of their stay along with the Ottoman honorary consul, Pasha and his crew graced a banquet hosted by the gem traders of Galle. Some of whom Osman Pasha recognises as Ismail and Saad effendi.²⁴⁷ The banquet was organised in the English way, and Legislative council member Hon. Abdul Rahman too attended the event. At the end of the occasion Osman Pasha and Hon. Abdul Rahman spoke on miscellaneous subjects like the education reforms of the Ceylon Moors. In addition to this Colombo municipal council member Muhammed Haniffa hosted a dinner to the *Ertuğrul* frigate commander and his crew at his residence in Maradana.²⁴⁸ Further, Osman Pasha also records the details of the banquets that were held for them and states similar to Bombay, Sultan Abdulhamid II's name is recited during the Friday sermons held in Colombo.²⁴⁹ After hosting the local visitors for almost a week the frigate departed to Singapore on the 7th of November 1889. The Ottoman honorary consul Hussein Lebbe Marikar briefs the Foreign ministry on the visit and departure of the frigate. He states the local Muslims were touched by the hospitality displayed to them by Osman Pasha and his crew.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁶ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1889.11.06

²⁴⁷ Süleyman Nutki, *Ertuğrul Fırkateyni Faciası* ,41

²⁴⁸ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1889.11.13

²⁴⁹ Süleyman Nutki, *Ertuğrul Fırkateyni Faciası* ,41

²⁵⁰ BOA, Y.A.HUS.232/66

3.1.2 Unpopular news involving the frigate

Regardless of the Imperial frigate's popularity within the Muslim communities and local run Muslim newspapers in each port they visited. The Sultan's ship did face various smear attacks from the London and English run press, the technical and financial difficulties of the voyage,²⁵¹ rhetorical questions whether the frigate would reach Japan, its final destination were published in them causing a nuisance to the Sultan. The motive behind the defamations directed to the *Ertuğrul* frigate is to water down the acclamation it was receiving from Muslims of British and French colonies. Even though the mission *Ertuğrul*, officially was a goodwill gesture to Japan and to provide training to the graduates of the Naval academy, it had greater political ambitions. Abdulhamid II used this voyage for his Pan-Islamism propaganda ensuing to counter the Britain's caliphate campaigning against the Ottomans. Despite the caliphate being a symbolic title, Ottoman Sultan being the leader of the Islamic world was hindering the agendas of the British Empire at that point to conquer the Arabia. Hence, they supported the Arabs in their anti-Ottoman campaigns and continued discredit the Sultan through their press²⁵².

As a result, mudsling on *Ertuğrul* frigate persisted. A letter was dispatched to the Ottoman ambassador in London by the Colombo honorary consul Hussein Lebbe Marikar on the 14th of January 1890 stating that Ceylon Observer on the 11th of January 1890 has published an article humiliating the Imperial frigate.²⁵³ Stating that the frigate is being detained in Singapore due to shortage of funds to pay dues and in an uncertain financial condition without coal or gunpowder. Rustem Pasha responded to the letter informing the Consul the allegations are untrue and the Minister of marine confirms that *Ertuğrul* left Constantinople with all the necessary provisions needful for the journey. And if she has remained for some length of time in several ports that is in fact in accordance with the purpose of her cruise that is the thorough training of the Naval cadre on board.²⁵⁴ However, the Ministry of marine informed the Ministry of foreign

²⁵¹ Selçuk Esenbel, "A "fin de siècle" Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: The Life of Yamada Torajirō and His "Toruko gakan", 241

²⁵² Kaori Komatsu, *Ertuğrul Faciası: Bir Dostluğun Doğuşu*, 34-43

²⁵³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/2

²⁵⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/35

affairs the reason of stopping in Singapore longer than expected was due to poor weather conditions.²⁵⁵

Ensuing it on the 11th of March 1890 Consul Marikar forwards paper cuttings of Ceylon Observer and Times dated 27th February 1890, 25th February 1890 and 1st March 1890. With articles retracting their former statements defaming the *Ertuğrul* frigate. Ceylon Observer on the 27th of February 1890 published the following:

THE TURKISH MAN-OF-WAR “ERTUGROUL”.

Our contemporary of the "Times" had the following para in Tuesday night's issue: The Turkish Man of War "*Ertugroul*" It will be remembered that paragraphs appeared in some of the local papers about, the "*Ertugroul*", which called here on her way to Japan, being detained at Singapore by want of funds, and being in a parlous financial condition without coal or gunpowder. Says the Singapore Free Press just to hand: We are not surprised, to learn that the strange Statements by a Colombo paper have caused very reasonable annoyance to the British Admiral in command. We are enabled to say that the statements in the *Ceylon Observer* are absolutely untrue and entirely unwarrantable. There are, of course, no port dues leviable on any vessel of any class in Singapore, so it is untrue to say that the "*Ertugroul*" has not paid such dues. It is ridiculous to say that she has not enough money to buy coal to take her to Japan. She has plenty of ammunition and saluted the port on her arrival. She has fired all the complimentary salutes which International regulations require. It is grossly false to say that the Governor has given orders that the "*Ertugroul*" is not to be treated as a man- of-war. There is no sort of justification for the expression of belief that the Captain of the "*Ertugroul*" is still waiting for remittances from the Porte. We shall be glad to see sherefore a retraction of the statements in the *Ceylon Observer*, which have been most unfairly made, probably on second-hand information, in regard to a vessel of a friendly Power, If the statements we made are incorrect we shall be extremely sorry for having made them, as, during the stay of the "*Ertugroul*" at Colombo, we found the Commander and officers of that vessel exceedingly kind and courteous. All we can say, however, is that similar statements had appeared in English papers before

²⁵⁵ Kaori Komatsu, *Ertuğrul Faciası: Bir Dostluğun Doğuşu*, 12

we heard of the alleged condition of the "*Ertugroul*." The statements contained in our paragraph were made on information received from some British Naval officers, who certainly believed what they were saying and had no intention of misleading us. We were also not the only Ceylon paper to make the statements complained of, though our contemporary of the "Times" did not happen to get the information - hence the ill-concealed glee with which he publishes the strongly worded paragraph from the *Singapore Free Press* which at least might have told us what the "*Ertugroul*" has been stopping such a long time at Singapore for.²⁵⁶

A similar news was published on the Times too. However, the 1st of March 1890, Times paper reported under the heading "The Sultan and the Ceylon Press" that the Turkish consul in Colombo has purchased all copies of local newspapers which contained references to the *Ertuğrul* being detained in Singapore for alleged reasons. The paragraph did not conclude with a reconciliation but with another controversy:

Therefore the rumor has gone forth that the Sultan is going to take a case for libel against the offending papers - so an influential Moorman assured us today. Good old Sultan! It would be rather hard if he were to have litigation added to his other troubles. He will find Paying the Russian war indemnity or introducing Reforms into Armenia far easier matter than screwing damages out of certain newspaper proprietors we are closely acquainted with! But Abdul Hamid (commonly known as the Sultan of Turkey) vs. *The Times of Ceylon* or "Ceylon Observer, would make a *cause célèbre* at Hultsdorp.²⁵⁷

Hence, yet again testifying the political rupture between the Ottoman and British Empire. And the manipulation of press for its anti-Ottoman campaign. However, the Ottomans did respond to these false allegations and continued in publishing the prominence and affection Osman Pasha and his officers received in each port. Thus, manifesting the Islamic world, the unity of the Muslims and the strength of the Ottoman Sultan as the Caliph.

²⁵⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/54/2

²⁵⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.372/54/4

3.2 Survivors of the tragedy and Japanese battleships reaches Colombo

On the eve of 16th September 1890, the *Ertuğrul* frigate and her officers met with a tragic accident at the off coast of *Wakayama*, on her home voyage to Istanbul. Only sixty-nine out of the five hundred and more officers survived this unfortunate accident. The survivors were rescued by the residents of the nearby village, and they also conducted burial services for the deceased officers. The injured victims were transferred to *Kobe* port to receive medical treatment from doctors serving under the Japanese Red Cross.²⁵⁸ The Japanese authorities meticulously followed the treatments of the injured officers and the rescue operation thus updated Istanbul regularly.²⁵⁹

The calamity of 1890 caught the attention of the competitive journalists of Japan who were keen in making prompt reports and provoking editorials. Hence the print media began to cover the tragedy of *Ertuğrul* and the Ottoman Empire. Subsequently thanks to the fierce competition in reporting the tragedy of *Ertuğrul* gained the sympathy of the Japanese society. On the 20th of September 1890, *Jiji Shinpo* Newspaper announced the collection of donations for the victims of the tragedy and rest of the Newspaper editors began their own campaigns. One of the striking editorials published in *Jiji Shinpo* on the 24th of September 1890, was criticising the Japanese authority since the Japanese foreign ministry was in discussions with Russia to send off the survivors in a Russian battleship without the consent of Japanese Maritime ministry and the Japanese navy fell behind the German navy in the rescue operations. The editorial thus demanded to enhance the honour of Japan the survivors should be sent back home by Japanese battleships. This idea became popular among the other newspapers as well, hence it shaped the public opinion in insisting on a Japanese battleship for the mission. Following it on the 26th of September, Meiji Emperor decided to dispatch two Japanese battleships *Hiei* and *Kongo*. However, it understood there was a nationalistic motive and an anti-European mindset behind this mission.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ Nobuo Misawa, “Relations between Japan and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century: Japanese Public Opinions about the Disaster of the Ottoman Battleship *Ertuğrul* (1890)”, pp. 10, 11

²⁵⁹ Süleyman Nutki, *Resmi ve Özel belgeler Işığında resimli: Ertuğrul Firkateyni Faciası*, (Kültür yayınlar Tarih dizisi No 65), pp. 71-83

²⁶⁰ Nobuo Misawa, “Relations between Japan and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century: Japanese Public Opinions about the Disaster of the Ottoman Battleship *Ertuğrul* (1890)”, pp. 16, 17

It was the tragedy of *Ertuğrul* which evoked the Ottoman Japanese relationship. The funds collected to the victims of *Ertuğrul* was the first Japanese donation collected for foreign victims in Japan. *Jiji Shinpo* managed to amass a substantial donation of 4,248,976 Yen²⁶¹ and decided to deliver the donation to the relevant authorities at Istanbul by one of their journalists. Hence the donations were exchanged into French franc at the *Yokohama Shokin* bank and Shotaro Noda correspondent was given the task of remitting the money at Istanbul. On the 7th of October 1890, *Jiji Shinpo* published a note from Shotaro regarding his voyage to Istanbul on the Japanese battleship *Hiei*. Shotaro dispatched regular reports of his journey whenever the battleship stopped by a foreign port. His reports were published on *Jiji Shinpo* under the title “Reports of voyage to Turkey on board of the Japanese battleships.”²⁶² Along with Shotaro Noda another Japanese merchant Yamada Torajiro the chief of the Near East Trade Committee²⁶³ also visited Istanbul in 1892 with donations collected for the *Ertuğrul* victims and during his audience with Sultan Abdulhamid II he presented a family heirloom a samurai armour and sword which is currently exhibited at the *Topkapı* palace.²⁶⁴

Japanese battleship *Hiei* and *Kongo* reached the Colombo port on the 16th of November of 1890. Siddhi Lebbe, the editor of local newspaper “Muslim Friend” (Muslim Nesan) visited the survivors on the battleship during their stay at the Colombo harbour. The paper provides the names of the Marine officers and their post, Haydar effendi, Ahmet Ali bey, Ali effendi, Ismail effendi, Seyed Ali effendi, Mustafa effendi, Husnur. Besides, Haydar effendi the engineer of the sunken *Ertuğrul* frigate was able to converse in English hence he explained the unfortunate accident that took the lives of Osman Pasha and his crew. The editor also met the Japanese officers of the battleships including the captain there were 24 officers and 306 crew members were

²⁶¹ The total amount of donations collected in Japan is 5000 Yen, which is estimated to a 100 million Yen today. See, Misawa, “The First Japanese Who Resided in the Ottoman Empire: the Young Journalist NODA and the Student Merchant YAMADA, p.53, S. Esenbel, “A "fin de siècle" Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: The Life of Yamada Torajirō and His"Toruko gakan", p. 241

²⁶² Nobuo Misawa, “The First Japanese Who Resided in the Ottoman Empire: the Young Journalist NODA and the Student Merchant YAMADA,” pp. 53-56

²⁶³ Ambassador R.Hüsrev Gerede, “Mübarek Ertuğrul Şehitlerimiz ve Muhteşem Anıtları”, 413 sayılı *Donanma Dergisinin Eki*, (İstanbul 1956), p.10

²⁶⁴ Selçuk Esenbel, “A "fin de siècle" Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: The Life of Yamada Torajirō and His"Toruko gakan", 237,241

present in the ships. Along with them the editor reveals Mr. Noda the reporter of Japanese newspaper *Jiji Shinpo* was also traveling to Istanbul. Shotaro Noda gave Siddhi Lebbe a copy of his newspaper reporting on the tragic accident of *Ertuğrul*. He further explained the editor about his mission to hand over 750 pounds, the donations collected for the victims and bereaved families of the *Ertuğrul* tragedy. In addition to the funds the Japanese journalist is also taking a condolence letter to the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II.²⁶⁵

During the stopover of the Japanese battleships at Colombo the Ottoman officers paid their respect to the tomb of late Ottoman honorary consul Hussein Lebbe Marikar and two banquets were organised for the Ottoman officers. One was hosted by Oduman Hajjar, the elder son of late Ottoman consul and the later by Muhammed Haniffa, member of the Colombo municipal council. The editor concludes his account by providing information on the battleships' itinerary. The next destination will be Aden and through Suez canal it would reach Port said therefore it is expected to reach Constantinople around December.²⁶⁶ Shotaro Noda corresponded to the *Jiji Shinpo* newspaper during his stay in Colombo and he reveals there were seven Japanese monks in Colombo who were learning Buddhism yet, he did not see any Japanese involved in trade in his short stay in Colombo. Noda did not report about the response of the locals around the ports he visited rather he was interested on reporting on the lives of Japanese expatriates at the ports he toured²⁶⁷. Hence, it might be the reason he omitted on the deeds of the Ottoman crew during the stopover in Colombo.

On the 2nd of January 1891. *Hiei* and *Kongo* arrived at Istanbul. Shotaro Noda initially wanted to hand over the funds collected to the bereaved families of the tragedy to Sait Pasha the foreign minister who is designated as the receiver of the donation. Nevertheless, he was requested to submit it to the bereaved family relief committee established under the Naval ministry. Thus, he handed over the money order to the chairman of the committee Rıza Hasan Pasha. The donation made by Japan was greatly appreciated by the Ottomans. Noda and the Japanese naval crew received a warm

²⁶⁵ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1890.11.19

²⁶⁶ Ibid

²⁶⁷ Nobu Misawa, "Reports about the Ottoman Empire carried on Jichi Shinpo (1890-93): Achievements of Shotaro NODA, the first Japanese journalist who was sent to the Islamic World", pp.117,118. Google translation was used to translate this Japanese article

reception in Istanbul consequently Sultan Abdulhamid II invited one of the Japanese naval officers to remain in Istanbul to lecture Japanese language to the Ottoman officers. Albeit Naval officers could not accept this offer hence they recommended Noda for this task. Ensuing Shotaro Noda became the first Japanese journalist to reside in Istanbul and the first Japanese to convert to Islam in June 1891 he converted to Islam with the name Abdülhalim.²⁶⁸

The *Ertuğrul* frigates stopover at the Colombo port in 1889 and the immense crowd it attracted throughout its one week stay in Ceylon manifests success of Abdulhamid II's motive of including local Muslim populated ports on the itinerary of the frigate. Though the Pan Islamic attitude could not reap its intended benefits it definitely created a unity among the South Asian Muslim population through the caliphate. The attraction *Ertuğrul* frigate received at the ports of Bombay, Colombo and Singapore speaks volumes of it.



Figure 28 The Ertuğrul frigate crew. Atatürk Kitaplığı Müteferrik Evrak, 26157/2

²⁶⁸ Nobuo Misawa, "The First Japanese Who Resided in the Ottoman Empire: the Young Journalist NODA and the Student Merchant YAMADA", pp. 56,57

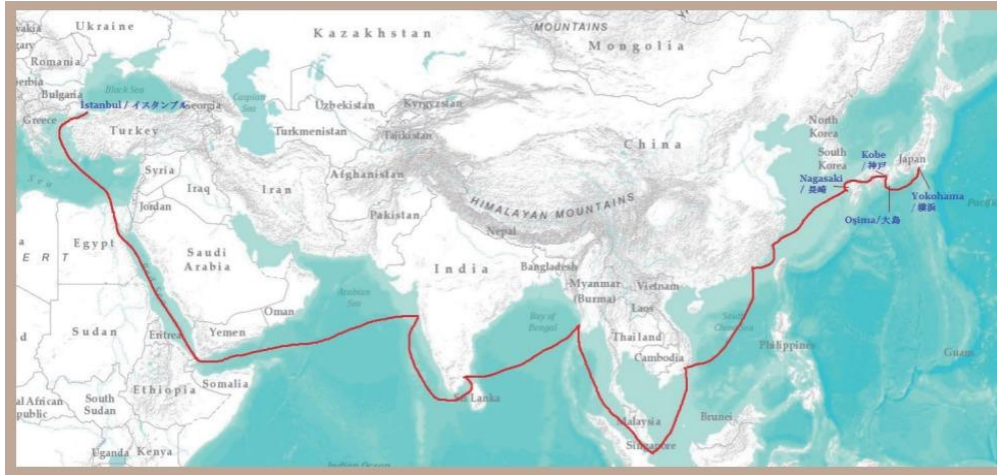


Figure 30 The Itinerary of the Imperial frigate.

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Japonya T.C. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi'ndeki Belgelere göre İki Ülke İlişkileri (Waseda Üniversitesi Sergisi 2017) ACRI Research Paper Series: 8, 22



Figure 29 A group of Japanese Naval officers of Hiei and Kongo battleships in Istanbul. Abdullah Frères, Abdulhamid II photograph Collection, İstanbul Üniversitesi Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi, 90816/8.

