

7 Gendering Jihad

Ottoman Muslim Women and War during the Early Twentieth Century*

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Women may go out to serve the community in a number of situations, the most important being:

- 1) Jihad (by appointment) – if the enemy is attacking her country and the men are not enough to protect it and the imams give a fatwa for it, as the blessed women of Iraq and Chechnya did, with great sadness, if the men are absent even [*sic*] they are present.¹

Introduction

In November 1914 the fatwas issued by the Shaykh ül Islam Hayri Efendi, in which Muslims were called upon to take up arms against those who attacked Islam, who seized and looted Muslim countries and who made the Muslim populations captive, were read to an audience of allegedly almost 100,000 Muslims at the Fatih Mosque in Istanbul. In the very first of these fatwas it becomes clear who should get engaged in the struggle against the attackers: “all Muslims, ... young and old, cavalry and infantry, ... Muslims from anywhere”. Their contribution to the struggle, moreover, should be not just “financial” but also “physical.”² Whom did he mean when referring to “all Muslims, young and old”? Did he include Muslim women? The words “cavalry and infantry” rather point at the contrary. This is confirmed in the address to the army and navy a few days after these fatwas by Sultan Mehmet Reşat v. He addressed in particular those serving in his army and his navy, addressing them as his “heroic soldiers” (*kahraman askerlerim*) and his “soldier-sons” (*asker evladlarım*).³ His address, moreover, was followed by a text from the military commander, Enver Pasha.⁴

A week later in the same periodical in which the texts of the fatwas and the other texts were published. However, Shaykh Salih Şerif

Tunusi explicitly included women in an article published in a dialectic form of questions and answers:

Q – What is the extent of jihad when enemies like these attack us?

A – For all Muslims; male, female ... non-breadwinner, breadwinner ... infantry, cavalry ... for all believers jihad becomes a duty applicable to all (*farz-i ayn*) when our enemies such as the French, English, and Russian attack us like that from all sides.⁵

But what did he expect women to do? What were Ottoman Muslim women expected to do when the call for Jihad was issued in November 1914? Were they to contribute physically or financially? Or were there other ways in which they could and should contribute? The sources are rather silent regarding this. At the time the Jihad was declared hardly any women's periodicals appeared. Authors in other periodicals or newspapers did not seem interested in posing, let alone, answering these questions. Why not? Why was the need to discuss the role of women in Jihad not felt? And if this need was not felt, how did men and women know what women could and should do? What did they do during World War I? How were these activities justified even if they meant transgressing the existing gender divisions?

Presents for the Soldiers

While women in general were not supposed to be part of the military force as such, Ottoman Muslim women were explicitly called upon to contribute to the military effort as civilians as early as the 1870s, when the Ottoman Empire was fighting off insurgents in the Balkan provinces and Russia.

A few months after the insurrection in Bosnia and Herzegovina broke out in July 1875 and Ottoman soldiers were sent to quash it, an anonymous author made a direct appeal to Ottoman (Muslim) women in the Thessalonian women's periodical *Ayine*:

Our soldiers are struggling in Bosnia and Herzegovina, sacrificing their lives to defend us and our homeland against the enemies. Although our soldiers, thanks to the kindness of our Sultan, have more than sufficient drinks, food and clothing at their disposal and do not need anything else, it occurred to us that we also should send a present in the name of the fatherland (*vatan*) from here to feel good and to show that we love

our soldiers as our beloved ones, because we saw in the newspapers that in Istanbul some are collecting and donating 'woollen jackets' (hırka), others 'flannel undershirts' (fanila) and 'short bodied coats' (nimten), that is, 'heavy outer shirts' (mintan) and we felt it would be appropriate if we would, within the limits of our possibilities, also do such a thing.⁶

The wording chosen in this appeal seems to stress the rather secular character of the donations. The readers were asked to "send a present in the name of the fatherland" to soldiers who did not need anything. As such the donations were explicitly dissociated from the Islamic context of *zakat* (alms) and *sadaka* (voluntary alms) and turned into *hediye* (presents) and *iane* (donations). In this way it became possible to address not only the Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire, but also the non-Muslims and ask them to contribute.

A few days after Serbia declared war on 1 July 1876 the French daily *Stamboul* called upon women to join forces and collect money and goods for war victims with a reference to "the miracles of devotion which we have been able to admire in the other capitals of Europe."⁷ That same day, the Ottoman Turkish newspaper *Vakit* (Time) published an article praising Armenian women in Erenköy, because they had founded an organization to produce surgical materials and night- and underwear for the sick and wounded.⁸ A day later, the same newspaper called upon Ottoman Muslim women not to fall behind "our Christian compatriots," (*huristiyan vatandaşlarımız*) and to establish an organization with five or ten women.⁹ A few days later the newspapers announced to its readers that such a committee had indeed be formed in Istanbul.¹⁰ Subsequently women in Thessalonica were called upon not to stay behind, and the establishing of a committee under the presidency of the wife of the governor of Thessalonica was announced.¹¹

The (very) short Greek-Ottoman war of 1897 was another occasion on which Ottoman Muslim women became actively involved in fundraising to support not only war orphans, but also wounded soldiers and their families. A "Donation Committee of Ottoman Ladies" (*Muhadderat-ı Osmaniye İane Komisyonu*) was formed under the presidency of the daughter of the Grand Vezir.¹² For several weeks, lists containing the names of generous donors, male and female, and the amounts of their donations to the committee were published in the "Ladies' Gazette" (*Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*).¹³ Women belonging to families from the ruling elites, national or local, thus became instrumental in involving Ottoman women, Muslim and non-Muslim, in campaigns to the benefit of the Ottoman military.

The committees mentioned above seem to have been short-lived. The Young Turk Revolution of July 1908 opened the way to the establishment of longer lasting organizations. Immediately after the Young Turk Revolution Ottoman women, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, in cities such as Istanbul, Edirne and Thessalonica became engaged in associational work to support the soldier-heroes of the revolution. They had, in their eyes, been maltreated under the old regime and continued to defend the Ottoman Empire, not only against the traditional forces who staged a counter-revolution in April 1909, but also against the continuously imminent external threats. Ottoman women contributed together with men by donating money and goods to the many local, neighbourhood-based charitable organizations (*cemiyet-i hayriye*) that were established in Istanbul,¹⁴ while women also established all-female committees and organizations. Through these committees and organizations women donated in particular all sorts of textiles: warm underwear, socks and padded vests and other clothes against the winter cold; bedding, dressing materials and shirts for the wounded soldiers.

Women of all creeds participated in these organizations and committees. An organization founded in Edirne in December 1908 by Emine Semiye, daughter of Cevdet Pasha, *Hizmet-i Nisvan Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi* (Women's Service Charitable Organization), for example, consisted of ten Muslim members and six non-Muslim members. Muslim as well as Christian women generously donated to the organization padded vests for the Ottoman soldiers.¹⁵ During the war against Italy (September 1911–October 1912) existing women's organizations in, for example, Thessalonica turned their charitable work from supporting schoolgirls and poor families to donating bedding, dressings and clothing to soldiers.¹⁶

In the aftermath of the counter-revolution of April 1909, to mention one more example, the *Osmanlı Kadınlar Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi* (Ottoman Women's Charitable Organization) was one of the first organizations founded explicitly by 30 women from prominent Ottoman and foreign families in Istanbul with the aim of improving the situation of Ottoman soldiers by focusing on the improvement of the situation in hospitals.¹⁷

These activities in general did not raise questions regarding impropriety. The Ottoman (Muslim) women donating these goods belonged to the families of civil servants and bureaucrats and purchased the goods they donated or produced them themselves within the confines of their homes. The goods were not handed to the soldiers directly, but through intermediaries. Initially newspapers that functioned as propaganda platforms carried out this function, but soon organizations such as the Red Crescent, which was founded in April 1911, took over the coordinating role. The army and its soldiers, therefore, remained at a comfortable

distance and demanded no direct involvement from the women, although some would have liked this to be different. “Unlike our brave foremothers we cannot fight on the battlefield; we are deprived of the honour to fight our enemies face to face” complained the ardent nationalist Nezihe Muhlis in a letter to the daily *Tercüman-ı Hakikat* (Interpreter of the Truth), which was reproduced on the bulletin board of the Ottoman Fleet Organization during the Tripolitanian War.¹⁸

The Balkan Wars, however, brought war and the soldiers literally closer to women in the main urban areas of Thessalonica and Istanbul.

Balkan Wars

During the first years after the Young Turk Revolution tension between the Ottoman Empire and its Balkan neighbours had been building up slowly but irreversibly. Immediately after 1908 Bulgaria had been confronted with an economic boycott, because it had declared independence and annexed the previously autonomous province of East Rumelia. Goods from Austria-Hungary were also boycotted, because it had annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina. These boycotts were followed by another one as a result of the crises around Crete. This boycott of 1910–1911 was actually directed against Greece, but also affected relations between the Ottoman Muslims and the Ottoman Greek Orthodox (*Rum*).¹⁹

The popular press proved to be instrumental in both creating public awareness and calling upon that public to take action. During these boycotts, the popular press published numerous calls from both the editors but also the public to participate in them. Both boycotts found a large public response. Since women’s periodicals formed an intrinsic part of that popular press from the last quarter of the nineteenth century onwards, and since women constituted a considerable part of the public that was addressed, women also actively participated in the discussions: female authors actively called upon their readers to refrain from buying boycotted wares.

The boycotts contributed to the rising political tension which eventually led to the Balkan Wars. On 2 October 1912, Greece, Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria, which had joined forces in the Balkan League, demanded that the Ottomans implement reforms in Macedonia to, amongst other aims, improve the situation of the non-Muslim population in that province. The ultimatum evoked the reaction of the Ottoman public in Istanbul.

On 4 October 1912 a meeting took place at the Hippodrome in Istanbul (*Sultan Ahmet*) where war was demanded. Although the majority of



FIGURE 7.1 “Another picture of the war manifestations at Sultan Ahmet,” *Servet-i Fünun*, 1114, 27 Eylül 1328 (10 October 1912), 508

the participants were male, women were certainly not absent, as some photographs published in *Servet-i Fünun* (Wealth of Science) show. A few days later on 8 October 1912 the First Balkan War broke out. It ended formally on 20 May 1913, to be followed immediately by the Second Balkan War which broke out on 16 June 1913 and lasted until 18 July 1913. During these wars women’s voices were not absent in the press. They were, together with men, publicly debating what to do.

So, for example, Mehmed Ubeydullah in an article in *Türk Yurdu* (Turkish Home) argued that the religious traditions (*hadith*) included many examples of women who had actively participated in war. Taking part in war was, he stated, a communal duty which, if observed by some, would absolve the others who did not observe it (*farz-ı kifaye*). For children, women, the blind and other “impaired” people, however, it was neither necessary (*vacib*), nor proper (*caiz*) to participate in war. On the other hand, if the enemy attacked, he wrote, taking part in the war became an individual duty applicable to all (*farz-ı ayn*). In such a case a woman did not even have to ask permission from her husband to participate in the war according to his interpretation of the religious laws relating to this subject. Since the Balkan War had started with the Ottomans being attacked, Ottoman women had to take up their duty in his view.²⁰

What exactly it was they should do he did not say. Beyond discussion, however, was the idea that Ottoman Muslim women had to make a contribution to the war in one way or another. By this time, the Ottoman Red Crescent had established its women's central committee, *Hilal-i Ahmer Hanımlar Heyet-i Merkeziyesi*.²¹ This committee would in due time play a pivotal role in the war-time activities of Ottoman women together with the *Müdafaa-i Milliye Osmanlı Hanımlar Heyeti* (Ottoman Women's Committee for National Defence), the women's branch of the *Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti* (National Defence Organization). This organization had been founded at the instigation of the CUP following the coup of January 1913.²² Abdullah Cevdet, at the time cited its aims briefly as "[to] collect donations, register volunteers, enlighten the minds of the people."²³ As such the organization served as a well-lubricated propaganda machine, reaching into the farthest corners of the Empire, consciously trying also to involve the not always compliant non-Muslim population and women.²⁴ Within a few weeks after its establishment local women's branches had been set up not only in various parts of Istanbul, such as Beşiktaş,²⁵ and Makriköy,²⁶ but also in Bursa,²⁷ Trabzon,²⁸ Ankara,²⁹ Diyarbakır³⁰ and Izmir.³¹ Women in these branches organized patriotic meetings with female speakers and collected money and goods. The *Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti* and the Red Crescent cooperated closely and seem to have worked out a division of labour between them: the former supported in particular the soldiers in the field and their families, the latter those who were wounded or ill. Both organizations turned into the major coordinating institutions for those women who, during the Balkan Wars and later during World War I, increasingly became involved in the "industry" of war donations as individuals and in organizations.

While the *Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti* and its women's branches were established relatively late to play a major role during the Balkan Wars, this was not the case for the Women's Centre of the Red Crescent. Within a few days after the First Balkan War erupted, it actively called upon women to sew underwear for the wounded soldiers, distributed cloth to this aim and also provided patterns which women could use. The materials could be picked up from the Red Crescent Headquarters, but the sewing was supposed to take place in the private homes of the women.³²

The *Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti* received 30 per cent of the money collected by the *Makriköy İlane-i Harbiye Komisyonu* (Makriköy War Donations' Committee), which had been founded immediately after the start of the Balkan Wars³³ and which had a separate women's branch, the *Makriköy İlane-i Harbiye Kadınlar Komisyonu* (Makriköy War Donations Women's Committee) presided over by Fehime Nüzhet, a well-known author and speaker at patriotic rallies.³⁴

Women and women's organizations not only actively participated in producing linen and bandages for the Red Crescent, but they also opened and equipped hospitals for wounded soldiers brought in from the front lines. The *Teali-i Nisvan Cemiyeti* (Organization for the Advancement of Women), for example, opened a small hospital with 100 beds, which it kept going for two months.³⁵ The members of the *Kadıköy Donanma-yı Osmani Muavenet-i Milliye Hanımlar Şubesi* (Kadıköy Ladies' Branch of the National Support for the Ottoman Fleet) spent close to 1,000 lira of the money they collected on establishing a hospital with 100 beds at the building of the *Osmanlı İttihad Mektebi* (Ottoman Union School) in Haydarpasha, while the *Osmanlı Kadınlar Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi* equipped a ward with 300 beds at the *Şişli Etfal Hastanesi* (Şişli Children's Hospital) and donated the wherewithall for 100 beds to the hospital in the Taşkılla barracks.³⁶ According to Messadet Bedir-Khan, women opened in total 12 hospitals during the Balkan Wars including the hospital of the *Teali-i Nisvan Cemiyeti*, a hospital at a former school in Haydarpasha, plus one in Erenköy with 60 beds and one in Kadırğa with 200 beds. The figures she gives may be exaggerated, though. Her statement that more than 5,000 "Musulmanes" had worked as sick attendants during the Balkan Wars certainly was.³⁷

Between the end of 1908 and October 1912, several initiatives were taken by the military authorities at the Gülhane military hospital to educate Ottoman women to become sick attendants in order to employ them at military hospitals. While a limited number of Ottoman women indeed attended these early courses, it remains unclear whether any Muslim women were amongst them. Moreover, the women attending seem to have used their newly required knowledge not to nurse strange men in hospitals, but to take care of the sick and ill at home in a more professional way. By the time the Balkan states had mobilized for war and the declaration of war was imminent, the Red Crescent took a first initiative to provide courses for sick attendants.