CHAPTER IV: EXCHANGE OF COMPLIMENTS, JUBILEE ANNIVERSARY AND THE TRAVEL JOURNAL

The establishment of the honorary consulates in Colombo and Galle facilitated the correspondence between the Ottoman Empire and Ceylon Muslims. The Muslims eagerly kept themselves updated about the current situation of the Ottoman Empire thus expressed their concerns over the Greco- Turkish war in 1897, made financial contributions to the victims of the Tripoli war in 1913 and conveyed their compliments to Sultan Abdulhamid II on his silver jubilee. Developments in the Ottoman Empire and Sultan Abdulhamid II were closely followed by the Muslim community hence it received major coverage in one of Ceylon's leading Muslim weekly journal known as "Muslim Nesan" (the Muslim Friend)²⁶⁹ Furthermore, the Ceylon Muslims also informed the Ottoman officials regarding the events that took place in Ceylon, including religious celebrations hosted by the Muslim community, it wasn't only the Ceylon Muslims who were keen over the Ottoman world affairs. The Ottoman subjects were also enthusiastic to learn about Ceylon, thus travellers from Istanbul journeyed throughout the Island and penned their travel experiences in newspapers published in Istanbul. This chapter presents in a nutshell the interrelation between the Ottomans and the Ceylon Muslims in exchanging their gestures between two nations.

4.1 Exchange of compliments The Greco- Turkish war 1897

In the year 1897 in the Ottoman Island of Crete an uprising was initiated by the Christians who were frustrated with the Ottoman ruling and aspired to unite the island with Greece. This insurrection was backed by the Greece administration. However, the Ottomans expected to settle the revolt in a peaceful manner, yet it eventually led to the Greco Turkish war of 1897. Despite all the efforts to a peaceful settlement the Sultan Abdulhamid II reluctantly declared war on Greece on the 17th of April which continued for one month. The Ottomans emerged victorious in the battlefield and the Sultan demanded the retrocession of Thessaly. Regardless of due to the Great powers'

²⁶⁹ Dr. M.A.M Shukri "Muslims of Sri Lanka a cultural perspective," *Muslims of Sri Lanka Avenues to Antiquity*, (Beruwala: Jamiah Naleemiah Institute, 1986), p. 355

intervention and attempt to maintain the balance of power in the region the demands of the Sultan were opposed as a result the Ottoman Empire was only left with an average war indemnity.²⁷⁰

Nevertheless, the Muslim community in Ceylon considered it as a worthy cause to rejoice with the Sultan thus they gathered at the Grand Mosque of Colombo and supplicated for the long life of Sultan Abdulhamid II and sent their congratulatory message to him through the Honorary consul Abdul Majid in July 1897.²⁷¹ Likewise, the Sultan appreciated this gesture from the Muslim community in Ceylon hence ordered to convey his greetings to the community.²⁷² The reply received from the Imperial Ottoman ambassador in London was published on “The Colonies and India”

By Imperial instructions you will inform the Mussulmen of your country that the congratulations sent for the victories obtained by the Imperial troops, and the prayers offered for the extension of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan's life, my august lord, have been the object of his highest satisfaction.²⁷³

Furthermore, this exchange of letters from Colombo and Istanbul confirms despite living further away from Istanbul the Ceylon Muslims were always concerned about the developments that took place in the Ottoman lands and they respected, admired the Ottoman Empire and its Sultan even though the outcome of the war wasn't decisive.

4.2 The Celebration of the Silver Jubilee of Sultan Abdulhamid II

Great festivals such as the accession to the throne, anniversary of accession was celebrated not only in the capital but also in the provinces and lands further away by people who were spiritually attached to the Ottoman Sultan. The Ottoman Empire and its sympathisers celebrated the silver jubilee with a series of events in the year 1900 to mark the 25th year of accession to the throne by Sultan Abdulhamid II. The

²⁷⁰ Mehmet Uğur Ekinci, “The Origins of the 1897 Ottoman- Greek war: A diplomatic history”, (Master’s thesis, July 2006) pp.16-17,73, 87-89

²⁷¹ BOA, İMTZ (01) 21/972

²⁷² BOA, BEO 986/73924

²⁷³ *The Colonies and India*, 4th September 1897

streets of Istanbul were decorated with lanterns, lights. Banners, plates inscribed with exalting phrases like “*Padişah çok yaşa*” were displayed in significant buildings and locations making the whole atmosphere to resemble that of an *Eid* day. The festivities in the provinces were not any lesser than that of Istanbul. This included construction of modern clock towers in every major provincial city such as Izmir, Syria, Aleppo, Beirut, Quds, laying the foundation for the Hejaz railway²⁷⁴ and construction, restoration of other important structures throughout the Empire.

Furthermore, the Ottoman sympathisers worldwide including India and Southeast Asia also celebrated the silver jubilee. The ardent devotees of Ottoman Empire the Ceylon Muslim community too organised massive gatherings under Muslim social organisations such as the Moors’ union, *Jamathul Hameediya* society. The Muslims of Colombo and other provinces of the island too participated in this auspicious celebration by adorning their houses and the streets they lived in with vibrant lights and flags.²⁷⁵ In addition to these events a leading Muslim boys’ school in Colombo was renamed to his Sultans name. Details of these occasions were meticulously followed by the Ottoman honorary consul in Colombo thus reported to the relevant authorities in Istanbul.

4.2.1 The Jubilee preparations in full swing

The Ceylon Muslims across the island celebrated His Majesty Sultan Abhdulhamid II’s silver jubilee in greatest grandeur. On the 31st august 1900 the Muslim populated regions of Ceylon witnessed and experienced a festive atmosphere. Prior to the celebrations the organisers from various parts of the country informed the public the proceedings planed for the day through print media such as the weekly newspaper Muslim Nesan. Special advertisements were published of decorative items for sale like celebratory posters, lamps and lights exclusively produced for the silver jubilee. Exclusive arrangements for the silver jubilee were discussed in every region of the island. On the 12th of august 1900 in Kandy at four pm at the Kandy Muslim school, thanks to the efforts of K.Mohammed Nooruddin, N.Pacha, S.Mohammed

²⁷⁴ Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire: Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline*, (Bloomsbury Publishing, Oct 22, 2014), p.104

²⁷⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS. 525/130/3

Ghouse Mesthriyar and K.Mohammed, more than one hundred Muslims were gathered to discuss on how to celebrate the 25th jubilee of Sultan Abdulhamid II and the preparations that were needed for it. Hence a committee was formed for this purpose K.Mohammed Yusuf requested Seyed Omar Ibnu Sali Madani Moulana to be appointed as the head of the committee and his suggestion was seconded by U.Cassim Lebbe. Consequently, a committee was organised to raise funds for the celebration and schedule of the day was decided by the committee as follows: 1. Food to be distributed in the mosques 2. Mosques and houses to be decorated with flags, lights 3. Shops were to be closed 4. To visit the mosque and make supplication for Sultan.²⁷⁶

Likewise a discussion of celebrating the jubilee took place in Jaffna and the subsequent was decided 1. 31st of August to be considered as a festive day 2. Food to be distributed 3. Supplications to be made for the long life of Sultan Abdulhamid II and for the stability of his Sultanate. 4. Mosques, houses, and streets to be decorated with flags, lights on the eve of Friday, Saturday. 5. Fireworks to be displayed.²⁷⁷ A group of youngsters in Mutwal gathered at the Al Majlis Islamiya hall on 25th the Sunday and agreed to celebrate the jubilee like no other festival. They also made a remark that none of the elders of the community had come forward thus thirteen of them secretly gathered to work on the celebration an appointed committee among them to raise funds for the jubilee. The members of the board as follow: head of the committee I.M. Uthman, secretary A.L. Abdulsamad, treasurer A.L. Ahmad Lebbe. Further in Colombo the Kolpity mosque too informed the public regarding their jubilee day preparations. The mosque requested the Muslim community to decorate their houses with colourful lights, shops to be closed for business and to celebrate the day. Apart from this the mosque had organised several other events for the day a special *Kutba* (Friday sermon) to make supplication for the long life of Sultan and his rule, *Mawlid sherif*²⁷⁸ to be recited, *baith* to be sung praising the caliph, food will be distributed to the poor, the mosque also welcomed Muslims from other parts of the island to join the *mawlid sherif* to celebrate the jubilee. The arrangements also included playing of musical instruments, firework display in the night. On the 24th of august

²⁷⁶ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.8.15

²⁷⁷ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.8.25

²⁷⁸ A collection of recitations on Prophet Muhammed saw, Hasan Aksoy, "MEVLİD", TDV *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/mevlid#4-turk-edebiyati>

1900 at the *Taika* Mosque of Bazaar Street, Badula a group of people gathered to discuss the preparations of the Jubilee. The following were decided: to gather at Bazaar Street and distribute food to the poor, make special supplication for the Sultan during the Friday prayers, Muslim shops, houses, and streets to be decorated with lights, to go on parade, from Friday evening to Saturday 6 pm -12 am fireworks and other traditional games would take place, and everyone should celebrate the day as a festival. Dikoya Muslims too made similar arrangements to celebrate the 25th jubilee apart from supplications to Sultan, decorations they also organised charity to the poor by distributing food, clothes, and gold. Recitation of *Mawlid sherif*, and a *kandhori* feast at the Gampola Kahatapitiya *Awliya* mosque was planned. In addition to these a store named Dikoya sheikh al Islam jubilee store to be opened on the 31st august as a commemoration to the 25th jubilee. Muslims from the southern part of the island also made arrangements for the special day. All the seven Jumma mosques of Galle region: fort, sola, katugoda, silumarai, navinna, kaluwella, kindura to make special prayers for the Sultan and his Empire, these mosques as well as the *Taikas* under them to be ornamented with lamps, streets, houses of Muslims to be lit with lamp decorations and charity to be given to the poor. Similar arrangements were conducted by the Muslims of Matara district too.²⁷⁹ Not only did the Muslim community put up huge preparations for the day, but they also kept each other informed about their events by posting painstakingly penned letters to the Muslim Nesan editor. Which in return encouraged everyone to celebrate the day with pomp and circumstance.

4.2.2 The celebration

The entire Ceylon Muslim community together merrily celebrated the 25th Jubilee of Sultan Abdulhamid II. It is not an overstatement to make that on the 31st august 1900 the people of Ceylon witnessed greatest festivities of the year. The mosques, houses, and streets of Muslims in every corner of the Island was adorned with colourful lights, lamps, and flags. Muslim owned businesses were closed for the day, men assembled for Friday prayers made supplications for the Sultan and involved in charitable activities such as feeding the poor, when it was time for the sundown sky of Ceylon was showered with dazzling fireworks people from all community rallied to

²⁷⁹*The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.8.29

witness this stunning eve. The weekly newspaper Muslim Nesan published illuminating letters sent from various parts of the island regarding the celebrations held in their cities.²⁸⁰

The celebrations in Colombo were in an impressive scale, every part of the city was adorned with lights, lamps and flags the atmosphere was filled with sounds of musical bands. Colombo being the busiest commercial hub the stores of Muslim traders were fully bedecked, apart from the shops of gem traders as they had left to their respective villages for the festive. Both sides of Umbrella store street were decorated with flags and lamps hence one could not distinct between the umbrellas and the vibrant flags. The decoration of Ibrahim's shop at Chatham Street caught everyone's eye since it brightened up the whole fort. People who visited the streets were greeted by sprinkling rose water. Every significant suburb in Colombo the New moor street, Siripina lane, Peer saibo street, Old moor street, Messenger street, Hulftsdrop, New Bazaar (Aluth Kade), Panchikawatta, Palathurai, Mutwal, Pettah, Maradana temple road, Maligawatta wops road, Dematagoda, Kompanya street (Slave island) and Kolpity was cladded with multicolour lights and flags. The jubilee coincided with Friday hence the Muslims gathered in Jumma mosques of Colombo made special supplications for the Sultan's long life and prosperity of his kingdom. Subsequently as a part of charity food were distributed to the poor. The *Takyias* and *Zaviyas* of Colombo too joined in the celebrations by decorating with lights, lamps, flags and distributing appetizers for the visitors. In the nightly hours vibrant lights were lit in every mosque creating an ambiance of *Eid*. A correspondent to Muslim Nesan reports "no celebration with such glory has ever happened in the Ceylon Muslim community thus this day will be etched in our hearts forever." Muslim social organisations too enthusiastically participated in the jubilee anniversary by hosting gatherings, ceremonial dinners where congratulatory letters were read. The celebrations didn't end in the land even the Muslim owned vessels docked in the Colombo port was adorned with flags, lamps. When the sun had set the radiance of these lamps turned the eve into day. The festivity in the air was not only felt by the

²⁸⁰*The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.9.1

Muslims the people from other communities too strolled in the streets to witness this glorious day.²⁸¹

Maradana Mosque celebration began with the Friday prayers supplications were made for the Sultan and *Khutbah* Friday sermon was read with translation. Following prayers charity was given to the poor, the students of the Maradana mosque sang songs praising the Padishah. With the sunset the mosque, houses and streets of Muslims were lit with lights and a band was played in the garden of the mosque. Subsequently the Ottoman honorary consul Abdul Majid effendi honoured the gathering along with him many other notable *alims*, *katibs* were to present. The French, Russian consul was also invited to the event they were greeted by Samsudeen the editor of Muslim Nesan and was ushered to their respective seats which were decorated with canopies with pearls and a coffee table with flowers. The leading members of the community Muhalam Wapchie Marikar, Meera Lebbe Marikar, Alim hajjiar, and Sulaiman Lebbe, Nuh Lebbe read congratulatory letters praising the Sultan and requested the Ottoman consul to accept it on behalf of him. Further special prayers were made by Falool ibnu Hasan Moulana for Sultan's longevity and to celebrate his golden jubilee. A speech on the history of Ottoman Empire was delivered by I.L.M Azeez and Nuh lebbe thanked the French, Russian consul for gracing the occasion. Organisers also expressed their gratitude to the Ottoman consul Abdul Majid whose family had held the prestigious position of Honorary consul for more than 40 years. His father Hussein Lebbe Marikar was the first Ottoman consul in Colombo who was recommended by Lord Stanley during his visit to Ceylon. The guests and the visitors were also served food and the reception ended at 12 am along with a fireworks display.²⁸²

Muslims residing in Galle southern province of the island too proudly celebrated the 25th jubilee. The city was adorned with flags, vibrant lights and lamps and houses decorated with fortunes attracted everyone. The whole of fort was lit with brightness and people were competing each other with their decorations. The guests who call on the Muslim households received excellent care; the Europeans were

²⁸¹ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.9.1

²⁸² *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.9.1

invited for dinner. Charity was given to less privileged. Dancers and youngsters wearing Turkish costumes (presumably the fez) paraded on the streets and others enjoyed their carriage rides. Nobles from the Muslim community had decided to send a congratulatory letter directly to the Sultan.²⁸³

Kandy residents commenced their festivities with making special prayers at the Kings street Taika mosque supplications were made by Seyed Umar Ibnu Madani Salih Moulana the prayers were attended by special guests' King of (illegible), and his ministers were welcomed with sprinkling rose water. Every Muslim residence in Kandy was decorated with flags bearing crescent and star, lamps. The commercial neighbourhood of Kandy Colombo street displayed beautiful pandols, shops were decked with Chinese lamps. Following it at 1 pm at Castle hill twenty-five celebratory gunshots were fired and a congratulatory letter was sent to the Colombo consul. At 7.30 pm musical band was played, 8 pm fireworks displayed with firecrackers imported from Chennai notables like Arabi Pasha joined to witness this memorable eve and the night was ended with recitation of *mawlid*, food distribution. *Meera Makam* mosque, Hanafi mosque also joined in the celebrations. Kandy line mosque too distributed food and a foundation was laid for a mosque building. Katugala mosque distributed rice and curry, *baiths* were sung, fireworks were displayed. Malapudiya mosque *Katib* entered the premises with a parade and made supplications for the Sultan consequently foundation was laid for a *hawul* (a pool providing water for ablution) *mawlid* was recited and food was distributed. Cassim Lebbe Marikar's house was recognised as the most beautifully decorated one.²⁸⁴

The non-Muslims commented that they had never witnessed such a grand celebration in Kandy in the past. It is in Kandy the sacred tooth relic of lord buddha is housed thus a splendid *perahara* procession with several dancers, drummers and elephants takes place every year to pay homage to the sacred tooth relic.²⁸⁵ In spite of it the above remark on the jubilee celebration in Kandy by the non-Muslim community

²⁸³ Ibid, *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)* ,1900.9.5

²⁸⁴ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)* ,1900.9.5

²⁸⁵ Sumanasuriya, K. T. W. "Some beliefs and practices among the Sinhala people." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Sri Lanka Branch* 31 (1986), pp.115–54

certainly makes you wonder the grandeur of the 25th jubilee ceremony held in Kandy.²⁸⁶

Muslims of Kurunegala too joined the celebrations by decorating their streets, giving charity, and parading in their carriages. Beruwala Muslim community celebrated the day with special prayers for the Sultan and offering food for the less fortunate. The following mosques in the community joined the celebration Beruwala Sheikh Mustafa Takiya, Molliyamala, Maradana, China fort mosques following the supplications for Sultan, *salawat* (salutation upon Prophet Muhammed) was recited. Thalawagala Muslim community decorated their houses, mosques streets and recited *mawlid* after Friday prayers. In Welimada the celebrations lasted for 2 days with fireworks, decorations done with lights and Ottoman flags along with religious activities such as the recitation of *mawlid*, *rathib* and food for one thousand people were distributed.²⁸⁷

In Aluthgama adults and children eagerly participated in the ceremony of the jubilee. Streets, houses were decorated with pandols, lamps and flags with Sultan's name on it. after attending the Friday prayers at the grand mosque and making supplications for the Sultan, singing baiths. People paraded on the streets while playing music, singing songs and some joined the parade with their vehicles, others by foot. The streets were lit with brightness people enjoyed the night with religious music and fireworks. After a parade of two miles *kandori* dinner was served at the mosque children and adults recited *mawlid burda* thus ended night with prayers for Sultan.²⁸⁸

Mutwal Muslims also joined in making prayers for the Sultan and sang Arabic songs praising him in addition distributed food for around four hundred people as a part of the jubilee celebration. *Takiyas* and *zaviyas* were also adorned with multicoloured lights, lamps which attracted people from other communities to promenade in the streets to observe the celebrations. In Deltota Pattiyaagama Muslim shops decorated, at the Friday prayer *baiths* were sung praising Sultan, *Kandori* was given to the poor and in the night colourful lights were lit music were played and