Having seen the not wholly successful efforts of the Gülhane hospital, Dr. Besim Ömer Pasha, who also had been involved in the foundation of the Red Crescent and its women's centre, started to try to convince the Board of the Red Crescent of the need to establish a so-called *hastahane-mektebi* (hospital with training facilities) where male and female sick attendants could be trained. Although the Board did not allow him to build new premises to that end, he was allocated some space at the Kadırğa hospital to set up such a hospital-school to train ten women. These women would be sent to families in need of sick attendants and thus not employed at hospitals.³⁸ The classes were announced in the newspapers and both men and women were invited to apply.³⁹ The school

was closed down, however, before it could even get started, because the premises were needed for the wounded soldiers from the Balkan Wars.

The Kadirga hospital, however, was one of the few hospitals where nine Muslim women were able to work as hospital attendants during the Balkan Wars; four of them Tatar women students from Russia who had initially come to the Ottoman Empire to work as volunteers to support the Red Crescent and “to wake up their Ottoman Muslim sisters.”⁴⁰

The reason this particular hospital seems to have been one of the first to employ Muslim sick attendants was probably that it used to be a maternity ward which was also used for educating midwives who, during their first year, also had to take courses in nursing. Obviously the women working there stayed on when the birth clinic was turned into an actual hospital with male patients due to the war.

The work of the women in this hospital must have inspired Besim Ömer to undertake another effort to organize professional education for nurses. In February 1913 women were once more invited by the *Hilal-i Ahmer* to apply to attend a six month course. The women had to be healthy and between 25 and 35 years of age, able to read and write (without a specification of what language) and prepared to serve for at least five years with the *Hilal-i Ahmer*. They would receive food and clothes and a small payment if they attended the courses for six months and participated in the practical exercises.⁴¹ How many women applied remains unclear.

The lack of interest in these courses did not mean that there were no female sick attendants and nurses in Ottoman hospitals. Several sources refer to a clear majority of foreign women working as volunteers.⁴² At the Kandilli hospital, for example, founded at the palace of Celâleddin Bey⁴³ with a capacity of 50 beds, not Ottoman women, but two *soeurs*, and a few English and French women worked as volunteers.⁴⁴ Although the total number of professional sick attendants remained limited and the majority of them were probably foreign or non-Muslim, some “Turkish and Muslim” women seem to have worked as volunteers during the Balkan Wars at the hospitals in Istanbul.⁴⁵ *Servet-i Fünun*, for example, published photographs of Muslim women at work at Gülhane and Haydarpasha hospitals during the Balkan Wars, referred to as *hanımlarımız* (our ladies) and *les dames turques* (the Turkish ladies) in the captions in Ottoman Turkish and French, respectively.⁴⁶

Moreover, it is not always clear from the sources whether the women involved in caring for the wounded were Ottoman or foreign, Muslim or non-Muslim. We know that some of the members of the *Teali-i Nisvan Cemiyeti* were actively involved in working at the hospital founded by the organization.⁴⁷ Some of the members of the *Osmanlı Kadınlar Cemiyeti-i*



FIGURE 7.2 “A room at the Gülhane hospital where one sees Turkish women as nurses for the first time” [*Une salle de l’hôpital de Kulhané où on voit pour la première fois les dames turques en infirmières*], *Servet-i Fünun*, no. 1118, (25 Teşrinievvel 1328/7 November 1912)

Hayriyesi also actively participated in the nursing of a total of 300 wounded soldiers and 60 wounded officers for a period of six months during the Balkan Wars.⁴⁸ It remains unknown, though, whether the members of these organizations working as sick attendants included Muslim women or not.

Ottoman Muslim Women and the Declaration of Jihad

By the time the Jihad was declared in November 1914, Ottoman women, Muslim and non-Muslim, had been involved in activities supporting the military and soldiers for many, many years. There was no need to ask whether they should or should not participate in the war effort and there was little discussion on what they should do. Despite the occasional reference in Ottoman periodicals and newspapers of the period to women battling side by side with men in history and contemporaneously, taking up weapons and fighting in the forefront was not what was expected from Ottoman women.

The women’s periodical *Kadınlar Dünyası* (Women’s World) of 19 December 1914, however, did carry a picture of women in military



وطن ایستینجه قادین ده عسکر اولور

FIGURE 7.3 “If the Fatherland wants it, women can become soldiers too” [*Vatan isteyince kadın da asker olur*], *Kadınlar Dünyası*, 155, 6 *Kanunuevvel* 1330 (19 December 1914), frontpage. The women in the picture rather look like British female volunteers from the Voluntary Aid Detachment. Their uniforms have been Ottomanized by adding badges with a star and crescent.

dress on its cover. The outfit of the women, who look very much like women belonging to the British Voluntary Aid Detachment, an agency sending off female volunteers, had been Ottomanized by the addition of badges with a star and crescent (Fig. 7.3). A few months earlier, in

July 1914, the periodical had featured an article on women and military service. In this article, the editors of the *Kadınlar Dünyası* referred to the women in the early days of Islam who participated in battles like men, while they also reminded their readers of *Kara Fatma* (Black Fatma), who “hiding her gender, succeeded in getting the rank of captain due to her courage and effort” in the Crimean War.⁴⁹ An unknown author writing in *Türk Yurdu*, moreover, referred to the Turkish past of the Ottomans: “[a]ccording to Turkish customs, women take part in war and battle side by side with the ruler.”⁵⁰ It is indeed not unlikely that at least some Ottoman (Muslim) women got involved in fighting. Women, often cross-dressing to hide their gender, are known to have participated in battles in many places and eras.⁵¹ Some female warriors are known to have fought alongside Ottoman soldiers in the various wars of the nineteenth century.⁵² Other women actively participated in the struggles to oust the foreign forces which had occupied parts of Anatolia after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I.⁵³

While the women active during the nineteenth century and those fighting during the War of Independence have taken their place in Turkish (and Kurdish) historiography, the period of World War I proves to be a blind spot. Both *Kadınlar Dünyası* and *Welt des Islams*, for example, refer to an article from *Tanin* according to which a group of 100 women – partly with and partly without weapons – took to the battlefield in Erzurum.⁵⁴ Further research may reveal more on women who actively took up their weapons to fight the enemy.

Despite the picture of the female volunteers and the reference to the women in Erzurum, the editors of *Kadınlar Dünyası* do not seem to have favoured women’s active participation on the battlefield. In the first editorial in December 1914 after a break of four months due to the shortage of paper, Ulviye Mevlan, the publisher of the periodical, made this clear. Although, “Ottoman women will and can fulfill their duty to the fatherland including taking up the weapons”, she wrote, “today our brave sons, our hero soldiers do not want their women, their mothers, their sisters to take up weapons.” While she claimed that the most important duty of women in these days was to give birth to children to create a stronger army, she also made clear that “women’s duties will become more serious, thousands of women will feel the compulsion and the need to work either for the Red Crescent or – not counting as [working] at the front, but in reality not less dangerous than it – the services. ... There is no doubt women will play a large role.”⁵⁵ Thus, just before the periodical stopped appearing, the editors sent a telegraph to Enver Pasha to inform him that he could count on their active support.⁵⁶ What did these and other Ottoman women do? They simply did what they had been doing before.



FIGURE 7.4 *Women of the Hilal-i Ahmer Hanımlar Heyet-i Merkeziyesi at work, Servet-i Fünun, 28 Mayıs 1331 (10 June 1915), 68*

The scale of their activities changed, though. World War I, with its wholesale mobilization, increased the need for military uniforms even more. No longer could textiles or uniforms be imported. The Ottoman army had to fall back on the resources in its own country in order to equip its soldiers.⁵⁷ The efforts to develop local industries were not enough and the authorities called upon the population of the Ottoman Empire to contribute through the mediation of the *Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti* and the *Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti* and its *Kadınlar Merkezi*. The appeal was not made in vain: the newspapers reported daily about the generous and patriotic gifts from citizens all over the empire and several women's organizations which had been founded with different aims turned their activities to production for the army.

A returning phenomenon was the campaigns for "winter presents." The first one was launched by the Istanbul governorship with an advertisement on 15 September 1914.⁵⁸ A few days later the *Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti Kadınlar Merkezi* issued a declaration asking the public to donate "winter presents" *in casu* clothing like warm underwear, vests, socks and gloves.⁵⁹ While the girls and women at its *Hilal-i Ahmer Hanımlar Darüssınaası* (Red Crescent Ladies' Craftworkhome) turned from producing fine needlework to sewing winter clothes and knitting socks, The Red Crescent's Women's Centre also called upon its members repeatedly to come to its home to participate in the work or to do so at home.⁶⁰

Moreover, it successfully called upon women all over the country to establish local women's branches of the Red Crescent and to set to work. In quite a few towns in Anatolia the wives of local governors or other high bureaucrats established such branches and presided over them.⁶¹

The "winter present" campaign was highly successful: the *Müdafaai Milliye Cemiyeti*, which collected the goods and distributed them, reported regularly that it received large numbers of gifts from towns all over the empire.⁶² Subsequently, the *Müdafaai Milliye Cemiyeti* renewed the invitation to the Ottoman public to donate "winter presents" for soldiers during the Gallipoli Campaign, at the end of the summer of 1915 with a new winter coming up.⁶³

Besides the women of the Red Crescent and the National Defence Organization several women's organizations answered these calls and also set to work. In October 1914, the *Teali-i Nisvan Cemiyeti* organized a concert combined with lectures whose "yield [was] meant for the purchase of warm underwear for the army."⁶⁴ The women of the *Türk Kadınları Biçki Yurdu* co-operated closely with the Defence Organization. Its pupils and alumnae produced tens of thousands of pieces of underwear for the army. They were partly produced from materials delivered by the Defence Organization. To be able to deal with the demand, they even invited women who wanted to participate in sewing to come and work at their workshops for a salary.⁶⁵

The girls and women working at the workshops of the organization which had been founded to stimulate the consumption of locally produced goods, the *Mamulat-ı Dahiliye İstihlaki Kadınlar Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi*, and those who worked for the organization in their own homes were set to work and produced more than 100,000 pairs of socks and other pieces for the *Müdafaai Milliye Cemiyeti* instead of fancy dresses for Ottoman ladies.⁶⁶ A photograph taken in one of the organization's workshops shows the women working on navy caps.⁶⁷

This organization also decided to set up its own hospital close to its shop and workshop in old Istanbul, which was financed by the incomes generated by the shop and workshops. In the end the total number of beds at this hospital was 150. The organization, moreover, donated a field hospital with 300 beds and necessities.⁶⁸ In May 1916 the hospital was closed for unclear reasons. Subsequently, the organization assisted in the opening of another hospital, *Zapyon Askeri Hastahanesi* (Zapyon Military Hospital), by providing a fully equipped hospital ward with 150 beds.⁶⁹

Other organizations also took hospitals under their wing. The *Osmanlı Kadınlar Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi* continued its work at the Şişli Etfal Hastanesi, but also worked for the former Russian hospital in Nişantaşı,



FIGURE 7.5 Women at work at one of the workshops of the *Mamulat-ı Dahiliye İstihlaki Kadınlar Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi*. “Women’s fate and women’s work: Letter of a young Turkish woman from Constantinople,” *Die Islamische Welt*, 1, 7, 1917, 380–383.

which had been turned into the Pangaltı Military Hospital to nurse wounded soldiers brought in from Çanakkale.⁷⁰ The supplies for the hospital were partly obtained through the *Mecruhın-ı Gaza-ı Asakir-i Osmaniye İane Komisyonu* (Committee for Donations to the Wounded Ottoman Gazi Soldiers) which was founded under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after the battles in Çanakkale had started and wounded soldiers had started to pour into Istanbul.⁷¹ This Committee was not only central to the collection and allocation of money and supplies donated from abroad, but also seems to have served as an intermediary to order materials from especially Austria-Hungary until this was no longer possible in September 1916.⁷²

This committee also sent several articles including bales of cloth to be turned into bedding to the *Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti Kadıköy Merkezi Hanımlar Şubesi* (Women’s Branch of the Kadıköy Centre of the National Defence Organization)⁷³ which was closely involved with the “Botter” Hospital in Kadıköy,⁷⁴ as we learn from the correspondence between women from the organization including its president, Reşide Bekir, the widow of the famous confectioner Hacı Bekirzade Muhittin, and the committee.⁷⁵

While many of the goods produced by the women reached the soldiers and the wounded in the hospitals through intermediary organizations, the newspapers also reported on individual women from the Istanbul elite and women's organizations who visited the soldiers in the hospitals to bring them more luxury products such as chocolate, oranges and cigarettes. Before World War I this was rare, but the upsurge of patriotism due to the influx of wounded men from Çanakkale seems to have been the major drive behind women's taking this step, including those for whom seclusion had been rather strict until then: women of the Ottoman imperial dynasty. The very visibility of war brought home took women even a step further beyond the traditional gender borders: an increasing number of Ottoman Muslim took the courses offered by the Red Crescent to become sick attendants over the years and actually worked as volunteers or paid staff in the hospitals in Istanbul and beyond.

Only a few months after the Balkan Wars had ended, in February 1914, the Red Crescent announced the start of a course for nursing aids which would consist of 18 lessons of two hours each on Fridays and Sundays.⁷⁶ Between 40 and 50 women participated in the course and at the end of the five month course 27 women successfully took the exam. These 27 women, who were all wives and daughters of prominent Ottoman officials and Muslim, received their certificate during a ceremony in the presence of the First *Kadın* of the Sultan, of Naciye Sultan, granddaughter of Sultan Abdülmecid and the wife of Enver Pasha, and her mother and other palace women.⁷⁷ In his speech at the ceremony Besim Ömer stressed the importance of the event and pointed out that these women served as examples to counter any social resistance the professional nursing school the *Hilal-i Ahmer* wanted to establish might generate.⁷⁸


Understanding that the involvement of Ottoman Muslim women in the nursing of wounded males would mean a serious transgression of existing gender norms for which it would not be easy to create public support, the Red Crescent made conscious efforts to massage public opinion into accepting this shift. Firstly, it continued to organize courses for women belonging to the Ottoman establishment who wanted to serve as voluntary nursing aids. Secondly, it launched a strong public campaign through regular dispatches of announcements, messages and communiqués to the newspapers, the many public lectures of Besim Ömer and other members of the *Hilal-i Ahmer*, the publication of photographs and articles in popular magazines such as *Servet-i Fünun* by popular authors like Fatma Aliye, and the "vulgarization of the work of the Red Crescent through illustrated post cards."⁷⁹ Meanwhile, Besim Ömer in particular continued to try to establish schools for those who wanted to work as volunteers, but also for professional sick attendants and nurses.