²⁸⁶ Ibid

²⁸⁷ Ibid

²⁸⁸ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.9.5

fireworks were displayed. Ukwella Muslims celebrated the jubilee like *Eid* with pandols, fireworks.²⁸⁹

Hatton one of the major tea estate towns in the central province of the island too joined in the ceremony of silver jubilee of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Muslim owned shops were closed for business and workers were given holiday to celebrate the day. Following the Friday prayers supplications were made for the Sultan and the Islamic flag crescent and star was hoisted, twenty-one celebratory gunshots were fired. Islamic Music was played, and food was distributed to everyone who visited the mosque until 5 pm in the evening more than one hundred poor Muslims were given food. The streets were decorated with banana branches, vibrant lights, flags, and flowers. Music and other entertainments lasted till 12 am in the night fireworks were displayed, people enjoyed the eve singing songs and praising Sultan as well as praying for his 50th jubilee celebration. It was the prominent Muslim traders who sponsored to decorate the mosques, distribute food in Dikoya, Hatton and Thalawakala central province areas. Watagoda mosque was decorated with flowers, *mawlid sharif* was recited, food was distributed, flags with “May the Sultan long live” were raised. To mark the commemoration of the jubilee agent Thanjaoor kadar pacha saibo sheik islam opened a shop at the commercial area and named it Jubilee store along with it displayed a portrait of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Celebrations at the Nuwara Eliya hill country city was organised by Abraham Sahibo company shops were closed, streets were decorated, Muslims gathered in the mosque prayed for Sultan’s long life and food, clothes, gold charity were given to the poor. People from other communities and Englishmen assembled to witness the celebration.²⁹⁰

Muslims of Gampola too hosted a large ceremony. A flag resembling the ottoman banner was carried on a horse with a band and procession took place. Well-attired Muslims joined the *Khutbah* prayed for the Sultan it is reported more than one thousand Muslims were gathered. Subsequently ghee rice was distributed to the poor they too made supplications for the long life of Sultan. The ceremony continued with fireworks at 6 pm along with *mawlid*, *baiths*. People from every community assembled

²⁸⁹ Ibid

²⁹⁰ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.9.5

to see this festival. English, Tamils, Burghers even the Muslims have not witnessed such a splendid celebration. The Englishmen who were gathered there also wished for the long life of Sultan. The correspondent of the letter thanked the editor of Muslim Nesan for encouraging the public to host a magnificent jubilee celebration.²⁹¹

The Muslim Nesan weekly also published the agenda observed by the Ottoman honorary consul on the 31st august 1900. At 2 pm foundation was laid to the Hameediah school adjoining the New moor street mosque. Subsequently at 3 pm he visited the Kompanya street Wekanda mosque laid foundation for the minaret, visited the Akbar mosque in Kompanya street, laid foundation at Shazuliya zaviya in messenger street and delivered speech on Sultan, at 5 pm visited Haji Ibrahim bin Ahmed's building in Main street which was named as "Hameedia Palace", met the Taika students of 2nd cross street, graced the "Mohammedean" society dinner at 7 pm and accepted the congratulatory letter, attended the Maradana mosque program at 10 pm and ended his day paying a call to the Palandura Hameediah society at 11pm.²⁹²

Several mosques in the Colombo suburbs participated in the jubilee ceremony. The mosques performed special supplications for the Sultan, food was offered to everyone who visited the mosques, charity to less privileged and the Friday mosques including the small mosques were decorated with flags, radiant lights, and lamps. In addition to these some of the mosques also had ceremonies with band playing music with songs praising the Sultan and the night was ended with splendid fireworks show. Masjid Akbar in Kompanya street delivered the Friday sermon with translations, Wekanda mosque minaret foundation was laid by the consul and at 7pm around 40 children marched around the street singing songs, Shazuliya mosque too attracted a huge crowd from all over the island, a proficient trader and philanthropist Carimjee Jafferji distributed food for students and the poor he also gave gold to the less privileged as a part of the jubilee celebrations, Messenger street *Muhyiddin takiya* mosque students fervently decorated the mosques and distributed food for the guests,

²⁹¹ Ibid

²⁹² *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.9.1

Aluthkade had magnificent pandols put up in the streets and Sheik Ismail Lebbe Marikar, Alim Saib made special prayers for the Sultan.²⁹³

The 25th jubilee ceremony attracted an extraordinary attention of the Muslim community despite the distance between the heart of the Ottoman Empire Istanbul and Ceylon. the Muslims of the island with high spirits celebrated the accession to throne anniversary in the most elaborate way. The honorary consul Abdul Majid did not fail to brief his superiors in London regarding the massive celebrations that took place across the island, a telegram was dispatched to the Ottoman ambassador in London, and it was published on the Western Morning News:

I am desired be the Mussulmans of Colombo to convey through your Excellency to our most gracious Majesty the Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan, Calipha, Defender of the Faithful, their heartfelt congratulations and special prayer for His Majesty's long life and reign, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the Ottoman Throne: and meanwhile to lay the foundation-stone today of a Mussulman boys' school, named Mudraseth-al-Hamidia, in honour of the same.²⁹⁴

Subsequently, On the 14th of May 1902 Colombo honorary consul Abdul Majid reports to Antopulo Pasha the London ambassador to the Imperial Ottoman regarding the progress of the school "*Al Madrasathul Hameediyah*" whose foundation was laid by the Colombo honorary consul in 1900 in commemoration of his imperial majesty Sultan Abdulhamid II's 25th jubilee.²⁹⁵ Further in a letter dated on the 17th of May 1902, the consul writes a letter attaching some song books compiled by the *Jamathul Hameediyah* society as a present to the Sultan and requests for a decoration as a recognition.²⁹⁶ Unfortunately the copy of the mentioned song books isn't available today. In addition to these events the Moors' union organised a meeting to celebrate the jubilee anniversary on the 31st august 1900 at Colombo. The president of the union I.L.M. Abdul Azeez delivered a speech in Tamil honouring the Sultan and his services rendered to the Ottoman Empire as well as the Muslim world. This speech was later

²⁹³ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.9.1

²⁹⁴ *Western Morning News*, 31st August 1900

²⁹⁵ HR.SFR.3.535/50/2/1

²⁹⁶ HR.SFR.3.516/32/1/1

published into a book known as “Sultan’s Silver Jubilee” a copy of this book was sent to the London ambassador requesting it to be forwarded to Istanbul thus the book was received on the 6th of October 1900.²⁹⁷

The book briefly describes about Sultan’s birth, his family, and the famous expedition he took to Europe with his uncle the martyred Sultan Abdul Aziz the narrator also remarks that the trip to the advancing Europe gave the Sultan the needful insight and helped him in his time of ruling. Further he explains the circumstances that resulted in Abdulhamid II enthronement on the 31st of August 1876, although he initially did not intend to become a Sultan, he accepted it due to the dire situation of the Empire since a strong leadership was needed to steer it in the right direction. Further I.L.M. Abdul Azeez speaks about the conspiracies that took place to dethrone Abdulhamid II and reinstate Murad V. Moreover, he points out the condition of the Empire when Abdulhamid II was enthroned, the Empire was struggling with crippling debt caused by the Russo Turkish war, the army was disbanded, thousands of people were killed and displaced further the transportation system as well as the education in the Empire was suffering. He then explains how the Sultan initiated to reform the administration by curbing the powers of corrupted Pashas, abolishing unwanted expenditures that were practiced by his predecessors, established telegram services around the Empire, kept himself well informed about the foreign developments. While making all these reforms Sultan held the absolute power the direct administration in his own hands even though it was not accorded with the European norm and certain groups were not in favour of this, he was compelled to do so in order to protect the Empire from dishonest Pashas and foreign conspirators. However, he says due to these vigorous measures of Sultan, Turkey has advanced since 1878 and it has turned out to be more progressive than the last 50 years. The transportation system has improved with rail tracks stretching more than 2000 miles, new docks in Smyrna, Istanbul, business hubs were created, zoos and botanical gardens to grow exotic plants were opened, mining excavations took place in different parts of the Empire, inaugurated the first bank to assist the farmers, schools and scholarships to France were established to study agriculture, hospitals and orphanages were constructed in Istanbul, education

²⁹⁷ Y.A.HUS.411/95/3/1, 411/95/4/1

reforms were made and new schools providing education in different fields were initiated. In addition to these he mentions the new railway line between Damascus to Mecca that is under construction is the most significant railway project to the Muslims around the world since it will ease the journey of hajj pilgrims. Further the speaker mentions about a latest development published on the newspaper on his 25th Jubilee the Sultan has announced of introducing a new school in Istanbul with professor Vambery.

He then continues to quote an English parliamentarian Sir Ellis Ashmead Bartlett²⁹⁸ “Sultan has been successful to maintain the balance of power in Europe and East despite the domestic, foreign oppositions.” He then further speaks about the Sultan’s reforms and achievements in the last 25 years and mentions how Turkish made products are being sold abroad, the participation of Ottoman representatives in the L’Exposition de Paris in 1900 and then continues his talk with the Question of East, Armenian issue. In 1894-95 during Armenian uprising in Istanbul despite the fact that 262 people were killed in one massacre this incident was exaggerated it was published that more than thirty thousand people were killed due to such false news and allegations the British people began to grow an animosity towards the Sultan and the Turks. The speech also covered the topics of Greco Turkish war of 1897, the Ottoman British relationship, and the importance of maintaining a cordial association with the Sultan to secure the support of the Indian Muslims and he quotes during the Delhi revolt the British had to appeal for the support of former Sultan Abdul Majid to suppress its Muslim subjects. He further mentions more than sixty million Muslims resides in British India and they acknowledge Sultan as their Caliph the respect shown towards the Sultan is a respect for themselves an insult for him is a disrespect caused towards them thus it is smart for the British not to be against the Sultan. In addition to this he also cites that the Ceylon Muslims also have recognised the Sultan as the caliph and his name being mentioned during the Friday sermon is a proof to this statement. The Moors’ union meeting ended with prayers for the Sultan and his Empire.

²⁹⁸ Sir Ellis Ashmead Bartlett’s book *The Battlefields of Thessaly. With first-hand experiences in Turkey and Greece*, (London: John Murray, 1897) gives first hand experiences of the Thessaly war and insights on the Armenian massacre along with his first-hand experiences of meeting Abdulhamid II

It is noted that the president of the Moors' union I.L.M Azeez²⁹⁹ has acquired much of his information regarding the Sultan Abdulhamid II and the Ottoman Empire through Sir Ellis Ashmead Bartlett's book "The Battlefields of Thessaly published in the year 1897. Sir Ellis has shared his first-hand experiences of the Greco Turco war of 1897 along with his personal encounter with the Sultan Abdulhamid II at the Yıldız palace in this book. However, what is emphasised in this episode is the attentiveness given by the Ceylon Moors particularly the leaders of the community, to keep themselves informed on the subject of Ottoman Empire. It is apparent that they did not only go through newspapers to acquire their information on the developments of Turkey but also read books concerning the topic. I.L.M Azeez has also quoted few Arabic newspapers on his speech presented on the 31st august 1900 thus not only English sources were read but they also sought to other sources like Arabic to update themselves on the events happening in Turkey. The forerunners of the community Siddi Lebbe, I.L.M Azeez utilised every opportunity at their hand to enlighten the Muslim community on matters of Ottoman Empire and the Sultan thus they also founded the newspapers Muslim Nesan, Muslim Guardian where separate columns were dedicated for news from Turkey and her history.

The 33rd jubilee anniversary was also commemorated with equal attention and enthusiasm. Announcement was published in the Muslim Nesan paper informing on how to celebrate the day. The paper encouraged the elite, the Muslim social organisations, and other notables like Marikars, Katibs, Matichas to come forward and host the jubilee celebrations in their respective regions. Request was made to close the Muslim owned shops on the jubilee day, offer two *rakats* of prayer, houses, streets to be adorned with flags, lights, charity to be given, the day should be celebrated as a holiday and congratulatory letters should be sent to the Sultan. In addition to the jubilee celebration the Colombo Hameediah society invited the Muslims to join the celebrations of the opening of the Hejaz railway on the 1st of September 1908.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ It is important note that I.L.M. Abdul Azeez didn't pursue his education beyond 6th grade. Hence, the profound knowledge he possessed on Ottoman and World affairs is commendable. A.M.A Azeez "I.L.M. Abdul Azeez Birth Centenary Address", *MICH Silver Jubilee Souvenir 1944-1969*, p. 16

³⁰⁰ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1908.8.15

A comprehensive report on the celebrations of the 33rd jubilee in Ceylon was sent to the London embassy. The honorary consul Macan Markar states the whole Muslim community as one body rejoiced the 33rd jubilee and the completion of the Hamidiye Hejaz railway to its final destination Medina. the numerous letters and telegraphs that were posted praising and congratulating Sultan affirms this statement. As a part of the commemoration charity was given to the poor and grand festivals were arranged by the Muslim social organisations in Colombo. the “*Zaviye al Fajir*” organisation delivered the honorary consul a silver chest with congratulatory letters to be sent to Istanbul. The head of this organization is sheikh Muhammed Ibrahim al fas eshfatullah who is from Mecca. The congratulatory letter was penned by his secretary Sheikh Ismail ali. And the festivals were organised by Haji sheikh abdulwahab and Haji izzedin. In addition to these two social organisations namely “*Al jamiathul islamiya*” and “The Moors’ union” held a gathering on the 1st of September to commemorate the 33rd jubilee and the opening of the Hejaz railway. Noteworthy speeches expressing the Muslim community’s sentiment and delight were delivered at the meeting. Further the Hameediah society in Colombo too organised an event to commemorate the 33rd jubilee anniversary. The event was organised by the following permanent members of the society: Abdul Rahman member of the Ceylon legislative council, Abdul Cader, Abdul Azeez, Noordeen Haji, Meera Lebbe Marikar, Mohammed Haji, Ahamad Lebbe Marikar and P.T Gouth. The meeting was also graced by the honorary consul Macan Markar thus he was requested to convey their sincere wishes to the Sultan. Ottoman London embassy thus forwards the above report to Istanbul on 29th October 1908 and notifies the silver chest will be dispatched to Istanbul through the Medoc ship departing towards Istanbul on the 18th of the month.³⁰¹ According to the correspondence between the London embassy and Ottoman foreign ministry it is understood the silver chest has been received by Istanbul authority on the 23rd of November 1908.³⁰² On the 14th February 1909 the Foreign ministry informs the London ambassador to convey the Colombo consul the Sultan appreciates the affection expressed by the Muslim population in Ceylon.³⁰³

³⁰¹ BOA, Y.A.HUS. 525/130/3/2

³⁰² BOA, Y.A.HUS. 525/144

³⁰³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.604/36

The 1900 and 1908 celebrations stand as a testimony for the unwavering support and loyalty the Muslims of Ceylon had towards the Ottoman Sultan. They did not only celebrate him at specific occasions they had welcomed him in their households and hearts as their caliph thus recited the *khutbah* in his name every Fridays throughout the island, engaged in supplication for his long life and prosperity of the Ottoman Empire during Miraj day³⁰⁴, his portrait printed in Germany adorned the walls of every Muslim household in important cities and suburbs, matters relating to Sultan and Turkey were discussed in all significant social and religious gatherings, wealthy merchants uninformed of English hired interpreters to read the pamphlets, books and periodicals that were published regarding Ottoman Empire and its ruler, new-borns and institutions were named after the Sultan. The ones who visited Istanbul were conferred with the epithet “Effendi,” a title as prominent as “Haji,” Moor men incorporated the fez crimson Ottoman hat in their attire. Besides the Ottoman consul in Colombo was honoured and attained a position beyond his diplomatic title he became one of the chief leaders of the community.³⁰⁵ Accordingly proving the admiration and regard the Muslims of Ceylon had towards the Sultan Abdulhamid II and the Ottoman Empire. This sentiment and their spiritual allegiance to the Sultan did not hamper their political obedience to the Queen of England. It may be appropriate to state, it is this attitude of the Ceylon Muslims which enabled them to facilitate publicly mass celebrations and events honouring the Sultan of Turkey regardless of living under the British flag.

³⁰⁴ BOA, Y.A.HUS.424/18 Letter from the honorary consul on the 12th of November 1901 informing the Muslim community in Ceylon made special supplications for the Sultan on the Miraj night which coincided on a Friday night

³⁰⁵ A.M.A. Azeez, “I.L.M. Abdul Azeez Birth Centenary,” *Moors’ Islamic Cultural Home Silver Jubilee Souvenir 1944-1969*, p.16, “A view of Pan Islam”, *The West Reappraised*, (Ceylon: Saman Publishers LTD, Maharagama, 1964), pp. 137,138

4.3 The Sojourn of S.M. Tevfik issued in *Sebilürreşad*

The *Sebilürreşad* magazine printed in Istanbul dedicated a column for the travel memoirs dispatched by its correspondent S.M. Tevfik from his sojourn in the Indian ocean. Tevfik with the end of his exploration in Madras visits Ceylon in the year 1913. The journey of Ceylon starts with the title “Madras dan Seylan Adasına” (from madras to the island of Ceylon). he explains the readers the route taken by him to reach Ceylon that is a journey of 24hours by train and another 12 hours by ship. The columnist gives extensive details about the interior of the train and his journey and his arrival to Ceylon.³⁰⁶ he also speaks about the geographical location of Ceylon remarks that her shape bears a resemblance to that of a pear or a heart. In the succeeding pages of the magazine, he writes about the population, ethnic details of the island. further gives the reader an idea about the island’s transportation states within two days the important regions of the island could be toured by train, and one could take a trip to every corner of Colombo by a hand drawn cart and draws comparison between the trams in Madras and Colombo: the Colombo trams are much cleaner and cheap. Similar to a conventional travel guide he lists out the finest hotels in Colombo: the Galle face grand oriental, Globe, Peria British India hotel, Bristol and leaves a special remark on Mount Lavinia hotel’s gallery which has been according to the American, Australian style. Apart from these the writer also gave lengthy descriptions on the plantations, botanicas and minerals of the colony quoting “the English call, it gem country.” S.M. Tevfik also touched upon the religious concerns of the island while suggesting “If an *alim* (Islamic scholar) who knows Tamil is sent to the island more than 1 million people could be converted to Islam” furthermore he also shares interesting facts such as how elephants are used in constructing huge buildings. Certainly, such details might have sparked the inquisitiveness of a reader in the Ottoman lands in 1913.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁶ S. M. Tevfik, “Madras dan Seylan Adasına,” *Sebilürreşad* adet 270/153,154

³⁰⁷ Ibid, 155, 271/170, 272/186,187,273/203

Moreover, S.M. Tevfik also writes to the magazine his encounter with the Ottoman honorary consul Macan Markar. What's intriguing here is that the writer saw a villa similar to that of those waterfront residences on the Bosphorus, which belonged to the honorary consul. Inspired from his trip to Istanbul three years ago the honorary consul constructed his residence resembling the waterfront houses and called it the "Villa Stamboul" and it is valued at five thousand English pounds. Further the writer mentions that every Fridays the ottoman flag is hoisted at the villa³⁰⁸ perhaps indicating availability of the consul at his residence or since Friday is a sacred day for the Muslims. Villa Stamboul in Galle road had continued to serve as a prestigious residence despite the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Presently the street in which Villa Stamboul is situated is known as the Stamboul Place.