المراسلین
 طبیبی :
 اسکی کشف ملکہ فارشوستہ
 تلفراف آدوسی :
 استانبول : نروت فون


 بکری آلتین سنہ
 صاحب امتیاز ومدیر مسئول :
 احمد احسان
 تلفون بومردوسی
 استانبول : ۱۲۰۶

سِرْوَتِ فُنُون

مجلسیہ کولتری جیقاد ، معصوم عثمانی غزہ سیدر
 عدد : ۱۳۵۰
 صفحہ : ۲۱ مایس ۱۹۱۷ - ۹ شیان ۱۹۳۰
 ۱۳۵۰



• ملال اجر • خستہ ہالین خانگری
 Foirnières du Croissant-Rouge.



اخترآ جیہ حربہ عزت ایندن اون پیش خستہ ہالین خانگری ملال اجر خانگری حرکتدن بول ایسہ لریہ حرکتگری
 [شیبہ ، لطفیہ ، مدتیقہ ، فخریہ ، الخال ، حروون ، خدیجہ ، خدیجہ زاهرہ ، فاطمہ جنوزہ ، سحر ، سلیمہ ، نائفہ ، وودیہ ، فخریہ ، بیسہ خانگری]
 Infirmières du C.R.O. quittant, au nombre de quinze et en tenue de voyage, le siège du Comité des Dames
 pour se rendre sur le front.




FIGURE 7.6 Fifteen Ottoman Muslim trained nursing aids leaving for the front wearing their travel outfit. Servet-i Fünun, 31 Mayıs/May 1917, front page

Despite the continuation of the training of professional sick attendants *cum* midwives at Kadırga hospital,⁸⁰ the new courses opening in Istanbul⁸¹ and the founding of schools in Edirne,⁸² Izmir⁸³ and Erzurum, the *Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti Kadınlar Merkezi* and Besim Ömer felt that the process of setting up a proper network of nursing schools within the Ottoman empire was lagging behind what they had hoped for. Only at the very end of World War I did Besim Ömer succeed in convincing the Board of the Red Crescent to allocate money and a building to found such a school.

Still, his diligent work was not left without result: during World War I a considerable, but still limited,⁸⁴ number of Ottoman (Muslim) women worked as voluntary nursing aids or professional sick attendants in the hospitals, initially mostly in the hospitals in Istanbul, but later also elsewhere in hospitals in the towns of Anatolia and in field hospitals right behind the front. It is not just the propaganda publications with their photographs that bear evidence of this, but also the long lists of the names of women working in the hospitals available in the archives of the Turkish Red Crescent and the registers containing the names of those who received a Red Crescent medal.⁸⁵ These registers also show that the socio-economic background of the women involved in nursing changed. While the women working in the hospitals during the first years of World War I seem to have been volunteers belonging to families of the middle and higher level bureaucracy, the women receiving medals in the later years seem to have been working to earn their living. These hospitals offered impoverished women the opportunity to earn a meagre income and, more importantly, a meal and, sometimes, also housing: important benefits for women affected by the war.⁸⁶

Conclusion

By the time the Jihad was declared in November 1914, men (and women) in the Ottoman empire had got used to women's active participation in society. As Selma Rıza wrote to those present at the 1914 Conference of the International Council of Women in Rome, Ottoman women, during the Balkan Wars:

ha[d] unfolded all the energy, accumulated since long years, to come to the aid of their compatriots and to take their place in public and social life. ... Their attitude has been so dignified and measured at this start that even the most severe and retrograde spirits cannot find anything to reproach them; they have, on the contrary, almost been forced to recognize the importance of the feminine role in society.⁸⁷

The question, therefore, was not whether they should contribute to the war effort. They had been doing so for many, many years. Nor was there much discussion on what they should do. Over those years, the range of their activities had been growing slowly but steadily: from simply donating money and goods in a rather anonymous way, to a more active involvement in the organization of donation campaigns and the actual establishment of women's organizations to the explicit aim of supporting soldiers and their families. Most of this work could be and was done from within all-female environments such as the private homes of women or special locations assigned to them. The public space Selma Rıza referred to was, in general, an all-female public space guaranteeing the "dignified" and "measured" attitude which the "retrograde spirits" could hardly disapprove of. Even the work as nursing aids mostly took place within the confines of private homes.

Only during World War I did Ottoman Muslim women have to step out of these all-female environments. Not to become soldiers. Certainly, rhetoric regarding female soldiers was occasionally used. This rhetoric did not serve, however, to encourage women to become soldiers themselves. Rather it was used as a metaphor to show how women had shown their patriotic love in other times and places and to justify the activities of women during World War I. These activities such as their work as nursing aids, after all, more than before meant a transgression of the existing gender borders. At the same time this work, in which women took a caring role and as such actually confirmed their femininity rather than belied it, remained more within these borders than if women actually had become soldiers. Their Jihad was not a Jihad of armed struggle, but rather a Jihad of supporting the armed struggle fought by men.

Notes

- * This article is largely based on the research done for my PhD thesis: "Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism: Female Associational Life in the Ottoman Empire," Leiden University, October 2013.
- 1 "Women of the Islamic State: A manifesto on women by the Al-Khansaa Brigade" [Translation and analysis by Charlie Winter, February 2015] (<http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/women-of-the-islamic-state3.pdf>, accessed 14-02-2015).
 - 2 "Kafe-i müslimin üzerine cihadın farziyeti hakkında fetva-ı şerife," *Sebilürreşad* 13, no. 314 (6 Teşrinisani 1330/ 19 November 1914): 12–13, quotation 12.
 - 3 "Cihad-i ekber hakkında beyanname-i hazret-i hilafetpenahi," *Sebilürreşad* 13, no. 314, (6 Teşrinisani 1330/19 November 1914): 14.

- 4 “Başkumandanlık Vekaletinin beyannamesi,” *Sebilürreşad* 13, no. 314, (6 Teşrinisani 1330/19 November 1914): 14–15.
- 5 Salih El-Şerif El-Tunusi, “Fisebilillah, cihadın hakikatı, gayesi, hükmü, mücahidinin vezaifi,” *Sebilürreşad* 13, no. 315, (13 Teşrinisani 1330/26 November 1914), pp. 20–24, quotation 22.
- 6 “Hanımlara hayıra davet,” *Ayine*, no. 3 (16 Teşrinisani 1291/28 November 1875), p. 3.
- 7 “Secours aux blessés; appel aux dames,” *Stamboul*, 12 July 1876, p. 1.
- 8 “Dünkü nüshamızda ...,” *Vakit*, 30 Haziran 1292 (12 July 1876), p. 3.
- 9 “Hanımlar gayret,” *Vakit*, 1 Temmuz 1292 (13 July 1876), pp. 1–2.
- 10 “Muharebede mecruh olan ...,” *Vakit*, 2 Temmuz 1292 (14 July 1876), p. 3; “Secours aux blessés,” *Stamboul*, 21 July 1876, p. 1.
- 11 “Asakir-i Osmaniye meçruhini için ...” and “(Pazartesi çıkarılan ilave),” *Ayine*, no. 33 (1 Ağustos 1291 (= 1292!)/13 August 1876), p. 1.
- 12 Şadiye, “Şeref-i nisvan-ı islam ve muhadderat-ı osmaniye iane komisyonu,” *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*, no. 124 (7 Ağustos 1313/19 August 1897), pp. 2–3.
- 13 See, for example, “Tebliğat-ı resmiye,” *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*, no. 120 (10 Temmuz 1313/22 July 1897), pp. 1–2; “Tebliğat-ı resmiye,” *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*, no. 121 (17 Temmuz 1313/29 July 1897), pp. 1–2 and subsequent issues.
- 14 “İane-i askeriye cemiyatı,” *Yeni Gazete*, 23 November 1908, p. 4.
- 15 Emine Semiye, “Kadın Mecmua-ı Muhterimesine,” *Kadın*, no. 9 (8 Kanunuevvel 1324/21 December 1908), p. 2; “Şuun-u Nisvan: ‘Hizmet-i Nisvan’ Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi,” *Kadın*, no. 10 (15 Kanunuevvel 1324/28 December 1908), p. 16; “Şanlı asker kardeşlerimiz ...,” *Yeni Edirne*, 8 Kanunuevvel 1324 (21 December 1908), p. 8; “Şanlı asker kardeşlerimiz ...,” *Yeni Edirne*, 9 Kanunuevvel 1324 (22 December 1908), p. 4; and subsequent issues.
- 16 See, for example, “Cemiyet-i Hayriye-i Nisvaniye’nin ilk eser-i şefkatı”; Zekiye, “Trablusgarb Muavenet-i Milliye Heyet-i Muhterimesine”; “Şefkat Cemiyet-i Hayriyesine arz-ı şükran,” all in *Rumeli*, 31 Teşrinevvel 1327 (13 November 1911), p. 1.
- 17 “Hanımlarımızın fedakarlığı,” *Tanin*, 18 Eylül 1325 (1 October 1909), p. 3; “Von der Mädchenschule in Nischantasch,” *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 29. March 1914, p. 1.
- 18 Nezihe Muhlis, “Nezih bir nida-yı hamiyet,” *Donanma*, 3, no. 2 (26) (Nisan 1328 / April/May 1912), pp. 59–64, quotation 61. Nezihe Muhlis would later become known under the name Nezihe Muhittin.
- 19 For an extensive discussion of this boycott which was used as a “political weapon” against foreign states see Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, “Muslim Merchants and Working-Class in Action: Nationalism, Social Mobilization and Boycott Movement in the Ottoman Empire 1908–1914” [Unpublished PhD-Thesis, Leiden: Leiden University, 2010].
- 20 Mehmed Ubeydullah, “İçtima ve siyaset: islam kadınları,” *Türk Yurdu* 2, (1328), pp. 861–866.
- 21 *Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti 1329–1331 Salnamesi* ([İstanbul:] Ahmet İhsan ve Şürekası, n.d.[1332 (1915–1916)]).
- 22 Although the official date of foundation of this organization according to its