The Ottoman explorer during his stay in Colombo got the opportunity to participate in one of the historic events of the Ceylon Muslim community. The Muslim community in Colombo welcomed the renowned Indian jurist Dr. Syed H.R. Abdul Majid in Colombo on his enroute to India from England. S.M. Tevfik introduces the Dr Majid to his readers as the Doctor who delivers law, religious lessons to the immigrant officers, Islam, and Hindu organisation in London besides, he states prior to the arrival of the doctor, local newspapers published lengthy articles about his activities. One such newspaper the "Ceylonese" also published a portrait of Dr. Majid.³⁰⁹ A large crowd greeted Dr. Majid on his arrival to Colombo and all his expenditures including accommodation and transportation to India from Colombo was funded by the local Muslims. A reception followed by Tea at the Galle face hotel was organised by pioneers of the community together with honorary consul Macan Markar. In Tevfik's words a reception that well suited Dr. Majid's honour was presented by the community. Following it Dr. Majid also delivered speech at the Hameediah hall, on the heading "Muslims and their difficulties" where he spoke about reviving Ottoman Empire against its enemies. Tevfik also makes another observation there were not any headgear other than fez in the conference hall.³¹⁰ Thus, asserting the fact Moor men did wear fez in their everyday life however this tradition is now only limited to

³⁰⁸ *Sebilürreşad* , 270/155

³⁰⁹ Sameer bin Haji Ismail Effendi, "The visit of Dr. H.R. Abdul Majid, L.L.D, to Ceylon," *The African Times and Orient Review*, (Nov-Dec 1913), p. 213

³¹⁰ *Sebilürreşad*, 276/250

special occasions such as wedding ceremonies in certain cities and families in the Island.

Further on the same event S.M. Tevfik also addresses the gathering while talking about the political tension between the Ottoman Empire and Britain he also sees it fitting for him as a representative of the Ottoman lands to convey his gratitude to the Islamic world for supporting the Ottomans during the war. Soon after his address the author was honoured with a garland of flowers a traditional way of respecting the guest. He also did participate in another event related to the Ottoman Empire organised by the Moors' union president I.L.M. Azeez and chaired by honorary consul Macan Markar.³¹¹ Writer's observations during his stay in Ceylon affirms the affection and fervent the Ceylon Muslims carry for the Sultan the caliph of Islam and the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, his articles published in the *Sebilürreşad* magazine would have certainly ignited an interest on the minds of the Ottoman readers regarding the little island in the Indian ocean. Whether someone got encouraged to travel to Ceylon later is a matter yet to be researched.

³¹¹ *Sebilürreşad*, 276/250-253

சித்திரக்காசித் தீபங்கள்.
 சித்திரக்காசித்
 விளக்குகள்.
 சித்திரக்காசித் லாம்புகள்
 பிரதானமாய்
 உதுமானிய சுல்தான்
 அவர்களின்
 25ம் வருட முடிசூட்டிய
 கொண்டாட்டத்துக்காக
 செய்யப்பட்டன.
 அதிகமா யெடுப்பவர்க
 ளுக்கு விவசகாயம்
 வேண்டியவரின் கொழும்பு
 பிறக்கோட்டை மலிபன்னிசி 61ம்
 நம்பர் வீட்டில் பெற்றுக்கொள்
 ளலாம். 16-8-1900.

Figure 32 Advertisement published in Muslim Nesan decorative lamps sold for the 25th Jubilee Celebrations. *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.8.18

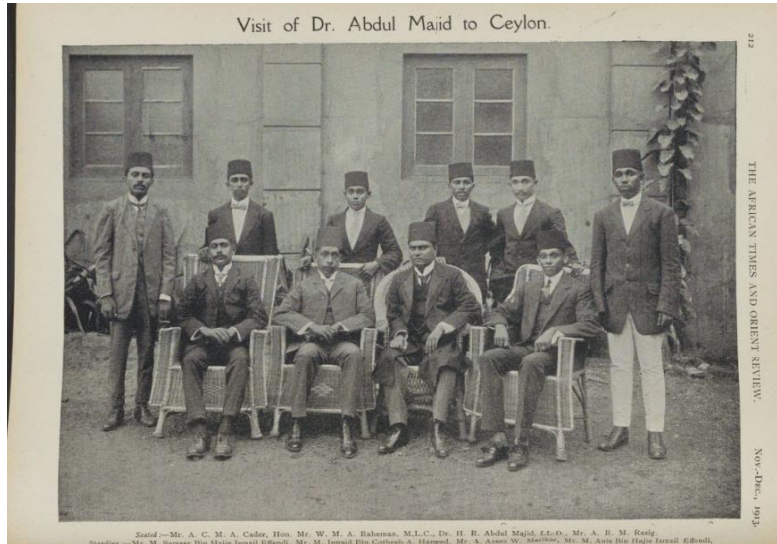


Figure 31 Photograph of Dr. Abdul Majid seated in the centre and Ceylon Moor men wearing Ottoman fez. "The visit of Dr. H.R. Abdul Majid, L.L.D. to Ceylon," *The African Times and Orient Review*, (Nov-Dec 1913), p.212

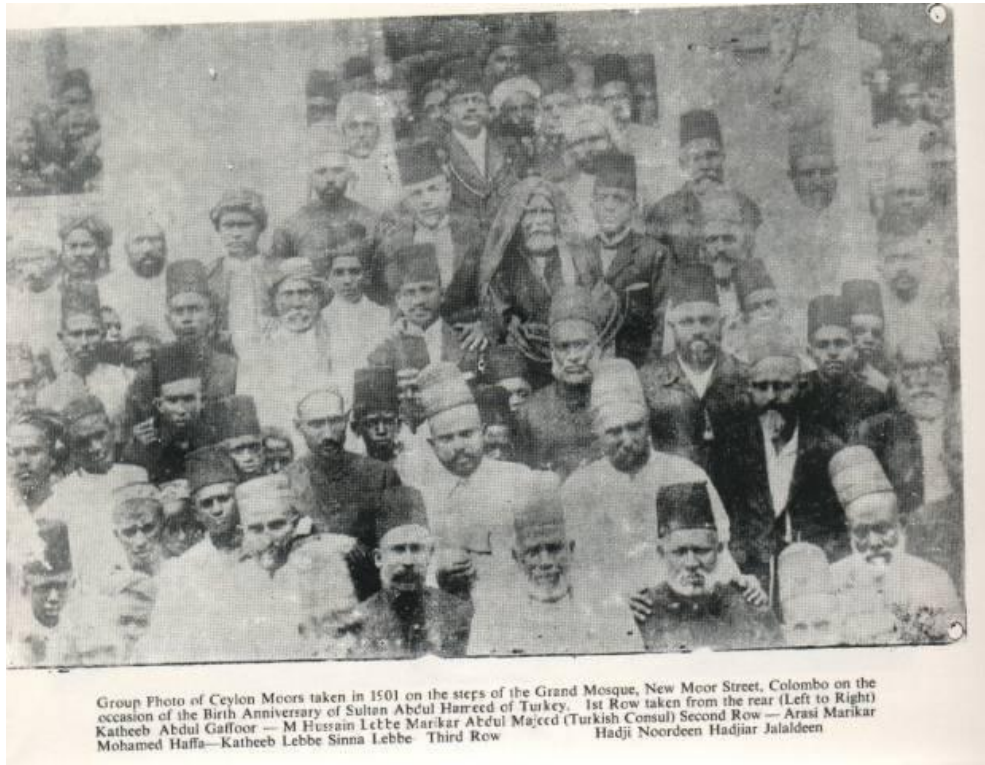


Figure 33 A group of notable Ceylon Moors including Ottoman Honorary consul Abdul Majid in front of the Grand Mosque of Ceylon, New Moor street Colombo. On the 25th Silver Jubilee celebration of Abdulhamid II year 1900. *Moors' Islamic Cultural Home, Souvenir*

CHAPTER V: ARABI PASHA'S EXILE IN CEYLON

5.1 Arabi Pasha's arrival to Ceylon

Although Ceylon Muslims were settlers of the island for centuries and were active in trade and commerce of the island. As a community they did not possess a national leader who was necessary to steer the community towards the needful reforms in the field of education during the 19th century³¹². It was Ahmad Orabi El Misri an Egyptian nationalist who revolted against the British in Tel al Kabir in 1882 filled the void of a national leader in the Ceylon Muslim population. Arabi Pasha and his supporters Ali Fehmi, Mahmoud Fehmi, Toulba Pasha, Mohammad Sami al-Barudi, Abdul Al Helmie and Yacoub were exiled to Ceylon in 1883 after facing a trial for being guilty of treason, rebel and guilty of mutiny as an officer of army. Arabi Pasha epithet as Arabi Pasha fought to free Egypt from the hands of foreign exploitation and even though, the revolt against the Britain's ended unsuccessful Arabi Pasha was revered as a national hero who opposed the British Empire for the sake of his native land and his faith. On the dawn of 26th December 1882 Arabi Pasha and his lieutenants boarded steamer "Mareotis"³¹³ from Suez on their lengthy journey to Colombo³¹⁴. The exiles consisted of a total of 54 individuals including the 7 Pashas, 19 wives, female children and 17 male children³¹⁵. The Ottoman consul in Colombo informed the local government of organising a reception to welcome the exile Arabi Pasha and he has been provided with a sum of money for that purpose by the local mosques of the town³¹⁶. Arabi Pasha and his companions were enthusiastically welcomed to the shores of Ceylon on the 10th of January 1883. However, they did not land until the next day before 11 a.m. due to certain police arrangements. There was a large crowd to witness

³¹² Dr. Vijaya Samaraweera, "Aspects of Muslim Revivalist Movement in the late Nineteenth Century". Dr. M.A.M Shukri (Ed), *Muslims of Sri Lanka Avenues to Antiquity*. (Beruwala: Jamiah Naleemiah Institute, 1986), pp.367-368

³¹³ *The Graphic*, 24th February 1883

³¹⁴ Mohamed Sameer, "Arabi Pasha", *Moors' Islamic Cultural Home Silver Jubilee Souvenir 1944-1969*, p. 29

³¹⁵ Arthur C. Dep, *Orabi Pasha and the Egyptian exiles*, (Colombo: Ahamed Orabi Pasha Commemoration Souvenir, 1980), p.7

³¹⁶ *The Friends of India and Statesman*, 9th January 1883

the arrival of Arabi Pasha nevertheless, they conducted themselves in a peaceful manner and some of the impatient Ceylon Muslims hired boats and rode them to the side of the steam ship to get a glimpse of the Egyptian Pashas. Once Arabi Pasha descended from the vessel the crowd began to flock towards the jetty to witness Arabi Pasha. Further on their way to the carriage the crowd profoundly saluted at the Pashas, they acknowledged the salutations with a curtsy and Arabi Pasha kissed the hands of a *Mollah* who had greeted him.³¹⁷ The arrival of Arabi Pasha to Ceylon was widely reported in international and local print medias along with illustrations on the newspaper *The Graphic* on 24th February 1883. Following his arrival on the 13th of February 1883 the Ottoman consul in Colombo notified the Foreign ministry in Istanbul regarding the arrival of Arabi Pasha and his companions along with their families and inquires how should the exiles be treated as he has not been provided with any information concerning the subject³¹⁸. During their exile in Ceylon Arabi and the six of his companions were provided with an allowance of £600 to £435 per annum by the Egyptian government which the Pashas found inadequate³¹⁹. The governor of Ceylon J. Douglas made arrangements for the accommodation of the exiles and their families at Braybrooke house, Struan house and Lake house in Colombo and for their medical needs Dr. White was appointed³²⁰ hence, the Exiles lived in lavishly furnished comfortable residence in Ceylon.³²¹ Nevertheless, they were under police surveillance directly under the Inspector general of Police, yet the restrictions were only imposed on the 7 Pashas, their dependents could travel as they pleased anywhere in the island.³²²

In his land of exile Arabi began to acquire a considerable amount of popularity among the Muslim society. Elites of the community expressed their interest in befriending him and the rest of the coreligionist found a charismatic leader in Arabi Pasha. As a result of the sentimental affection the Ceylon Muslims had towards the Ottoman Sultan, they viewed Arabi as a representative of the Sultan. His attire the fez

³¹⁷ *The Graphic*, 24th February 1883

³¹⁸ BOA, HR.TO.333/57

³¹⁹ Arthur C. Dep, *Orabi Pasha and the Egyptian exiles*, 21

³²⁰ *Ibid*, 17

³²¹ Mohamed Sameer, "Exile Who made big impact here". A.I.L. Marikar, A.L.M. Lafir, A.H.Macan Markar, *Glimpses from the past of the Moors of Sri Lanka*, (Colombo: Moors Islamic Cultural Home, 1976), p.70

³²² Arthur C. Dep, *Orabi Pasha and the Egyptian exiles*, 16

cap, European trousers, his title Pasha and his popularity among the British government created this impression on the minds of the Ceylon Muslims. Thus, Arabi Pasha's actions and advice received an eminent acknowledgement amongst the Muslim society.³²³ Arabi Pasha had recognized the importance of modern education reforms that took place in Egypt in the 19th century³²⁴. Hence, he and his companions were interested in learning English and even enrolled their children including their daughters³²⁵ to missionary schools like the Kingswood college in Kandy.³²⁶ At a time when the local Muslims were fearing to admit their children to missionary schools, Arabi Pasha countered this misconception stating his children are well grounded in the knowledge of Quran therefore, it was impossible for them to become Christians³²⁷ and he did not object his daughters to learn Christianity. As education was his prime concern, he encouraged them to be educated at English schools.³²⁸

5.1.1 Arabi Pasha's activities in Ceylon

Prior to Arabi Pasha's arrival as an exile to Ceylon in 1883, Siddi Lebbe the first Muslim proctor in Ceylon encouraged English education in the Muslim community, realising the significance of English education for the future generation to secure government jobs and to pursue higher education in the field of law, medicine. Nevertheless, not many supported Siddi Lebbe in his novel endeavours. It was amidst this climate Arabi Pasha arrived in Ceylon and Siddi Lebbe who had observed the reputation and popularity of Arabi Pasha among the Muslim community approached him to endorse and encourage his views in modern English education. Further details on this subject are discussed in the following chapter. Siddi Lebbe published long interviews with Arabi Pasha on his weekly journal "Muslim Nesan." According to the journal Arabi Pasha's residence Lake house at Colombo had guests frequently visiting the Pasha and his residence has almost turned into a mosque. Arabi Pasha had drawn

³²³ M.M. Mahroof, "The Muslim Education in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) 1881-1901", *Islamic Culture* vol XLVII no1, (India, January 1973), pp. 306-307

³²⁴ A.M.A. Azeez, "Arabi Pasha", *The West Reappraised*, (Maharagama, Ceylon: Saman Publishers LTD, 1964), p. 128

³²⁵ *The Graphic*, 24th February 1883

³²⁶ Mohamed Sameer, "Exile Who made big impact here", p. 71

³²⁷ Dr. Vijaya Samaraweera, "Aspects of Muslim Revivalist Movement in the late Nineteenth Century" 370-371

³²⁸ *The Graphic*, 24th February 1883

a great deal of attention of the Colombo Muslims that some of them considered it as a duty to greet Arabi Pasha before leaving to work. He was also hosted in several mosques and the Muslim community were informed of his arrival prior to the events. Thus, on Friday's whatever mosque Arabi Pasha would choose to attend is certainly crowded with worshippers³²⁹. Arabi Pasha was not treated like an exile rather he received the treatment of a Sultan in Ceylon. Elites of the Muslim community called upon him and held banquets in the honour of the Pasha.³³⁰ The Ceylon Muslims viewed the Egyptian exiles with the highest regard and as martyrs to their religion, Arabi was the champion of it.³³¹ Irrespective of the fame and respect Arabi Pasha had gained in Ceylon he did not involve himself in the political arena rather Arabi Pasha invested his time and expertise in the upsurge of modern education in the Muslim community, along with Siddi Lebbe and philanthropist Wapitche Marikar. With their joint effort along with Arabi Pasha they achieved to commence the first "Anglo Muhammadan" school in Colombo in the year 1884³³² additional particulars of the school are discussed in the ensuing chapter. Further, in 1885 apart from being a prominent figure in the founding of the Muslim school in Colombo Arabi Pasha also acted as a peacemaker among the three factions of the Muslim community in Colombo. At a public meeting connected to the school Arabi Pasha made a touching speech which promoted to the reconciliation of rival factions.³³³

Subsequently, in the year 1892 another school in the name of "Al Madrasathul Zahira" was founded in Colombo. Arabi Pasha took great interest in this institution and visited it periodically and engaged with the staffs, the students of the institution. Arabi Pasha's final visit to the institute was around the 12th of September 1901 somewhere around 6 days before his sojourn to Cairo. On this day he presided the Prize giving ceremony of the school and farewell speeches in Arabic were read out by the students on the service rendered by him to Egypt and his endless encouragement towards the upsurge of Muslim community in Ceylon.³³⁴ On another occasion before

³²⁹ *Dublin Daily Express*, 14th December 1883

³³⁰ *Muslim Nesan*, 2nd April 1883

³³¹ *Dublin Daily Express*, 14th December 1883

³³² Dr. Vijaya Samaraweera, "Aspects of Muslim Revivalist Movement in the late Nineteenth Century" 37

³³³ *New Zealand Mail*, Issue 683, 3 April 1885, p. 25

³³⁴ A.M.A. Azeez, "Arabi Pasha", 129-130

his departure Arabi Pasha also planted a commemorative Coconut tree in the grounds of Zahira. Which was later cut down due to its branches harming the adjoining building of the school. However, a nut from the original plant was later planted close to its previous location and this tree thrives at the grounds of Zahira college till date.³³⁵ Today the street where Zahira college is located is known as the Orabi Pasha street.

During his 18 years of exile in Ceylon, Arabi Pasha appealed to the British government and Khedive in several instance to pardon him or to allow him to relocate to Cyprus due to his deteriorating health that adverse owing to the climate in Colombo. however, his request was declined by Khedive and the English government after performing a medical examination.³³⁶ In another instance Arabi Pasha and his companions sent letters and gifts to their kith and kin in Egypt through Ceylon Haj pilgrims headed by Ismail Lebbe Marikar Alim. In addition to gifts for their relatives, Arabi Pasha also handed over a petition of appeal to pardon them. Which was carefully carried to Egypt concealed in a pillowcase, yet the petition was rejected by the authorities who believed it was too early for such a verdict.³³⁷ In the year 1892 Arabi Pasha moved to Kandy to reside with the other exiles Yacoub, Fehmi and Sami. Further, Toulba Pasha was granted to relocate St. Helena since the climate of Colombo did not suite him.³³⁸ Even so Toulba Pasha decided to remain in Ceylon and in February 1899 he was pardoned by the Khedive of Egypt to return to Cairo ³³⁹. In the year 1893 the Ottoman consul in Colombo forwarded a list of the names of Egyptian exiles to the Ottoman ambassador in London at his request. At that time, all 6 exiles were residing in Ceylon including Mohamed bey son of Arabi Pasha and Abdul Medjid son of Mahmoud Pasha.³⁴⁰

Although Arabi Pasha periodically dispatched appeals to pardon him, in Ceylon he lived a comfortable life and was satisfied as he was deported to the land where Adam was exiled according to Islam. However, the English government selected Ceylon as his land of exile not necessarily because of the above reason but

³³⁵ Mohamed Sameer,"Arabi Pasha", 30

³³⁶ BOA, Y.A.HUS.246/11

³³⁷ Mohamed Sameer,"Arabi Pasha", 29-30

³³⁸ *Mid Sussex Times*, 16th February 1892

³³⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.TKM. 24/19, *Morning Post*, 3rd February 1899

³⁴⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.413/41

because they thought living alone in Ceylon is vile.³⁴¹ In the case of Arabi Pasha, he did not only acquaint and gain popularity among the Muslim population of the island³⁴², he also befriended the founder of Lipton tea Sir Thomas Lipton who hosted Arabi Pasha at his estate in Haputale. He also invited the Pasha to stay at his estate for the benefit of Arabi's health and the Pashas who might accompany him. Sir Thomas Lipton's agents were instructed to take diligent care of the guests and to entertain them in the best possible manner thus, special carriages and coaches were assigned for the journey of Arabi Pasha and his companions.³⁴³

Among the others who Arabi Pasha had the privilege of meeting was the King of Siam in 1897, during his visit to Kandy. Arabi Pasha and the King conversed on diverse topics from the Turco Greek war to the English occupation in Egypt. Along their conversation the King inquired Arabi Pasha whether he wishes to return to Egypt to which Arabi responded that "it was his prayer he might be able to even lay his bones to rest in his own land." The King who was moved by his remarks expressed his sympathy and hoped that someday Arabi's wishes to see his homeland will be granted. He also presented Arabi with his autograph.³⁴⁴ In the year 1883 Arabi Pasha also had an interview with Mr Harry Lynch and his brother Mr. R. Lynch of the Lynch Bellringers who were touring Ceylon. The Lynch brothers visited Arabi at his residence "Bon Air" in Mutwell and invited him to their performance at the Garrison theatre.³⁴⁵ Mr. Wilfred Blunt and his wife Lady Anne Blunt who were supporters of Egyptian nationalism were hosted at the Lake house in Colombo by Arabi Pasha,³⁴⁶ He also met the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York during their visit to Kandy and spoke about his parole.³⁴⁷ Arabi Pasha throughout his stay in Ceylon entertained several guests from around the world who visited him for various purposes including Newspaper correspondence to interview Pasha on his exile in Ceylon hence, Pasha also maintained a visitors book in which the guests entered their names.³⁴⁸

³⁴¹ *Portsmouth Evening News*, 11th December 1882

³⁴² *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 27th January 1883

³⁴³ *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 16th September 1892

³⁴⁴ *Eastern Morning News*, 28th May 1897

³⁴⁵ *Oamaru Mail*, Volume IV, Issue 1322, 19 July 1883, p.4

³⁴⁶ *The Homeward Mail*, 8th December 1883

³⁴⁷ *Irish News and Belfast Morning News*, 31st May 1901

³⁴⁸ *North Otago Times*, Volume XXVIII, ISSUE 3718, 5 August 1884, p.3

5.2 Arabi Pasha's departure

Since 1883 until his parole in 1901 Arabi Pasha continued to devote his time to the advancement of the Muslim community in Ceylon the field of Education and strived to unite the community shattering numerous stereotypes it had related to the religion.³⁴⁹ As a result, the Muslim community was able to make the needful progress in modern education which contributed to the establishment of several school where Arabic, Quran was taught along with English. Further, the Muslim community also gave importance to the study of Arabic thus, a book was compiled in Tamil for this purpose. Before his departure Arabi Pasha not only witnessed the growth of modern education in the Muslim community but also the tremendous progress, they made in the Arabic language they had mastered the skill of delivering talks in Arabic.³⁵⁰

The subsequent chapter examines on the establishment of the “Anglo Muhammadan” school in Ceylon and its connection with the Ottoman Empire. In May 1901, the Khedive of Egypt pardoned Arabi Pasha and Ali Fehmi Pasha who were the last remaining exiles in Ceylon.³⁵¹ Abdul Al Helmie Pasha one of the exiles died in Ceylon 1891 and he was interred at the Muslim burial grounds in Kupiyawatte and Mahmoud Fehmi Pasha who was a well-known engineer in Cairo died in Kandy in the year 1894 and was buried at the Mahiyawa mosque grounds in Kandy³⁵² and Mahmoud Sami the former Prime Minister of the Egyptian nationalist cabinet of 1881 was granted parole in 1900.³⁵³

When the news of Arabi Pasha's remission was announced the Muslim in Ceylon organised quite a few farewell ceremonies to send off their Egyptian leader. The leading Muslims of Kandy hosted a farewell ceremony at the residence of Mr. C.L.M. Usoof at Trincolmalie street, Abdul Hamid and W.P.S. Meera Saibo accompanied Arabi Pasha to Mr Usoof's residence. They were welcomed by Mr. Usoof and Cassie Lebbe with an oriental welcoming ceremony of sprinkling rose water

³⁴⁹ A.M.A.Azeez, “Arabi Pasha”,129

³⁵⁰ Arthur C. Dep, *Orabi Pasha and the Egyptian exiles*, 37

³⁵¹ *News of the World*, Taranaki Herald, Volume XLIX, Issue 11690, 25 May 1901, p.3

³⁵² *The Madras Weekly Mail*, 2nd April 1891, *Colonies and India*, 21st July 1894, Mohamed Sameer, “Arabi Pasha”,29

³⁵³ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 24th May 1901

and petals of flowers. Following it delicacies and mocha coffee was served and Mr. T. de Silva played a collection of music on the piano. Subsequently, Arabi Pasha addressed the gathering in the following words:

I am unable to speak to you in many words, being overpowered with conflicting emotions. I am greatly touched by your kindness to the last in coming here to bid me good-bye. True, I am going to my native land, but never will I forget that Lanka was my home for a long period. I will always remember Kandy and the kind friends I had during my stay here. I am happy you are come here and will remember this occasion with gratitude. To one and all I say good-bye.³⁵⁴

Thus, the Muslims of Kandy witnessed a historic moment. Another dinner was hosted by the residents of Kandy at a “Mohamedan Boys’ school” where Arabi was accompanied by his three sons Mehmed Arabi bey, Mohamud bey, Abdul Feltah and his two grandsons Ahmed bey and Arabi bey. Most influential representative of the Moor and Malay community was present at this gathering where a scrumptious dinner was served besides a volunteer public band played a selection of music.³⁵⁵

In Colombo, a grand farewell was arranged at the Hameedia school where Arabic poems were recited praising the Pasha and prayers were made for his safe return to his homeland.³⁵⁶ Arabi Pasha and his family stayed at Esa vila the residence of Mr. Carimjee Jafferjee at Colombo till their departure to Egypt. On the 17th of September 1901 Arabi Pasha accompanied by his family departed his exile home Ceylon by the steamer “Prinzess Irene.” A group of 27 members including Arabi Pasha’s four Sinhalese Ayah’s (maids) left for Cairo, first class was reserved for the Pasha and his family members and second class for the maids. The cost of travel was borne by the Egyptian government. Mr. Carimjee Jafferjee and Ottoman consul in Galle Ibrahim Didi escorted Pasha to the Jetty. Over 500 Moors and other members of the society were present to send off Pasha, the crowd was cheering and were struggling to touch Pasha’s hand or garment as a mark of bidding farewell. When Arabi Pasha walked to the Jetty a Moorish choir chanted farewell songs.³⁵⁷ When Arabi Pasha arrived in

³⁵⁴ *The Madras Weekly Mail*, 12th September 1901

³⁵⁵ *Englishman's Overland Mail*, 12th September 1901

³⁵⁶ Mohamed Sameer, “Exile who made a big impact here”, 74

³⁵⁷ *Madras Weekly Mail*, 26th September 1901

Ceylon, he did not possess the knowledge of English however he was willing to learn it since then Arabi and his companions cultivated the knowledge of English and their sons received an excellent English education in consequence they secured employment at government offices in Cairo.³⁵⁸ Consequently, Arabi Pasha indeed was a far-sighted leader who was able to utilise his exile in Ceylon in an optimistic approach for him and for the Muslim community in the island. Due to his progressive attitude the Muslims of the island were able to gain the educational reforms they were lacking. Today Arabi Pasha's legacy lives in the minds of the Ceylon Muslims through Zahira college and the traditional Fez he popularised in the country during his exile. Further, Arabi Pasha's residence in Kandy is turned into a cultural centre and foundation which strives to uplift the standard of education of the less privileged children of all communities in Sri Lanka.³⁵⁹

³⁵⁸ *The Sphere*, 29th December 1900

³⁵⁹ Udumbara Udugama, "That exile from Egypt who inspired many," *Sunday Times* 2nd March 2008, https://www.sundaytimes.lk/080302/KandyTimes/kandytimes_0026.html

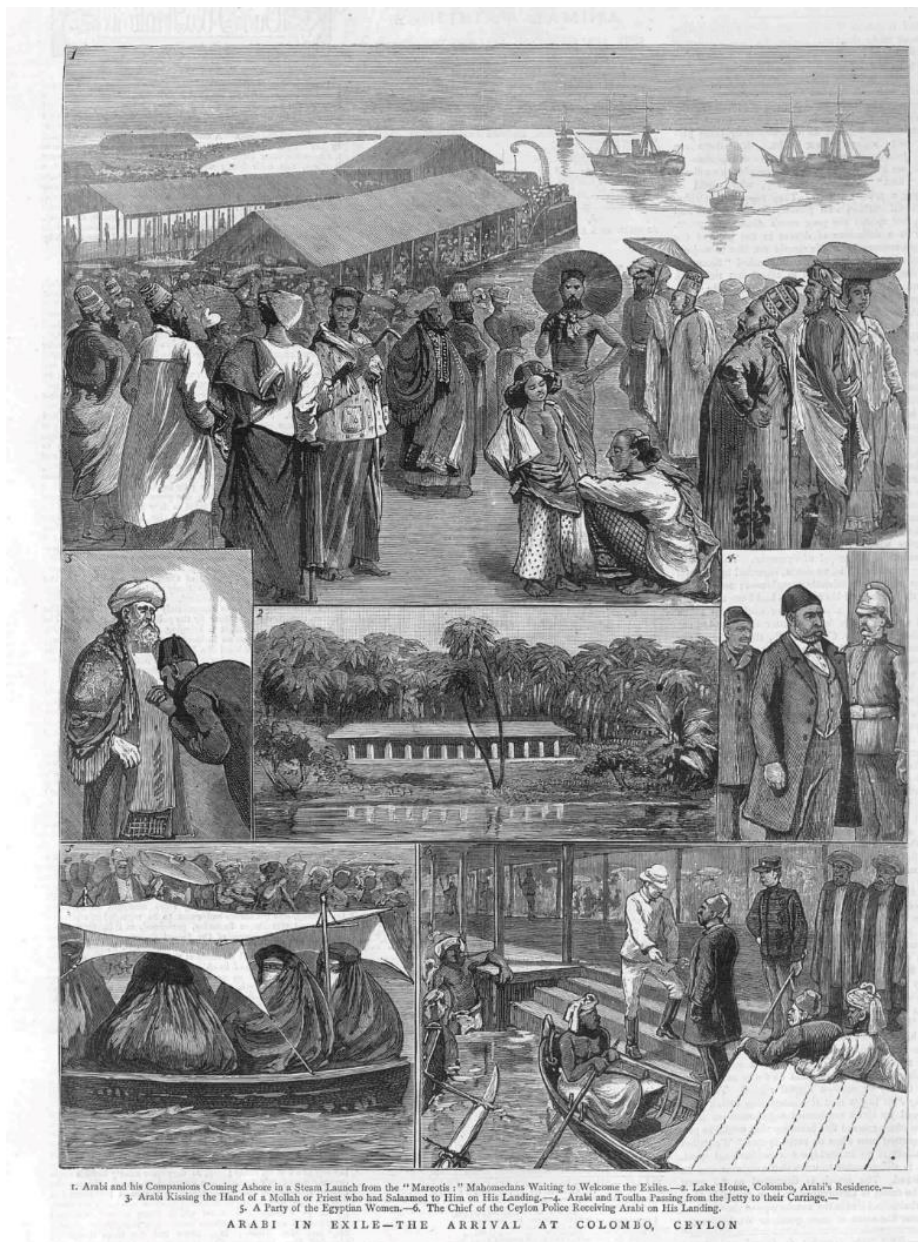


Figure 34 Arabi in exile the arrival at Colombo, Ceylon I. Arabi and his Companions Coming Ashore in a Steam Launch from the "Mareotis;" Mahomedans Waiting to Welcome the Exiles. 2. Lake House, Colombo, Arabi's Residence,— 3. Arabi Kissing the Hand of a Mollah or Priest who had Salaamed to Him on His Landing.—4. Arabi and Toulba Passing from the Jetty to their Carriage,— 5. A Party of the Egyptian Women.—6. The Chief of the Ceylon Police Receiving Arabi on His Landing. The Graphic, 24 February 1883, p.192



Figure 36 Arabi waiting for Tea in front of his house at Colombo. *The Sphere* 29th December 1900, p. 372

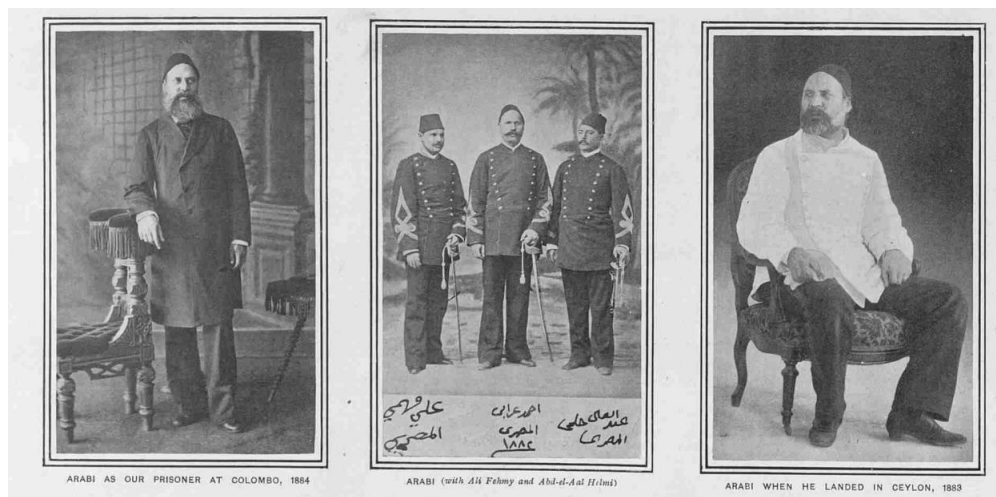


Figure 35 Portraits of Arabi in Colombo 1884, In the days of power in Egypt with Ali Fehmi & Abd el Aal Helmi, Arabi in Colombo 1883. *The Sphere* 29th December 1900, p. 372

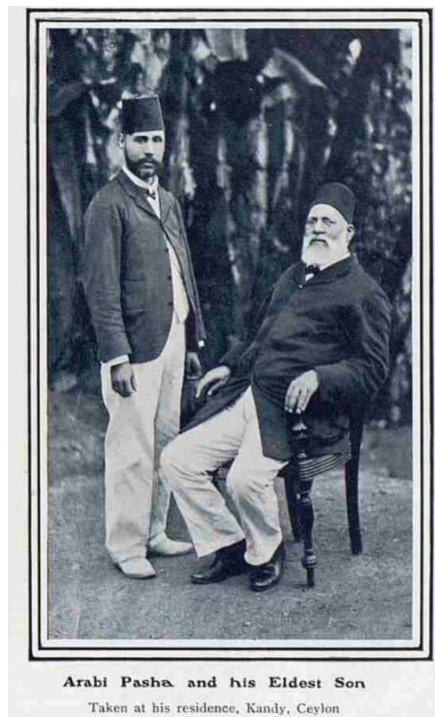


Figure 37 Arabi Pasha and Eldest son at his residence Kandy, Ceylon. *The Sphere*, 30th September 1911, p. 343



Figure 39 Arabi Pasha & his son at his residence in Kandy. *The Graphic*, 1st June 1901, p. 754