- statutes was 1 February 1913, it seems to have been in existence somewhat earlier: Nâzım H. Polat, *Müdâfaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti*, Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1991, pp. 17–21.
- 23 A[bdullah] C[evdet], “Ağlatan bir sahne-i fazilet”, *İçtihad* 3, no. 51 (24 Kanunusani 1328/6 February 1913), pp. 1163–1164, quotation 1163.
- 24 Eyal Ginio, “Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913): Awakening from the Ottoman Dream”, *War in History* 12, 2 (2005), pp. 156–177; Nadir Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Sosyal Devlet* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), pp. 305–306.
- 25 At a meeting for women of the branch in Beşiktaş, for example, Fatma Aliye, Fehime Nüzhet, Salime Servet and Nur Halime addressed the audience: “Hanımlara konferans: Müdafaa-i Milliye Beşiktaş Şubesinden”, *Tanin*, 7 Mart 1329 (20 March 1913), p. 5. See also “Türk hanımlarının toplanışı”, *Büyük Duygu*, no. 2 (16 Mart 1329/29 March 1913), pp. 31–32; “Für die Nationalverteidigung”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 20 March 1913, p. 2; see also Nâzım H. Polat, *Müdâfaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1991), pp. 80–81; Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1996), p. 203.
- 26 “Müdâfaa-i Milliye: tehhür”, *Tanin*, 29 Mart 1329 (11 April 1913).
- 27 “Müdâfaa-i Milliye: Brussa hanımlarının hamiyetperverlikleri”, *Tanin*, 15 Şubat 1328 (28 February 1913), p. 3.
- 28 “Müdâfaa-i Milliye: Trabzon hanımları”, *Tanin*, 23 Şubat 1328 (8 March 1913), pp. 4–5; “Die patriotischen Frauen von Trapezunt”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 27 February 1913, p. 1.
- 29 “Die Nationalverteidigung”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 28 Februar 1913, p. 2.
- 30 “Die nationale Verteidigung”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 4 March 1913, p. 1.
- 31 “Patriotische Opferstimmung in Smyrna”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 14 March 1913, p. 1.
- 32 “Hilal-i Ahmer”, *Tanin*, 1 Teşrinievvel 1328 (14 October 1912), p. 5.
- 33 Türkiye Kızılay Arşivi, (hereafter TKA), 93/10, 11 Teşrinievvel 1328 (24 October 1912).
- 34 Fehime Nüzhet, “Varaka: Senin ceride-i muhterimesi müdüriyetine”, *Senin* (= *Tanin*), 8 Teşrinievvel 1328 (21 October 1912), p. 5.
- 35 “Teali-i Nisvan Cemiyeti”, *Halka Doğru*, no. 48 (6 Mart 1329 [sic This should be 1330]/19 March 1914), p. 383; Messadet Bedir-Khan, “A propos de l’article de Madame Delaunay”, *Kadınlar Dunyassi*, no. 125 (4/17 January 1914), pp. 1–2; “Halide Hanımefendinin hitabesi”, *Kadınlar Dünyası*, no. 134 (8 Mart 1330/21 March 1914), pp. 4–5.
- 36 “Sanitätshilfe: Eine Danksagung”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 1 December 1912, p. 2; “Die Hilfsaktion. Dank”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 6 December 1912, p. 2; “Die Wohltätigkeitsgesellschaft der osmanischen Damen”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 2 March 1913, p. 1; Forinne [sic] Lütfi, “Şerike-yi mesaimiz ...”, *Kadınlar Dünyası*, no. 100–113 (12 Teşrinievvel 1329/25 October 1913), p. 7; *Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti 1329–1331 Salnamesi*, pp. 172–174.
- 37 Messadet Bedir-Khan, “A propos de l’article de Madame Delaunay”, *Kadınlar Dunyassi*, no. 125 (4/17 January 1914), pp. 1–2.
- 38 Besim Ömer, *Hanımefendilere Hilal-i Ahmer’e dair konferans* (İstanbul: Ahmet İhsan ve Şurekası, 1330), pp. 75–77.