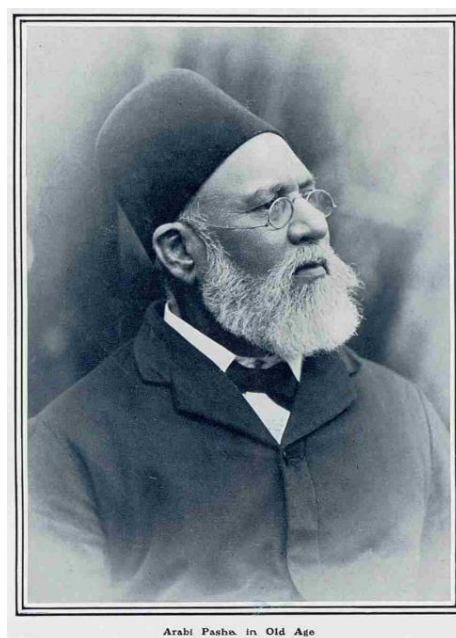


Figure 38 Arabi Pasha in Old age. *The Sphere*, 30th September 1911, p. 343

CHAPTER VI: MILESTONE IN CEYLON MUSLIMS EDUCATION “AL MADRASTHUL HAMEEDIYAH”

6.1 Overview of Muslim Education

The Muslims of Ceylon prior to the late 19th century possessed rigid views on the western oriented education system, hence the Muslim community suffered in educational backwardness. The children of the Muslim community attended religious schools known as *Madrasas* or were schooled in their *verandas*, where the focus was on religious education precisely the knowledge of Quran and a limited knowledge of arithmetic, reading and writing. The students attending such religious schools did not acquire any secular education or practical skills.³⁶⁰ The explanation behind Moors rejecting modern education was their fear of losing their religious identity when attending Christian missionary schools and the possibilities of being converted into Christianity. Further, Muslim priests issued *Fatwas* religious verdicts against sending Ceylon Moor children to Christian missionary schools as a form of curtailing cultural and religious assimilation, which was commonly occurring in the Sinhalese and Tamil community. In addition to religious factors another reason was the perception English education does not provide any benefit for their trading occupation given that the Ceylon Moors were acknowledged as a business community. This attitude of resisting modern English education costed the Muslim community their opportunity to engage in the island's political affairs and their ability to enter public service.³⁶¹

Amidst the influence of English education imparted by Christian missionaries in Ceylon the Sinhalese and Tamil reformists initiated to revitalise Sinhala and Tamil vernacular education along with their own ethos and social values.³⁶² Hence, they established their own schools which was an alternative to the Christian missionary education. Meanwhile in India Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was making various reforms to

³⁶⁰ M.M.M. Mahroof, “The Muslim Education in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) 1881-1901”, *Islamic Culture* vol XLVII no1, (India, January 1973) pp.302, 317

³⁶¹ Dr.S L M Rifai, A Brief Survey on the Origin, History, and the Development of Muslim Education in Ceylon Under British Rule, pp. 4,5,7.

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3797239

³⁶² Ibid,7

educate the Indian Muslim community through his “Anglo-Mohamedan” Aligarh university. His movement opposed the missionary monopoly of higher education and campaigned against practices that corrupted Islam.³⁶³ The Muslim intelligentsia in Ceylon became conscious of the importance of English education to improve their social and political standards. Thus, being inspired by the Sinhala and Tamil reformists as well the Aligarh movement in India the Ceylon Muslim intellectuals began to find alternatives to missionary education.³⁶⁴

The pioneer of this cause M.C. Siddi Lebbe who was a lawyer by profession commenced “Muslim Nesan” a weekly journal in Tamil vernacular in the year 1882. Through this journal Siddi Lebbe campaigned for social reforms, political representation of Muslims and notably the necessity and value of modern education.³⁶⁵ Siddi Lebbe was a forward thinker therefore his ideas of progression were not embraced by the Muslim laymen.³⁶⁶ The timely arrival of Egyptian revolutionist Arabi Pasha in exile to Ceylon in the year 1883 filled the years long void of a Muslim leader that the Ceylon Muslims were longing for. The fervent affection the Ceylon Muslims had towards the Sultan of Turkey persuaded them to view Arabi Pasha as the representative of the Ottoman Sultan. since the laymen of the time did not understand the actual political climate.³⁶⁷ Arabi Pasha did not fear the western education or modernisation hence he sent his children including his daughters to English schools in Ceylon.³⁶⁸ Siddi Lebbe utilised the influence Arabi Pasha had on the Ceylon Muslim community and sought his assistance towards the educational amelioration of the

³⁶³ Visakha Kumari Jayawardena, *The Rise of the Labor movement in Ceylon*, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1972), p. 42

³⁶⁴ Dr.SLM Rifai, “A Brief Survey on the Origin, History, and the Development of Muslim Education in Ceylon Under British Rule” 10, Visakha Kumari Jayawardena, *The Rise of the Labor movement in Ceylon*, 42

³⁶⁵ M.M.M.Mahroof, “The Muslim Education in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) 1881-1901”, *Islamic Culture – An English Quarterly*. Vol. XLVII No. 4 October 1973, pp. 310,311, Ramla Wahab Salman, “A History of the 'Ceylon Moor' Press (1882-1889)”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka*, New Series, Vol. 61, No. 2 (2016), p.61

³⁶⁶ A.M.A. Azeez, “M.C. Siddi Lebbe,” *The West Reappraised*, (Ceylon: Saman Publishers LTD, Maharagama, 1964), p.170

³⁶⁷ M.M.M.Mahroof, , “The Muslim Education in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) 1881-1901”, 306

³⁶⁸ A.M.A. Azeez “M.C. Siddi Lebbe,” 165, Ramla Wahab Salman, “A History of the 'Ceylon Moor' Press”, 66

Ceylon Muslims. Thus, Arabi Pasha actively participated in encouraging his coreligionist to modernise the education system and to introduce religious reforms.³⁶⁹

The efforts of Ceylon Muslim intelligentsias Siddi Lebbe, Wapitche Marikar and Arabi Pasha on establishing a modern school which would cater the secular needs and yet preserve the Islamic identity initially resulted in the founding of one of the earliest Muslim grant aid schools in Colombo in the year 1884. “*Al Madrasathul Khairiyathul Islamia*” “Anglo- Mohamedan” school was inaugurated on the 15th of November 1884 in New Moor street, Colombo.³⁷⁰ The school functioned as a cornerstone in breaking off the Muslim community’s educational backwardness. Apart from its salient contribution to the Ceylon Muslims education history, the school also contributed to the strengthening of the Ottoman- Ceylon relationship in the 19th century.

6.2 A School to honour the Sultan- “Al Madrasathul Hameediyah”

The Islamic fraternity celebrated the Silver Jubilee of Sultan Abdulhamid II the caliph and the custodian of the holy lands in the year 1900. As the author has discussed in the previous chapter the 25th jubilee was celebrated illustriously among the Muslim community in Ceylon. A part of this celebration was the renaming of the “Anglo-Mohamedan” school “*Al Madrasathul Khairiyathul Islamia*” into “*Al Madrasathul Hameediyah*” the inclusion of “*Hameediyah*” a means of honouring Sultan Abdulhamid II and the 25th jubilee anniversary. On the 31st of August 1900, the *Jamathul Hameediyah* society the founders of the *Hameediyah* school organized a grand event to commemorate the 25th anniversary of coronation of His Majesty Abdulhamid II and to lay foundation for a new school building which was donated by I.L.M.H. Noordeen Hadjar a philanthropist and an active member of the *Hameediyah* society.³⁷¹ This event was graced by Ottoman honorary consul A.L.M. Abdul Majid

³⁶⁹ Dr.SLM Rifai, “A Brief Survey on the Origin, History, and the Development of Muslim Education in Ceylon Under British Rule”, 8, Visakha Kumari Jayawardena, *The Rise of the Labor movement in Ceylon*, 42

³⁷⁰ M. Thowfeek Hassan, “Hameed Al Husseinie College - 125 years of existence: Early years of Muslim education”, *Daily News.lk* Friday 14th August 2009
<http://archives.dailynews.lk/2009/08/14/fea03.asp>

³⁷¹ Ibid

as the representative of Sultan in Ceylon he was requested to lay the cornerstone for the new building. The telegram sent by the Ottoman consul in Colombo to the Ambassador in London regarding the Jubilee celebration and the *Hameediyah* school was published on the Thames Star newspaper of New Zealand as follow:

The Turkish Consul at Colombo has sent the following telegram to the Ottoman Ambassador in London, I am desired by the Mahomedans of Colombo to convey through Your Excellency to our most gracious Majesty the Sultan Abdul amid Khan, Khalifa, Defender of the Faith, their heartfelt congratulations and special prayers for His Majesty's accession to the Ottoman throne, and meanwhile to lay the foundation stone to-day of a Mahomedan boys' school named Madrasat al Hamidia in honor of the same. The Mahomedans in Ceylon on August 31 celebrated the Sultan's Jubilee by special prayers in the mosques. The streets were decorated, and there were illuminations on a large scale, which were, however, marred by heavy rains.³⁷²

Besides, various contemporary local sources quote the year of this event as 1901. However, the 25th silver jubilee was commemorated on 31st august 1900, Ottoman archive documents and articles published on the weekly journal *Muslim Nesan* and other foreign newspapers such as the Thames Star attests it³⁷³.

Ensuing this occasion in the year 1902, the honorary consul Abdul Majid provides details on the progress of the *Hameediya* school to Anthopulos Pasha Imperial Ottoman ambassador in London. On his letter dated 14th May 1902, he writes the school “has done wonderful progress so far education is concerned” there are 400 students, and they are taught Arabic, Quran, Hindustan (Urdu) and Tamil vernacular. Further he recalls on the awards ceremony that was held on the 11th of May. For which he was invited as a chief guest by the *Jamathul Hameediyah* society, the awards distributed to the successful students were sovereigns, watches, chains, Quran and Tamil books. At the conclusion of the event special prayers were offered for the long life and welfare of His Majesty Sultan Abdulhamid II. The *Hameediya* society had requested the honorary consul to notify these accomplishments to Antopulo Pasha and as a token of remembrance the society implores for a decoration from His Majesty

³⁷² *Thames Star*, VOLUME XXXIX, Issue 9770, 18 October 1900, 2

³⁷³ HR.SFR.3.535/50, *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1900.9.1

Sultan which they intend to hang in the school room. Consequently, Consul Abdul Majid too requests the ambassador to fulfil the society's plea by utilising his influence and favour. Since a recognition from the Sultan is the means of winning the hearts of the coreligionist and their sincere trust.³⁷⁴ This letter was forwarded to the Foreign ministry on the 10th of June 1903³⁷⁵. One year later on the 20th of May 1903, Consul Abdul Majid writes to Ambassador Stephen Mousourous Pasha regarding the performance of the students of *Hameediya* school in the annual examinations held on the 10th of May 1903, out of the 365 boys 96 have passed Arabic, Hindustani and Tamil. Once again, the consul forwards the request of the promoters of the institution along with the students for a decoration as a remembrance from the Sultan.³⁷⁶ However, there are no official documents indicating that the above request has been fulfilled.

Couple years later in the year 1905, Consul Macan Markar writes to Mousourous Pasha on the subject of the *Hameediya* institution he informs that he was honoured to preside the prize distribution ceremony of the school on the 16th of July 1905. And the administration of the institution requests for a prize from the imperial Sultan for the most deserving student at the school since it would be a great encouragement to the institution. Then he recalls the school was opened as a commemoration of Sultan's 25th jubilee. Consequently, he requests to forward this proposal to the Foreign ministry.³⁷⁷ after years of unsuccessful attempts of receiving a decoration from the Sultan the committee of the school had resorted to request for a prize. The ministry of education assessed this proposal positively on the 4th of November 1905, therefore orders to send a Quran as a prize to the most outstanding student of the institution.³⁷⁸ This decision was informed to Mousourous Pasha through the Foreign ministry on the 10th of May 1906 along with it a gold gilded Quran was dispatched to award to the most excellent student of the *Hameediya* school.³⁷⁹ Following it on the 18th of April 1906 Macan Markar effendi notifies Mousourous

³⁷⁴ HR.SFR.3.535/50/2

³⁷⁵ HR.ID.2033/74/1, Y.A.HUS.451/138

³⁷⁶ HR.SFR.3.535/50/4

³⁷⁷ HR.SFR.3.725/2/1

³⁷⁸ HR.TH.326/77

³⁷⁹ HR.SFR.3.725/2/3

Pasha on receiving the Quran that was dispatched on the 19th of May 1906 further he testifies his gratitude for this benevolence on the Ceylon Muslims.³⁸⁰ Along with the letter a document containing the proceedings of the prize giving and the names of the successful students, teachers and the awards distributed to them were attached. Consul Macan Markar was invited to attend the ceremony as the representative of the Sultan and the prizes distributed for the first class and second-class winners included a watch, chain, half a sovereign and a 30 juz Quran. And for the third class Rs.5 and Quran for the fourth class Rs.2 and Quran. Tutors were given Rs.5 and an umbrella.³⁸¹

On the year 1907 the gilded Quran sent from Constantinople was awarded to a 12-year-old student who recited the Quran byheart. Further the consul cites the gift sent from the imperial Sultan has created an enthusiasm and a delightfulness in the minds of the local Muslims and it is also a proof of the unity among the Muslims in the Ottoman Empire and the foreign lands. Thus, he requests to dispatch a gift every year since it would encourage and set an example to the Muslims. Such an act of kindness would result in virtuous deeds and excellent work. At the same time Muslims in the distant countries would feel honoured reminiscent to living in the imperial state. Further they would feel they are not far from the heart of caliph.³⁸² Consequently, on the 6th of February 1908 the committee of the *Hameediya* institution and the local Muslims expressed their gratitude to Sultan for accepting their humble request.³⁸³ Hence, yet again the sentiment and affection the Ceylon Muslims display towards the Ottoman Sultan has been rejuvenated through this gold gilded Quran dispatched from the imperial state. From the ottoman perspective it was another opportunity to strategically employ one of their soft powers. It has been acknowledged that the Ottoman Sultan in fact utilized education as a tool in his Pan Islamic propaganda and to improve the state's public relations.³⁸⁴

³⁸⁰ HR.SFR.3.725/2/6, 725/2/5

³⁸¹ HR.SFR.3.725/2/7

³⁸² Y.A.HUS.516/21

³⁸³ Y.A.HUS.518/93

³⁸⁴ Selim Deringil, *Simge den Millete II. Abdiilhamid' den Mustafa Kemal'e Devlet ve Millet*, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları,2007) pp.32-34

CHAPTER VII: CEYLON MUSLIMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO HIJAZ RAILWAY CAMPAIGN & RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

7.1 Overview of the Hijaz Railway project

Hijaz railway project was an unprecedented mission in various aspects. Beginning from the unique way of financing the project to its construction. On 1st May 1900, through an imperial will (*irade -i seniyye*) Sultan Abdulhamid II announced his ambitious railroad project to the world. The economic and political debacle of the Empire made the Hijaz railway scheme look improbable. However, it is the same reason which led to the discovery of untapped financial sources. The explanation behind this costly 1700 km railway project is narrowed down to two points military and religious significance. Considering the British separatists' propaganda "the campaigning for an Arab caliphate" in the Arab region, a railway running through Damascus to Mecca was necessary as it would facilitate in swift deployment of soldiers to the region. Through joining the railways from Damascus to the holy cities (Mecca, Medina) it would ease the challenging Hajj journey which usually took more than 3 months. In return this would enable Abdulhamid II to consolidate his power as the religious leader caliph of the Islamic world as he was pursuing an Islamist policy (to mobilise Muslims within his domain under the leadership of caliph) and also promote Islamic solidarity³⁸⁵. It was the religious factor of the Hijaz railway project that attracted the Muslims living away from the Ottoman domains especially the Indian Muslims including the Ceylon Muslims. The Muslims living under the colonists distant from the Ottoman territory had an unswerving loyalty and expectation from Abdulhamid II and his administration. Hence, the Sultan capitalised this sentiment to legitimise his title of caliph and to strengthen his authority over the Ottoman subjects. Furthermore, this support from the Islamic world was utilised to finance "holy line" or the *Hamidiye Hijaz* railway as it was recognized officially.³⁸⁶

³⁸⁵ Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline*, (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2014), pp. 39-68

³⁸⁶ Ibid, 47-49,59

In the 1860's Zimpel, a German origin American citizen architect proposed the idea of building a railway connecting Damascus and the Red sea, this was the first project proposed for the Hijaz region. Since then, several Ottoman officials including an Indian Muslim Journalist, Muhammed Inshaullah proposed the idea of constructing a railway linking Damascus to Mecca.³⁸⁷ Inshaullah continued articulating his railway project idea in various articles and newspapers including *al-Wakil* and *al-Watan* where he was the editor in chief. Moreover, he suggested the railway to be financed through voluntary donations from the Muslims around the world. In 1900 when Abdulhamid II announced the construction of the “sacred line” it was introduced as a religious charity and not an Ottoman project rather a joint mission of the Islamic world. Therefore, it should be constructed by Muslim engineers and financed solely through Muslim sources. This resulted in a multinational finance in an Ottoman project for the very first time. Regardless of the claims of using Muslim engineers the project indeed had to seek the expertise of German engineers.³⁸⁸ A central commission was organized for the collection of donations in April 1900 in Istanbul and the opening official donation was made by the Padishah himself a substantial amount of 50,000 liras were donated to promote the donation campaign and it was soon followed by several Ottoman officials.³⁸⁹ The construction was immediately started with a 100,000-lira credit from the ziarat bank. Further, the donation campaigns were supported by the Pan Islamic media, religious leaders, merchants and Ottoman diplomats in the foreign land played a pivotal role in collecting donations to the Hijaz railway scheme. The primary contribution of external donations came from India and Egypt. Soon after the Sultan's call for donations Indian journalist Inshaullah began his donation campaign through print media. As a result of his efforts, he collected around 3,243 liras which comprised 20 percent of the donations collected in India. Although the exact amount of donations collected in India is unknown it is estimated nearly between 15,500 and 40,000 liras. The Indian Muslims viewed the Hijaz railway scheme as an anti-western

³⁸⁷ Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline*, 63-68

³⁸⁸ Syed Tanvir Wasti, “Muhammad Inshaullah and the Hijaz Railway”, *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 2 (1998): pp.60–72

³⁸⁹ William L. Ochsenwald, “The Financing of the Hijaz Railroad”, *Die Welt Des Islams* 14, no. 1/4 (1973) pp.129–49, Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline*, 70

project combined with religious solidarity. Hence, they took great pains to support the Hijaz railway campaign despite the negative propaganda generated by the British media in India.³⁹⁰ Therefore, the donors of the Hijaz railway project were honoured with Hijaz railway medals, the donation commission apart from distributing pamphlets and certificates published in various languages for propaganda purposes. similarly issued Hijaz railway medallions, people who donated 5-50 liras were awarded with nickel medal, 50-100 liras silver medal, above 100 liras were presented gold medal and awarded medallions of merit for individuals who displayed an extraordinary effort in raising funds.³⁹¹ Nevertheless, only 9 percent of the total donations were external and the rest of it was collected within the Ottoman domains in means of taxes, kind and involuntary payments.³⁹² Besides, donations contributed by the Indian Muslims has been discussed widely even though it was lesser than the sum collected in Egypt.³⁹³ However, India was not the only Asian British colony that contributed to the Hijaz railway funds, Muslims of Ceylon and Burma too supported the cause.³⁹⁴ In September 1908, the Damascus to Medina line was inaugurated, the Muslims all around the world funded one third of the railway project³⁹⁵ and they enthusiastically celebrated inauguration of the Medina line.