- 39 “Hilal-i Ahmer”, *Tanin*, 25 Eylül 1328 (8 October 1912), p. 5.
- 40 *Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti 1329–1331 Salnamesi*, p. 126. See also TKA, 413/13, 14 Teşrinievvel 1328 (27 November 1912); TKA, 413/14, 14 Teşrinievvel 1328 (27 November 1912); TKA, 413/22, 22 Teşrinievvel 1328 (5 December 1912); TKA, 413/42, 29 Teşrinievvel 1328 (12 December 1912); “Türklük Şuunu – Şimali Hemşirelerimiz”, *Türk Yurdu*, 4, no. 14 (18 Nisan 1329/1 May 1913), p. 464.
- 41 TKA, 193/23, [23 Kanunusani 1328 (5 February 1913)].
- 42 Such as, for example, the sources on decorations. The easiest accessible listing is the one in the *Nişan Defterleri: Hilal-i Ahmer Madalyaları*. Other places to find references to recipients of medals are the catalogues of the *Dahiliye Nezareti: Kalem-i Mahsus*, the *Meclis-i Vukela Mazbataları*, and those with the *İrade-i Taltifat*. Within the latter category especially the files with specific decrees relating to decorations are relevant: *Taltifat-ı Nisvan* (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (hereafter BOA), Dosya Usulu İradeler Tasnifi (hereafter DÜİT) 44) and the *Taltifat-ı Memurin: Hilal-i Ahmer Madalyaları* (BOA, DÜİT 47).
- 43 Son of Cemile Sultan, daughter of Sultan Abdülmecid. The Palace was torn down in 1914. <http://www.cemilesultan.com/hakkimizda.php> (consulted 5 January 2011).
- 44 *Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti 1329–1331 Salnamesi*, p. 165.
- 45 Selma Riza, “Turquie”, in International Council of Women, *Report on the Quinquennial Meetings, Rome 1914* (Karlsruhe: G. Braunsche Hofbuchdruckerei und Verlag, [1914]), pp. 391–394 (accessed through <http://www.archive.org>).
- 46 “Mecruh gazilerimiz: Gülhane hastahanesi’nde bir koğuş [photograph]”, *Servet-i Fünun*, no. 1118 (25 Teşrinievvel 1328/7 November 1912): front cover; “Gazi Osmanlılar: Haydarpaşa hastanesinde ameliyat salonu, hanımlarımızın muavenet-i şefkatkaranesi [photograph]”, *Servet-i Fünun*, no. 1121 (15 Teşrinisani 1328/28 November 1912): front cover.
- 47 “Halide Hanımefendinin hitabesi”, *Kadınlar Dünyası*, no. 134 (8 Mart 1330/21 March 1914), pp. 4–5; “Teali-i Nisvan Cemiyeti”, *Halka Doğru*, no. 48 (6 Mart 1329 [sic] This should be 1330)/19 March 1914), p. 383; Nezihe Muhittin, *Türk Kadını* (Istanbul: Numune Matbaası, 1931), pp. 84–85.
- 48 “Die Hilfsaktion. Dank”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 6 December 1912, p. 2; “Die Wohltätigkeitsgesellschaft der osmanischen Damen”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 2 March 1913, p. 1.
- 49 Kadınlar Dünyası, “Askerlik ve kadınlar”, *Kadınlar Dünyası*, no. 148 (20 Haziran 1330/3 July 1914), p. 2.
- 50 “Kadın Efendi Hazretlerinin asker evladlarına muhabbet ve şefkatı”, *Türk Yurdu*, 8, no. 6 (21 Mayıs 1331/3 June 1915), p. 2627.
- 51 See, e.g. Karin Hagemann, “‘Heroic Virgins’ and ‘Bellicose Amazon’: Armed Women, the Gender Order and the German Public during and after the Anti-Napoleonic Wars”, *European History Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (2007), pp. 507–552; Dianne Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry 1650–1850* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996 [reprint with new preface of original 1989]); David Hopkin, “Female Soldiers and the Battle of the Sexes in France: The Mobilization of a Folk Motif”, *History Workshop Journal*, 56 (Autumn 2003), pp. 78–104; Remke Kruk, *The Warrior Women of Islam: Female*

- Empowerment in Arabic Popular Literature* (London, New York: IBTauris, 2014); Julie Wheelwright, “‘Amazons and military maids:’ An examination of female military heroines in British literature and the changing construction of gender”, *Women’s Studies International Forum* 10 (1987), pp. 489–502.
- 52 Zeynep Kutluata, “Gender and War during the Late Ottoman and Early Republican Periods: the Case of Black Fatma(s)”, [unpublished MA thesis, Sabancı University, Istanbul, 2006].
- 53 *Milli Mücadele’de ve Cumhuriyet’in İlk Yıllarında Kadınlarımız* (Ankara: T.C. Milli Savunma Bakanlığı, 1998), pp. 28–141; Zeki Sarihan, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Kadınları* (Bursa: Nilüfer Belediye Başkanlığı, 2009⁴ [birinci baskı: Ankara: Çankaya Belediyesi katkılarıyla Cumhuriyet Kadınları Derneği, 2006]), pp. 203–254.
- 54 See e.g. M[artin] H[artmann], “Der Glaubenskrieg und unsere Frauen”, *Welt des Islams* (1) 3, no. 2 (1915), pp. 144–145 which was a reproduction of an article in *Tanin* from 8 January 1915 on women at the border near Erzurum who were fighting side by side with men against the Russians. See also Ulviye Mevlan, “Geçinmek ihtiyacı”, *Kadınlar Dünyası*, no. 160 (10 Kanunusani 1330/23 January 1915), p. 2, who was probably referring to the same group of women.
- 55 Ulviye Mevlan, “Hal-ı hazırda kadın”, *Kadınlar Dünyası*, no. 154 (29 Teşrinisani 1330/12 December 1914), p. 1.
- 56 “Harb-ı Umumi ve Kadınlar”, *Kadınlar Dünyası*, no. 161 (17 Kanunusani 1330/30 January 1915), p. 2.
- 57 Nicole A.N.M. van Os, “Ottoman Muslim Women and Work during the First World War”, in *War and Empire: World War One and the Ottoman Empire*, eds. M. Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2015 (forthcoming)).
- 58 “Askere hedaya-yı şitaiye”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 2 Eylül 1330 (15 September 1914), p. 3.
- 59 Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti Hanımlar Heyet-i Merkeziyesi, *Takvim – 1 –*, İstanbul, 1331, pp. 64–65.
- 60 “Muhterem Osmanlı Hanımlarına”, *Turan*, 18 Teşrinisani 1330 (1 December 1914), p. 3; “Hilal-i Ahmer’deki dikişler”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 7 Kanunuevvel 1330 (20 December 1914), p. 3; “Ein Aufruf an die türkischen Frauen”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 2 December 1914; “Mecruhin gazata yardım”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 28 Kanunusani 1330 (10 February 1915), p. 4; “Osmanlı hanımlarına”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 18 Şubat 1330 (3 March 1915), p. 4; “Vom Roten Halbmond”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 5 March 1915, p. 3. According to the German newspaper “patriotic Turkish women” were invited, while *Tasvir-i Efkar* refers to “Ottoman ladies.” “Dikişe davet”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 19 Nisan 1331 (2 May 1915), p. 2.
- 61 Such was the case, for example, in Konya in October/November 1914 and in Kastamonu in May 1915. TKA, 28/16, 26 Ağustos 1330 (8 September 1914); TKA, 28/24, 13 Teşrinievvel 1330 (26 October 1914); TKA, 28/29, 9 Teşrinisani 1330 (22 November 1914); TKA, 28/160, 2 Mayıs 1331 (15 May 1915); TKA, 28/177. See also Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti Hanımlar Heyet-i Merkeziyesi, *Takvim – 1 –*, p. 59.
- 62 See, e.g., “Hedaya-yı şitaiye”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 6 Teşrinievvel 1330 (19 October 1914), p. 3; “Hedaya-yı şitaiye”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 1 Kanunuevvel 1330 (14 December 1914), p. 3.

- 63 “Gazilerimize hedaya-yı şitaiye hazırlayalım”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 11 Ağustos 1331 (24 August 1915), p. 2; “Askerlerimize hediye-i şitaiye”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 19 Ağustos 1331 (1 September 1915), p. 2.
- 64 “Zum besten der Soldaten”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 23 October 1914, p. 3.
- 65 “Hediye-i şitaiye”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 27 Eylül 1330 (10 October 1914), p. 4; Lebib Selim, “Türk kadınlığının harb-ı umumideki faaliyeti”, *Türk Yurdu*, IX, 5, 5 Teşrinisani 1331 (18 November 1915), pp. 2812–2816.
- 66 Lebib Selim, “Türk kadınlığının harb-ı umumideki faaliyeti”, *Türk Yurdu*, IX, 4, 22 Teşrinievvel 1331 (4 November 1915), pp. 2797–2799.
- 67 “Frauensichksal und Frauenarbeit: Brief einer junge Türkin aus Constantinopel”, *Die Islamische Welt*, 1, 7, 1917, pp. 380–383.
- 68 Draft letter of Melek hanım, the president of the organization, dated 15 Ağustos 1331 (28 August 1915) in BOA, Hariciye Nezareti, Siyasi Kısım (hereafter, HR.SYS), 2174/3, 20 May 1915. In this letter she quotes the number of beds as 95 and 150, respectively. Other sources refer to 100 and 160 beds and even 170 beds, respectively. “Frauensichksal und Frauenarbeit: Brief einer junge Türkin aus Constantinopel”, *Die Islamische Welt*, no. 7, pp. 380–383; Lebib Selim, “Türk kadınlığının harb-ı umumideki faaliyeti”, *Türk Yurdu* 9, no. 4 (22 Teşrinievvel 1331/4 November 1915), pp. 2797–2799; Lebib Selim, “Türk kadınlığının harb-ı umumideki faaliyeti”, *Türk Yurdu* 9, no. 5 (5 Teşrinisani 1331/18 November 1915), pp. 2812–2816; “İstihlak-i Milli Kadınlar Cemiyeti”, *Tanin*, 17 Eylül 1332 (30 September 1916), p. 3.
- 69 “İktisadi haberler: İstihlak-i Milli Kadınlar Cemiyeti”, *İktisadiyat Mecmuası*, no. 69 (21 Eylül 1332 /4 October 1916), p. 7; “İstihlak-i Milli Kadınlar Cemiyeti Hastahanesi”, *Tanin*, 21 Nisan 1332 (4 May 1916), p. 4; “Teşekkür – İstihlak-i Milli Hastahanesi sertababeti’nden”, *Tanin*, 22 Nisan 1332 (5 May 1916), p. 3; “İstihlak-i Milli Kadınlar Cemiyeti Hastahanesi sertababeti’nden”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 22 Nisan 1332 (5 May 1916), p. 2. The Zapyon hospital was located in a Greek school which had been confiscated by the authorities to be used as a hospital. During the war many schools (especially those of Christian minorities) were indeed (partly) turned into hospitals.
- 70 “Grand Concert”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 28 July 1915, p. 5; “Für das Krankenhaus in Nischantasch”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 1 August 1915, p. 3; “Grand Concert”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 1 August 1915, p. 5; “La société de bienfaisance des dames ottomans”, *Lloyd Ottoman*, 27 October 1917, p. 3; BOA, HR.SYS, 2174/2, 19 January 1915; BOA, HR.SYS, 2174/3, 20 May 1915. For information on the history of the hospital which was turned into a Russian hospital again after the war see Nuran Yıldırım, “Rus Hastanesi”, *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1994), Vol. 6, p. 370.
- 71 Letter of the organization dated 29 Temmuz 1331 (11 August 1915), an undated list of the wanted articles and a draft response to the *Pangaltı Osmanlı Kadınlar Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi* dated 15 Ağustos 1331 (28 August 1915) in: BOA, HR.SYS, 2174/3, 20 May 1915; See also several documents at BOA, HR.SYS, 2174/2, 19 January 1915.
- 72 When it was no longer possible to purchase the supplies needed for the hospitals from Austria-Hungary the Committee was dissolved and the money left in its

- accounts was transferred to the *Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*. Dispatch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 4 Eylül 1332 (17 September 1916) in: BOA, HR.SYS, 2174/3, 20 May 1915.
- 73 The branch in Kadıköy seems to have been particularly active during the second half of World War I. “Grande fête champêtre”, *Lloyd Ottoman*, 2 August 1917, p. 3; “Grande fête champêtre”, *Lloyd Ottoman*, 3 August 1917, p. 4; “La fête de Féner Baghtché”, *Lloyd Ottoman*, 3 August 1917, p. 4; “Kadıköy hanımlarının faaliyeti”, *Tanin*, 7 Temmuz/July 1334/1918, p. 4; “Konferans”, *Tanin*, 6 Ağustos/August 1334/1918, p. 4; “Kadınlara Konferans”, *Tanin*, 13 Ağustos/August 1334/1918, p. 4.
- 74 This hospital was housed in the “Botter” mansion which is actually located at Fenerbahçe and had been built as a summer house by one of the tailors of Abdülhamid II, J. Botter, who was of Dutch origin.
- 75 Letter signed Pakize dated 31.6.1331 (13 September 1915); draft letter of the Committee dated 10 Eylül 1331 (23 September 1915) in BOA, HR.SYS, 2174/3, 20 May 1915; Receipt signed Pakize Zeki dated 20 Eylül 1331 (3 October 1915) reporting the arrival of the slippers; account for the transporting costs of the slippers dated 21 Eylül 1331 (4 October 1915); letters expressing gratitude from the women’s organization and the board of the hospital dated 27 Eylül and 3 Teşrinievvel 1331 (10 and 16 October 1915), respectively, all in BOA, HR.SYS, 2174/2, 19 January 1915.
- 76 “Die Kurse für Krankenpflegerinnen”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 15 February 1914, p. 2; “Havadis-i dünya: kadınlar hastabakıcılığı”, *Kadınlar Dünyası*, no. 130 (8 Şubat 1329/21 February 1914), p. 9.
- 77 “Der Rote Halbmond”, *Osmanischer Lloyd*, 14 July 1914, p. 3; “Hilal-i Ahmer’de bir resm-i bihin”, *Servet-i Fünun*, no. 1206 (3 Temmuz 1330/16 July 1914), p. 74. The last article contains a full list of all the women receiving their diplomas including the names and ranks of their fathers and husbands. A year later, in retrospect, Besim Ömer declared that the aim had been “the creation and instruction of a corps of *Muslim* male and female nurses”: Bessim Ömer, “La fondation, la réorganisation du Croissant-Rouge et son action pendant les guerres de Tripolitaine et des Balkans”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge* 46, no. 183 (1915), pp. 419–428, quotation 428 (emphasis added).
- 78 “Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti reis-i sanisi muallim doktor Besim Ömer Paşa nutku”, *Servet-i Fünun*, no. 1212 (14 Ağustos 1330/27 August 1914), pp. 124–125.
- 79 Bessim Ömer, “La fondation, la réorganisation du Croissant-Rouge”, p. 428.
- 80 In September 1914, for example, six Muslim women graduated from the courses at the Kadirga hospital for female hospital attendants. TKA, 331/5, 11 Eylül 1330 (24 September 1914).
- 81 TKA, 193/88, 23 Eylül 1330 (6 October 1914); TKA, 193/95, 12 Teşrinievvel 1330 (25 October 1914); “Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti’nden”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 11 Teşrinievvel 1330 (24 October 1914), p. 4.
- 82 TKA, 157/24, 23 Eylül 1330 (6 October 1914); TKA, 157/30, 4 Teşrinisani 1330 (17 November 1914).
- 83 TKA, 336/2, 6 Teşrinievvel 1331 (19 October 1915); TKA, 336/3, 11 Teşrinisani 1331 (24 November 1915); N.O., “Eine Krankenpflegerinnenschule in Smyrna”, *Welt des Islams* (1) 3, nos 3/4 (25 March 1916), p. 225; “İzmir’de hastabakıcı hanımlar”, *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 30 Haziran 1332 (13 July 1916), p. 2.

- 84 “Die Frauenbewegung in der Türkei”, *Neues Wiener Journal (Mittagblatt)*, 23 August 1916, p. 3.
- 85 See footnote 45, 46.
- 86 See, for example, “Hastahane hemşiresi”, *Vakit*, 20 Teşrinisani/November 1917, p. 2; “Hastabakıcı araniyor”, *Tanin*, 5 Mayıs/May 1918, p. 4; “Kolordu için jamım araniyor”, *Tanin*, 6 Haziran/June 1918, p. 4.
- 87 Selma Rıza, “Turquie”, in International Council of Women, *Report on the Quinquennial Meetings, Rome 1914* (Karlsruhe: G. Braunsche Hofbuchdruckerei und Verlag, n.d. [1914]), pp. 391–394, quotation 392–394 (accessed through <http://www.archive.org>).