³⁹⁰William L. Ochsenwald, "The Financing of the Hijaz Railroad", 75

³⁹¹ Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline*, 70

³⁹² William L. Ochsenwald, "The Financing of the Hijaz Railroad", 144-147

³⁹³ Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline*, 70

³⁹⁴ William L. Ochsenwald, "The Financing of the Hijaz Railroad", 141

³⁹⁵ Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline*, 93

7.2 Hijaz railway Campaign in Colombo

The announcement of constructing a railway line connecting Damascus, Medina and Mecca to relieve the tiresome journey of the Hajj pilgrims drew the attention of the Ceylon Muslims. Subsequently, on the 21st of May 1901 Ottoman honorary consul in Colombo, Abdul Majid effendi informs Anthopoulo Pasha that the Ceylon Muslims are interested to contribute to the project and has inquired him on several occasions regarding the tickets for subscription. Thus, he requested the Pasha to furnish him with few tickets as he is convinced the Ceylon “Muhamedans” will fervently support the cause.³⁹⁶ On the 10th of June 1901, the Foreign ministry notifies Anthopoulo Pasha that the Hijaz railway subscription tickets are sold in six classes and inquires the quantity of tickets the Colombo consul requires.³⁹⁷ Following the letter consul Abdul Majid was notified to write to the Hijaz railway Subscription Commission at Constantinople regarding the tickets which were divided into six classes as follow: 5 mejidiye, 1 mejidiye, 5 piastres, 1 piastres.³⁹⁸

Hence, on the 31st of October 1901, the Colombo consul reports to the London ambassador concerning his letter to the Railway commission requesting for tickets for subscription. In addition, to it he also encloses the letter forwarded to the Railway commission and requested the Ambassador to forward a French translation of the aforementioned letter as well to influence the committee to dispatch him tickets in Ceylon currency. Given that it would facilitate the Ceylon Muslims living in the outskirts to subscribe effortlessly. On his letter to the Hijaz railway commission the consul elaborated his reasons to request the tickets in Ceylon currency. He explained the Muslims living in the outskirts are not much familiar with the Turkish currency, points out the exchange difference between the English pounds and the Ceylon rupees “Ceylon currency 1 rupees is equal to 18 English money”. Further, exchange of Turkish money into pounds then into rupees is a hassle. If the tickets are in Ceylon currency, he could hold on to it thus sell it throughout the year at a fixed rate. Moreover, having the tickets printed in Ceylon currency would enable the less

³⁹⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.501/40/6

³⁹⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.501/40/8

³⁹⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.501/40/5

privileged Muslims also to subscribe. The consul further enlightens the commission on his intentions to advertise the railway subscription on the “Muslim Friend” which is a weekly journal published in Tamil vernacular, if the tickets are sent in rupees and cents. He gives the ensuing list of tickets: 1 rupees tickets 3000, 2 rupees 1500, 5 rupees 200, 10 rupees 200, 50 rupees 20. If its inconvenient to send tickets in Ceylon currency, he requested the following: 5 piastres tickets 8000, 5 mejidiye 200, 1 mejidiye 300.³⁹⁹ Proceeding the request of tickets from the Colombo consul the Hijaz railway commission on the 6th of March 1902 confirms the dispatchment of a total of 8500 tickets to the consul in Ottoman currency.⁴⁰⁰ The dispatchment of tickets were received by the Colombo consul on the 2nd of April 1902. Thus, he writes a letter of acknowledgement. Besides, he notifies the ambassador the difficulty to fix a rate to the three classes of tickets since they are in Turkish currency. However, he intends to fix 3 different sums to the tickets which would enable him to collect a sum exceeding 66000 piastres, the amount he was instructed to collect. And he intends to remit the amount after deducting the expenses.⁴⁰¹

“The Muslim guardian” local newspaper on the 29th august 1902 published a detailed article on the advancements of the Hijaz railway. On this article the editor Abdul Azeez persuaded the Ceylon Muslims to subscribe to the “holy line” project which should be built with Muslim funds. He states the donors of this project will gain recognition as well as merit. Therefore, he calls the Ceylon Muslims to donate to the project and fulfil their obligations as a Muslim. Further, he emphasises if it is not for the Muslims who else would contribute to the “holy line.” Similar to Indian Pan Islamic publications the Ceylon Muslim print media editors like Abdul Azeez, Samsudeen got involved in announcing the developments of the railway project and encouraged the people to subscribe to the noble cause.⁴⁰² subsequently, the “Muslim Guardian” began to publish the names of donors and the amount contributed under the title “Contributions to the Macca Railway from the Mohammedans of Ceylon,” according to the publication on the 28th of October 1902, on the month of August a total of Rs. 1279.55 subscriptions were raised. Through the list of Subscribers, we

³⁹⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.501/40/10

⁴⁰⁰ BOA, HR.TH.265/78

⁴⁰¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.516/10/8

⁴⁰² *The Muslim Guardian*, 29.08.1902

understand women alike men participated in the donation campaign and certain donors made contributions along with their families. Further, donors did not only belong to Colombo but residents of outskirt regions like Weligama, Beruwala the south of the island also fervently participated in the campaign. Apart from it some local residents also came forward in raising funds like Seyed Idroos Hassan ba Hashim Moulana who collected subscriptions from Weligama was appreciated by the consul Abdul Majid.⁴⁰³

Given the archival documents in the possession of the author the first cheque of subscription from the Ceylon Muslims was forwarded in December 1902, however, since the demand of draft was addressed to the late ambassador Anthopoulo Pasha a fresh draft of £ 50 was forwarded on the 23rd of December 1902. The consul informs the ambassador that several Moor gentlemen are ready to subscribe in generous amounts if they can obtain a gold medal. Thus, the consul inquires the number of subscriptions needed to receive a gold medal⁴⁰⁴. Corresponding to the above request it is convincible the people were willing to pay substantial amounts if they could receive a medal from the Ottoman Empire. Receiving a medal from the Caliph of Islam is considered honourable as much as contributing to the “sacred line.” Following it on the 16th of January 1903, Hamid bey from the London embassy acknowledges the demand draft of £50 and he would inquire in regard to the gold medal for the subscribers.⁴⁰⁵ The consecutive cheque of £20 from the Mercantile Bank of India Ltd was forwarded to London ambassador on the 30th of September 1903, the consul on his letter requests to forward the draft to the Hijaz railway commission in Istanbul.⁴⁰⁶ Consequently on the 25th January 1904, the Hijaz railway commission acknowledges receipt of £20 from Ceylon and informs the commission has decided to award a medal to the consul in recognition of his service rendered to the Hijaz railway subscription⁴⁰⁷. As mentioned in the earlier chapter 3 on the 1st of December 1903, consul Abdul Majid had requested for a medal, decoration or a higher rank such as the consular general in recognition of his service rendered to the Sultan for 13 years.⁴⁰⁸ Therefore, it is

⁴⁰³ *The Muslim Guardian* 28.09.1902

⁴⁰⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.528/3/13

⁴⁰⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.528/3/1

⁴⁰⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.528/60/1

⁴⁰⁷ BOA, HR.TH.297/69

⁴⁰⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.3.723/42/1/1-3

apparent that the Hijaz railway commission's decision to award him a medal was related to the above appeal made by the consul. Nevertheless, it is not certain whether Abdul Majid received any sort of medal from the imperial state. Though on the 22nd of March 1904, the Hijaz railway commission mentions of a nickel medal to be sent to Abdul Majid effendi there is no acknowledgement of receiving a medal from the Colombo consul⁴⁰⁹. Further, on the 19th of May 1904, Foreign ministry notifies the consul has been relieved from his position⁴¹⁰. In addition, there is no remark of a medal to the consul in the successive correspondence between Abdul Majid and the London ambassador. The subsequent transfer of fund to the Hijaz railway project was made on the 13th of July 1906, the Colombo consul forwarded a bank order of Rs. 717 to the ambassador in London. The breakdown of tickets sold up to the aforementioned date follow as: 10 tickets valued at Rs. 15, 64 tickets valued at Rs.3 and 500 tickets valued at 0.75 cents⁴¹¹. The cheque was received by the Hijaz railway commission on the 5th of August 1906⁴¹² and on 24th of August 1906, the ambassador sent the receipt delivered by the Hijaz railway commission for the cheque of £ 47.16 dispatched from the Colombo consulate.⁴¹³ On that account, according to the Ottoman archival documents available a total of £ 117.16 has been forwarded to the Hijaz railway subscription from Ceylon starting from December 1902 until July 1906.

The consul Abdul Majid appealed to the London ambassador on his letter on the 30th of March 1904, to recognise the service rendered by two Ceylon men who had diligently campaigned for the Hijaz railway project. Mr. A.T. Samsudeen, the manager of a local journal known as "Muslim Friend", had published the names and the address of the subscribers and the amount subscribed by them in his biweekly journal encouraging the rest of the Muslims to take part in the campaign. He also published about 2500 notices in Tamil vernacular. All the above services were performed free of charge. The other gentleman Seyyed Mohamed Mohideen of Galle a prominent city in the coastal region of the Island, had also involved in collecting subscriptions. Thus,

⁴⁰⁹ BOA, HR.TH.300/50

⁴¹⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.723/42/6/1

⁴¹¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.564/1/39/1

⁴¹² BOA, BEO 2893/216944

⁴¹³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.564/1/42/1

the consul urged to reward these two gentlemen for their efforts.⁴¹⁴ There is no evidence in the Ottoman archival documents whether the aforementioned individuals received any kind of recognition from the imperial state.

However, on the 11th of March 1909, the consul of Colombo informs the secretary of the imperial Ottoman embassy the receipt forwarded on the 13th ultimo has been delivered to the recipient Mr. Hadji Nooreddin bin Hadji Idroos⁴¹⁵ as instructed⁴¹⁶. Hence, it is understood that Hadji Noordeen a renown philanthropist of the Ceylon moor community has contributed to the Hijaz railway campaign thus a receipt was presented to him. In continuation of this event on the 10th of July 1909, the consulate manager Samsideen acknowledges the receipt of the medal awarded to Hadji Nooreddin bin Hadji Idroos on the 1st of June 1909, for his subscription to the Hijaz railway project. Upon accepting his award Hadji Noordeen conveys his sincere gratitude to the imperial Ottoman state.⁴¹⁷ Similarly individuals from India like Mr. Mahomed Naseeruddin Sahib Ghattalah Effendi, K. M. proprietor of the *Shams-ul Akhbar* and the *Mahomedan* from Madras who had rendered his services to the Hijaz railway fund was awarded insignia of the order of *Majeediah* and Gold medal by the imperial Sultan. In order to attract more donors these recognitions were published in the local press.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.546/18/1

⁴¹⁵ I.L.M.H Noordeen hadijar a philanthropist who is a prominent member of the Ceylon moor community and the Hameediah society

⁴¹⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.603/15/1

⁴¹⁷ BOA, HR.SFR.3.603/18/1/1

⁴¹⁸ The Madras Weekly Mail, 23rd April 1908

7.3 Ottoman Consul General of Colombo Ahmed Attaullah bey's arrival to Colombo

Ahmed Attaullah effendi who held the post of Ottoman Consul General in Singapore was the son of Abu Beker Effendi whom the Sublime Porte on the request of British foreign office appointed to settle the religious disputes among the Malay community in Cape of Good Hope in 1861. Attaullah effendi succeeded his father and was appointed as the professor at the Imperial school in Kimberly. He strived for the cause of education among the Malay, Indians and Cape Muslims further served in several social and moral reforms during his 17 years of service in South Africa. Attaullah effendi who has traversed numerous countries and has been decorated by his Imperial Majesty Sultan during several occasions arrived at Colombo on 14th October 1901 on his way to Singapore as the Ottoman Consul General⁴¹⁹. Unlike the other Turkish guests who had arrived in Ceylon previously Ahmed Attaullah effendi was the first Ottoman diplomat with higher credentials to arrive in the island hence the Ceylon Muslim community was thrilled to welcome and shower their hospitality to the representative of the Sultan and the Caliph of the Islamic world. Moreover, his arrival to Ceylon also coincided with the fund-raising period for the Hijaz railway project in Ceylon. According to the Ottoman consul in Colombo Attaullah effendi and his chancellor Syed Hamid effendi, his French secretary Jalaludeen bey were called upon to countless dinners and events in Colombo where they were well entertained by the local Muslims.⁴²⁰ One of the most prominent and active social organisations of Colombo The Moors' Union on the 23rd of October 1901 held a felicitation ceremony to honour the Consul General Attaullah effendi. Where the president of the union I.L.M. Azeez expressed the communities gratitude for Attaullah effendi's presence in the island and the honour to receive a brother, representative of Sultan in Ceylon. Following it he also reaffirmed the Ceylon Muslims allegiance to Sultan Abdulhamid II as the Caliph of Islam.⁴²¹ The particulars of the event held in Colombo was published on an Ottoman newspaper *İkdam* on 9th November 1901, according to it the banquet

⁴¹⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.508/70/2/1

⁴²⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.508/69/1/1

⁴²¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.508/69/4/1

was attended by around 100 individuals and Attaullah effendi thanked the community for their warm reception and kindness.⁴²² The local newspapers too covered the activities of Attaullah effendi in Ceylon and few of these paper cuttings were forwarded to Istanbul by Consul Abdul Majid. Furthermore, Attaullah effendi was also entertained by the Ibrahim Didi effendi the Ottoman consul at Galle in his residence at Gairloch, Kollupitiya. The founding member of the *Hameediya* school Hadjie Noordeen and Abdul Rahman member of the legislative council hosted the Consul General in separate occasions. Since his arrival to Ceylon Attaullah effendi had attended 17 dinners in his honour.⁴²³ On a letter to the Ottoman embassy in London the Consul General's Chancellor states their experience in Colombo. Since their arrival to the island, they have been flocked with visitors who wished to greet the Ottomans who have been blessed to witness the Sultan. Further he refers to the endless banquets that were hosted in the honour of Consul General from day one at various locations including mosques and madrasas where there was a crowd of 2000 Muslims. In the grand mosque of Colombo following the Friday prayers a speech was read in Arabic in honour of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Further he informs the Muslim community has promised to contribute a large sum for the Hijaz railway for that purpose a committee will be formed sooner. It is a proven fact that the Muslims of Ceylon regardless of the distance between the Island and Istanbul are attached to the Caliph and they are constantly making prayers for the Caliph.⁴²⁴ Hence, once again we are able to witness the brotherhood and longing of the Muslim community in Ceylon to maintain their bond with the Islamic world intact. Ensuing his successful stay in Ceylon Attaullah effendi and the officials left for Singapore by the steamer Ernest Simons on the 25th of October 1901.⁴²⁵

⁴²² *Ġkdam*, 9th November 1901

⁴²³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.508/69/3/1

⁴²⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.508/70/1

⁴²⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.501/36/1

7.4 The inaugural of the Hijaz railway to Medina

The inaugural of the *Hamidiye* Hijaz railway to Medina was celebrated on the 1st of September 1908, along with the Sultan's 33rd accession anniversary. It was a fortunate day for the Islamic fraternity hence, impressive celebrations and events were organised by the Muslim communities in the respective countries. India, Penang (Malaysia), present day Singapore⁴²⁶ and Ceylon Muslim community too celebrated the day in grandeur. In Colombo, the *Hameediah* society encouraged the Muslims to join the celebrations of Hijaz railway on the 1st of September 1908.⁴²⁷ The committee gathered at the *Madrasathul Hameediyah* school to discuss on the celebrations. Thereupon, the decisions made by the committee was published on the *Muslim Nesan* weekly. Every Muslim household, *Takiyas*, *Zaviyas* were encouraged to decorate illuminate their houses and streets. The *Katibs* of the mosques were asked to make the above announcements following the Friday prayers. Special prayers for the Sultan were to be organised at the Grand mosque of New Moor street, Colombo. Following the prayers, the Muslims of Colombo were to read congratulatory letters to the Sultan, and they were to be handed over to Ottoman consul Macan Markar. Residents out of Colombo were also encouraged to celebrate the event in their respective cities.⁴²⁸ On 22nd September 1908, consul Macan Markar enlightens the London ambassador on the celebrations that took place in Ceylon on the 1st of September 1908 commemorating the inauguration of the Hijaz railway and the accession anniversary of the Sultan. The Muslims of the island rejoiced in the opening of the Hijaz railway to Medina hence, prayers were made for the health and wellbeing of the Sultan. Congratulatory letters were read expressing the love and loyalty of the Ceylon Muslims towards Sultan.⁴²⁹ The community wished to forward it to the imperial Sultan therefore, these letters were dispatched to London in a silver chest by the consul. The specifics of this silver chest are discussed in chapter 4 of the thesis. A resembling pattern of celebration was witnessed in other parts of Asia too. Observing the day as a holiday, special prayers

⁴²⁶ *Madras Weekly Mail*, 3rd September 1908. *Straits Echo*, 19 September 1908, *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser* 2- 3 September 1908

⁴²⁷ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1908.8.15

⁴²⁸ *The Muslim Friend (Muslim Nesan)*, 1908.8.22

⁴²⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.588/117/1

for the Sultan's long life and wellbeing, recitation of *Mawlid*, congregation of large gatherings, distribution of food and illumination of streets and households was observed by the Muslims from other nations too.⁴³⁰ Consequently, the donations made to the Hijaz railway fund from Ceylon was another occasion where the Muslims of the island demonstrated their Pan Islamic sentiments.

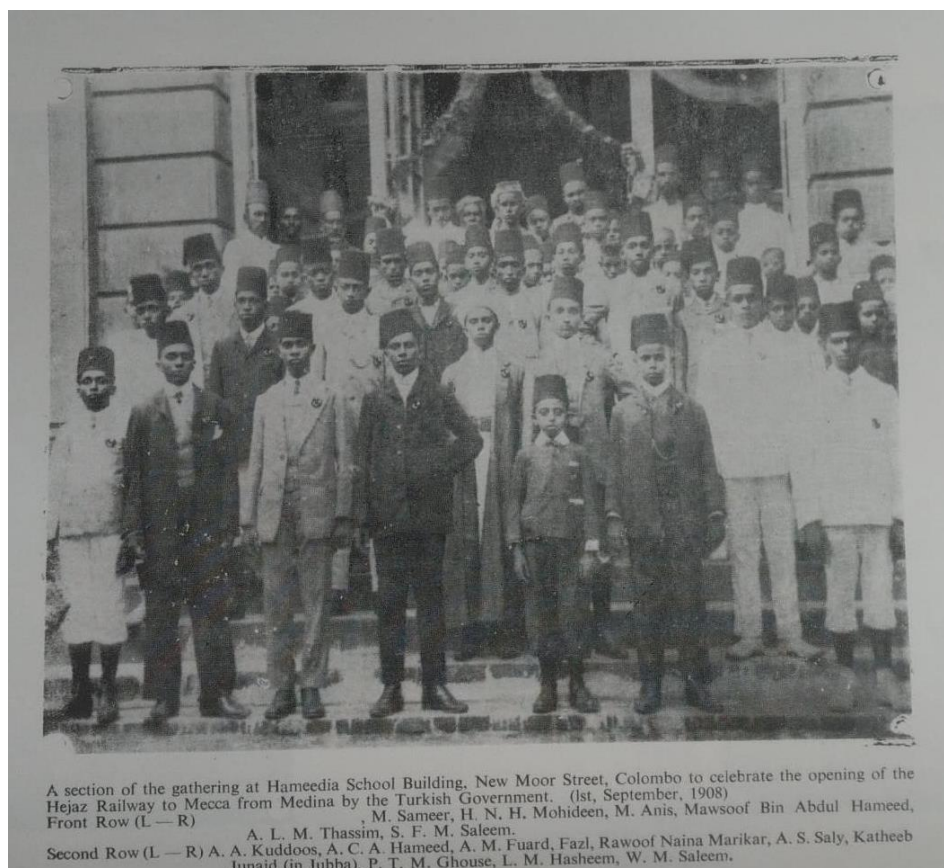


Figure 40 The students of the Hameedia school in front of the school building on the celebrations of the opening of the Hijaz railway to Medina on the 1st of September 1908. *Moors' Islamic Cultural Home Souvenir IV 1977-1982*

⁴³⁰ *Madras Weekly Mail*, 3rd September 1908. *Straits Echo*, 19 September 1908
<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/straitsecho19080919-1.2.21?ST=1&AT=search&k=hedjaz%20railway&QT=hedjaz.railway&oref=article> ,
The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser 2 -3 September 1908
<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/singfreepressb19080903-1.2.50?ST=1&AT=search&K=hedjaz+railway&P=2&Display=0&filterS=0&QT=hedjaz.railway&oref=article>

7.5 Ceylon Muslims' contribution to the Red Crescent during the Tripoli and Balkan wars

Italy's efforts to gain colonise in the North Africa resulted in the outbreak of the Turco-Italian war on the 29th of September 1911. Taking advantage of the civil upheaval the Ottoman Empire was facing, Italy resolved to occupy Tripoli and Bingazi. Hence, Italian government delivered a note to the Ottoman Empire. stating that the Italian subjects were exposed to danger in Tripoli and Cyrenaica therefore, a military action needs to be taken immediately. However, the response the Italian government received from Ottoman Empire was deemed unsatisfactory. As a result, Italy issued a 24-hour ultimatum expressing its concerns and intention to set forth a military occupation in the provinces, thus, demanded for a satisfactory answer within the 24 hours of delivering the ultimatum. The Italian government considered peace-making and amicable response of Ottoman Empire as insufficient and consequently Italy issued a formal declaration of war on Turkey on the 29th of September 1911.⁴³¹

The Turco- Italian war was the very first battle in which aerial bombing was deployed thus, it was also the first battle where an international cooperation between the Red Cross societies (German, England) and Red Crescent committees ensued. The Ottoman Red Crescent Society *Hilal i Ahmer* was in its organizational stage at the beginning of the Tripoli war in 1911 as a result it lacked the necessary financial and medical resource. Hence, the Red Crescent society appealed for aid locally and internationally. The call for aid received instant response from Muslims around the world including Egypt, India, South Africa, America and Ceylon.⁴³² The Indian Muslims who responded to the crisis expressed their resentment against Italy and their fervent support to Ottoman Empire held several meetings and raised subscriptions for the Red Crescent fund. Moreover, they urged the British government to interfere in the affairs on behalf of Turkey. Consequently, Tripoli war led to the emergence of the

⁴³¹Oya Dağlar Macar, "Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti'nin Kurumsal Tarihinde Önemli Bir Deneyim: Trablusgarp Savaşı (1911-1912)." *Belleten* 81, no. 2017, pp. 947-950

⁴³²Muttalip Şimşek. "Trablusgarp Savaşı'nda Alman Kızılhaç (Salib-i Ahmer) Cemiyeti'nin Çalışmaları." *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi*, vol. XXXV, no., 2019, pp. 325-328, BOA, HR.TO.542/172

Indian Red Crescent society which was formerly known as the “Committee for aid to the Ottoman Red Crescent society” founded on 2nd October 1911 in Calcutta. The first Indian medical mission to Tripoli was organised by the Indian Red Crescent Society in May 1912. Hence, the Ottoman Red Crescent received assistance in cash, donations of medical supplies and volunteer doctors and health care staffs. Further, the Red Crescent society not only provided treatment to the injured soldiers but also to the civilians without any racial discriminations. The Muslims viewed the Tripoli war as an attack directed to the Caliph thus, it was their utmost duty to support the Ottoman Empire in any means. Apart from raising funds for the Red Crescent, the Muslims also initiated boycotts against products produced in Italy the mass gatherings, protests that took place around India and other parts of the subcontinent urged for the boycott of Italian products. Hence, the Pan Islamists also led a commercial war against Italy which were partly effective in Bengal, United provinces and Punjab.⁴³³

Besides, with the breakout of Balkan war in 1912 the president of the Ottoman Red Crescent society and former Grand Vizier, Hilmi Pasha appealed to the Muslim world to contribute to the relief fund to establish hospitals for the wounded soldiers. On his telegram to Muhammed Inshaullah, the editor of *watan* in Lahore, Hilmi Pasha requested to publish the Red Crescent society’s appeal for subscription in newspapers throughout India⁴³⁴. Further, the Red Crescent society in Constantinople appealed through the consular general in London for assistance for the sick and wounded Turkish soldiers at the front⁴³⁵. Hence, Indian, Ceylon Muslims continued to raise funds for the Ottoman Red Crescent society during the Balkan wars. In India house to house collections were commenced as a result many Muslim women donated their valuable clothes and jewellerys to the Red Crescent fund⁴³⁶. During a meeting held at Karachi a seven-year-old girl after reciting a poem removed her golden nose ring and donated it to the Red Crescent fund⁴³⁷. In another instance a meeting was organized by

⁴³³ Shamshad Ali. “Turko- Italian war and its impact on Indian politics.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, vol. 53, 1992, pp. 571–73, Kerimoğlu, H. "Trablusgarb ve Balkan Savaşlarında Hint Müslümanlarının Osmanlı Devleti'ne Yaptıkları Yardımlar". *Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri Dergisi* 12, 2012, pp.162-165

⁴³⁴ *The Civil & Military Gazette*, 19th October 1912

⁴³⁵ *The Belfast News-Letter*, 22nd October 1912

⁴³⁶ *The Civil & Military Gazette*, 22nd November 1912

⁴³⁷ *The Civil & Military Gazette*, 16th October 1912

the non-Muslims Hindus and Sikhs of Sialkot district to convey their sympathy with their fellow Muslim citizens and to contribute towards the relief of sick and wounded.⁴³⁸

Along with their coreligionists around the world the Ceylon Muslims also took part in raising subscriptions to the Red Crescent society as a means of expressing their sympathy and support to the wounded soldiers, orphans, widows, families of the deceased and prominently the Ottoman Empire. The initial reaction to the Tripoli war by the Ceylon Muslims was a mass meeting held in front of the Maradana mosque in Colombo on the 5th of November 1911 nearly five thousand Muslims were present as a form of solidarity and sympathy to the Ottoman Sultan. They also implored King George to intervene and use his influence to end the conflicts. Further, prayers and supplications were offered in favour of Sultan and his armies victory in Tripoli.⁴³⁹ News of this gathering was published in several international papers including a photograph of it on the "The Sphere" 23rd December 1911. The Ottoman consul in Colombo forwarded his first instalment to the Red Crescent society in Constantinople on the 25th of November 1912, a sum of £ 1100 corresponding to Ceylon Rs. 16,500⁴⁴⁰ from the Colombo branch of the National Bank of India ltd via London.⁴⁴¹ Out of this amount a total of £ 666 was collected at a meeting held on the 1st of November 1912, as printed in the "The Homeward Mail" 9th November 1912.⁴⁴² In addition to it on his telegram the consul states the Ceylon Muslims are offering prayers daily for the victory of the Ottoman army.⁴⁴³ The second instalment from Colombo £ 900 corresponding to Rs. 13,500 was forwarded to Constantinople on the 17th of January 1913 remitted via London. With his second instalment the consul informs that he has not yet received an acknowledgement for his first instalment therefore requests for an acknowledgement for the remittances not as a form of guarantee of receipt but an acknowledgement from the authorities. As it would be appreciated by the Muslim subscribers of Ceylon and a means to accumulate more funds for the Red Crescent society⁴⁴⁴. The third instalment

⁴³⁸ *The Civil & Military Gazette*, 11th December 1912

⁴³⁹ *The Englishman*, 9th November 1911

⁴⁴⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.692/5/1

⁴⁴¹ BOA, BEO 4130/309693/6/1

⁴⁴² *The Homeward Mail*, 9th November 1912

⁴⁴³ BOA, BEO 4130/309693/3/1

⁴⁴⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.692/5/1

of £ 333 from Colombo through the National Bank of India ltd was forwarded via London on the 20th of July 1913.⁴⁴⁵ The fourth instalment of £ 113.15 shillings 4 pence was forwarded from Colombo on the 23rd of October 1913 and the consul acknowledges receiving the receipts of the previous instalments on 20th august 1913.⁴⁴⁶ In addition to the subscriptions that were directly forwarded by the Ottoman consul in Colombo there were individual subscriptions sent from Ceylon to the Red Crescent society in Istanbul. On 7th January 1913, C.K. Bawa resident of No 798, Peradeniya road, Kandy, Ceylon. Remitted Ceylon Rs.50 equivalent to £ 3.6.6 to the relief fund of widows and orphans of Tripoli. On his letter to the Grand Vizier, he expressed the Muslims of Ceylon are greatly touched by the circumstances that have befallen on the Imperial government and prays for the success of the Imperial government.⁴⁴⁷ Accordingly, a total of 3 money orders amounting to 1 pound, 6 shillings, 8 pence, 1 pound, 6 shillings, 8 pence and 13 shillings, 4 pence that is a total of £ 3 pounds 6 shillings 8 pence was dispatched from Ceylon to Constantinople.⁴⁴⁸ Following it another subscription of £365.88 was forwarded to Constantinople on the 29th of June 1913.⁴⁴⁹ Donor of this subscription is unknown. Subsequently receipts of acknowledgements were sent from Istanbul to the Ottoman consul in Colombo and individual donors from Ceylon. Further gratitude was expressed on behalf of the Imperial government.⁴⁵⁰ Although the total amount of subscriptions raised in Ceylon for the Red Crescent society from 1912 to 1913 is uncertain according to the archival documents presented an estimation of £ 2800 was raised by the Ceylon Muslims. Moreover, in addition to monetary contributions the Ceylon Muslims also applied for the Red Crescent society in Tripoli for active service.⁴⁵¹ However, the author could not obtain evidence concerning Ceylonese serving in Tripoli thus it should be furthered examined.

⁴⁴⁵ BOA, HR.SFR.3.695/12/1

⁴⁴⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.692/31/4/1

⁴⁴⁷ BOA, BEO 4144/310774/6/1

⁴⁴⁸ BOA, BEO 4144/310774/3/1,4/1,5/1

⁴⁴⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.695/12/7

⁴⁵⁰ BOA, BEO 4194/314524/3/1, HR.SYS. 2019/2/1, HR.SFR.3.695/12/7

⁴⁵¹ *The Englishman*, 23rd November 1911

From the inception of the official relationship between Ottoman Empire and the Ceylon Muslims they have liberally contributed to numerous projects, relief funds initiated by the Ottoman government. Beginning from Turco Russian war in 1877,⁴⁵² for the construction of “Darülaceze” in 1892 a charity organisation established in Istanbul in the year 1895 to accommodate orphans, elderly and the needy,⁴⁵³ contributions to the Hijaz railway project in 1902⁴⁵⁴ and to the Ottoman Naval society in 1909⁴⁵⁵, to the Red Crescent society during the Tripoli and Balkan wars since 1911 to 1913.⁴⁵⁶ Regardless of being a minority in Ceylon the Muslims were able to mobilise funds successfully at short notice thanks to the local Muslim print media, merchants who contributed generously and the Ceylon Muslims unvarying need to be connected to the Ottoman Empire and the Islamic world as means of protecting their identity.



Figure 41 Ceylon Muslims protests against the war in Tripoli in front of the Maradana mosque in Colombo 1911. *The Sphere*, 23rd December 1911, p. 283

⁴⁵² BOA, HR.SFR.3.723/42/1/1-3, HR.SFR.3.548/7/2/3

⁴⁵³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.397/20/1, Hidayet Yavuz Nuhoglu, "DÂRÜLACEZE", *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/darulaceze>

⁴⁵⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.528/3/13

⁴⁵⁵ Ekrem Saltık, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Seylan Adası ile İlişkilerine Methal." p. 23-24

⁴⁵⁶ BOA, BEO 4130/309693/6/1, BOA, HR.SFR.3.692/31/4/1

CONCLUSION

Regardless of being a minority in the island of Ceylon, the Ceylon Muslims had drawn considerable attention of the Ottoman and the British Empire thanks to their linguistic skills and trading abilities. An English newspaper took the liberty of comparing the characteristics of Ceylon Moors' to Jews living in Europe who were dealers of varieties of goods.⁴⁵⁷ Due to their trading network outside the island, they acquired the acquaintance of significant individuals who paved way to secure crucial positions like that of the Ottoman honorary consul. Further, due to their eagerness to be connected to the Islamic world and to preserve their Islamic roots the Ceylon Muslims made efforts to be attached to the Ottoman Sultan who was also recognised as the Caliph. As a result, they actively participated in matters relating to the Ottoman Empire be it celebrating the Jubilee of Sultan Abdulhamid II or raising subscriptions for the Hijaz railway, funds for the Red Crescent society. Furthermore, they also commemorated the Ottoman Sultan in numerous ways similar to establishing schools in his name and expressing their regard to Ottoman guests whom they considered as a representative of the Sultan. Thus, the existence of the Ottoman consulate in Colombo and Galle provided an eminent recognition to the Ceylon Muslims irrespective of being few in numbers, having an official representative of the Sultan in the form of a local elite was still a considerable accomplishment of the island's Muslims.

Although the Ottoman Empire couldn't utilise the sentiments of the Ceylon Muslims towards their agendas in relation to British like the Indian Muslims, the survival of an honorary consulate for 50 years with frequent correspondence with Istanbul and Ottoman embassy in London certainly demonstrates the Ottomans wanted to maintain a symbolic presence in the island of Ceylon. Moreover, it is important to understand the relationship the Ceylon Muslims had towards the Ottoman Empire in no way took the shape of a political agenda and they regularly asserted that their political loyalty remains with the British king even though it is at the cost of opposing the Ottoman Sultan.

⁴⁵⁷ *The Homeward Mail*, 6th June 1883

Consequently, during the World War I the Ceylon Muslims publicly expressed their opinion opposing the decision of Turkey joining the Germany against the British Crown. Imam of a grand mosque as well as the president of the Moors' union who enthusiastically participated in promoting the Ottoman Empire in Ceylon stated the Ceylon Muslims sympathy will continue to be with England and it will not be shaken due to the events in Turkey.⁴⁵⁸ In addition, the Muslims of Ceylon announced a collective declaration of their loyalty to the British King at a Mass meeting organised by the Young Men's Muslim Association (YMMA).⁴⁵⁹ The explanation behind this attitude of Ceylon Muslims' could be related to the fact that they enjoyed a greater deal of liberty in practicing their religion and trade under the British colony unlike the previous colonisers of Ceylon who persecuted the Muslims. Therefore, it is obvious the British administration in Ceylon were aware the Ceylon Muslims unlike the Indian Muslims were not capable of challenging the British Crown. Hence, their activities related to the Ottoman Empire was not restricted. Moreover, the last Ottoman honorary consul Macan Markar had an audience with the King Edward VII ⁴⁶⁰while he was an Ottoman consul and was knighted for public service in Ceylon in the year 1938.⁴⁶¹ Thus, holding the position of Ottoman honorary consul did not constrain his prospects.

⁴⁵⁸ *The Englishman*, 5th November 1914

⁴⁵⁹ Farzana Haniffa, *Ayesha Rauf A pioneer of Muslim Women's Emancipation in Sri Lanka*, (Colombo: Social Scientists' Association, 2014), p. 5

⁴⁶⁰ *The Muslim*, 1.10.1909

⁴⁶¹ *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 9th June 1938

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