



CHURCHILL, EUROPE AND TURKEY

Churchill, Europa y Turquía

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From the early 1930s until his peace time premiership (1951-1955), Winston Churchill was one of the strongest advocates of the concept of a United Europe. While this is well known among scholars of 20th century British history, Churchill's actual vision for what a United Europe might look like has received less attention. Still less attention has been paid to Churchill's opinions of the roles other nations might play within the new Europe. This article will examine Churchill's view of Turkey in the new European order and will reveal that Churchill saw Turkey as a part of, (or at least an extension of) Europe. However, this article will also reveal that Churchill's conceptualisation of Turkey's role was largely predicated on 19th century geostrategic thinking.



Abstract

Winston Churchill; Turkey; United Europe; European Council; Rebuilding Europe.

Winston Churchill; Turquía; Europa unida; Consejo Europeo; reconstrucción de Europa.



Key words

Desde inicios de la década de 1930 hasta su mandato en época de paz (1951-1955), Winston Churchill fue uno de los grandes defensores del concepto de una Europa unida. Mientras que los académicos de la historia británica del siglo XX conocen esa característica, la visión que Churchill tenía sobre la forma que tomaría la Europa unida ha recibido menos atención. Y aún se sabe menos sobre la opinión de Churchill con respecto al rol que otras naciones deberían desempeñar en la nueva Europa. El presente artículo examinará la visión de Churchill sobre Turquía en el nuevo orden europeo y, así, revelará que Churchill consideraba a Turquía como parte (o al menos una extensión) de Europa. De todas formas, este artículo también revelará que la conceptualización de Churchill sobre Turquía aparecía a menudo en el pensamiento geoestratégico del siglo XIX.



Resumen

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Fechas

From the early 1930s until his peace time premiership (1951-1955), Winston Churchill was one of the strongest advocates of the concept of a United Europe. While this is well known among scholars of 20th century British history, Churchill's actual vision for what a United Europe might look like has received less attention. In the shadow of "Brexit", the scholarly debate has remained focused on the role Churchill believed Britain might play in the European post war order; whether Britain would be an integral nation within the "United States of Europe" or if like a flying buttress, Britain would support the new Europe from the outside. This debate has overshadowed interesting questions which arise from Churchill's vision of post war Europe. For instance, this debate has overlooked what Churchill believed might be the structural and legal framework of European integration and other, far more basic issues like which countries could be members of the European order.

For Churchill, membership to the United States of Europe was simple. In Brussels, on 26 February 1949, Churchill's speech to the *Salle des Beaux Arts* said that, "[a]ny European country that sincerely accepts and adopts the principles set forth [in the Charter of Human Rights proclaimed the United Nations Organisation] will be welcome by the European Union" (Rhodes-James, 1974). Churchill envisioned a path which could be open to several countries to attain membership to the European Union, but perhaps the most interesting of these is Turkey. Despite his defeat by Ottoman forces at the Dardanelles in 1915 and the political collapse of the Coalition Government brought on by the Chanak Crisis in 1922, Churchill held no grudge against Turkey. He saw Turkey as a potential ally and partner much as he did prior to the First World War.

Turkey, like Britain, is a geographical outlier in Europe. Another crucial point is that to some degree, both nations struggle with their "European" identity. For Britain, there has been always been a tension between its imperial character and its European character. This of course posed no problems for Churchill who saw these two characteristics as a part of the three interlinked circles: "The first circle for us is naturally the British Commonwealth and Empire, with all that that comprises. Then there is also the English-speaking, World in which we, Canada, and the other British Dominions and the United States play so important a part. And finally there is United Europe" (Churchill, 1950). In terms of its relationship to Europe, Turkish identity is far more fractured. Turkey has dealt with questions of being Eastern or Western, being secular or non-secular, and of being European or Asian for centuries. Like Churchill's complex reading of British character and Europe, modern scholarship has moved beyond such mutually exclusive, binary questions (Massicard, 2013).

It follows that Churchill's interlinking circles of identity for Britain might be applied to Turkey as well. In this way, Churchill saw Turkey as more than just a European state or Near Eastern state. Rather, he retained strategic ideas of nineteenth century such as Britain's "Eastern Question" strategies and applied them to the post war world. After all, Britain had been an ally with the Ottoman Empire against Russian Imperial expansion in the nineteenth century. In Churchill's mind, this might help provide a model for dealing with Soviet expansion in the twentieth century.

In order to understand the role for Turkey in Churchill's Europe, there are three areas of his understanding which will need to be considered. The first is regarding the historical perspective of Turkey and the Ottoman Empire. This will need to be examined to gauge how his father's influence and indeed the influence of the Conservative party may have affected Churchill's

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understanding of Turkey's role in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. The second area of understanding is to analyze Churchill's 1943 "Morning thoughts" and meetings with the United States which he records in his Second World War memoirs, where he most clearly articulates his vision for the role of Turkey in the future of Europe. The final area of thought is to consider the post war realities and to what extent Turkey's relationship with Europe and Britain reflected Churchill's vision.

Historical Perspectives

Winston Churchill, like his father Lord Randolph Churchill, came from a Conservative political background. Many in the Tory party approached British relationship with the Ottoman Empire in geostrategic terms. One of the loudest Tory voices was Benjamin Disraeli who championed the Ottoman Empire as an ally against Russian Expansion in Asia and the Near East. Winston Churchill later described the Tory mood on the Eastern question as "tremendous and inflexible" (Churchill, 1906). Despite this atmosphere, Lord Randolph welcomed the sacrifice of Ottoman holdings in the Balkans, though significantly not Turkey-in-Europe with which he was content. Lord Randolph reached out to the Liberal, firebrand Charles Dilke declaring that the aim of the British government should be "the complete freedom and independence of the Slav nationality, as opposed to any reconstruction of the Turkish Empire" (Churchill, 1906).

However, as Winston Churchill pointed out in his father's biography, these views were entirely private. In the fray between Conservatives and Liberals regarding the Eastern Question "Lord Randolph Churchill took no public part" and it is only from his "private letters that we may learn how decided were his sympathies" (Churchill, 1906). Perhaps this indicates that Lord Randolph Churchill was not particularly committed one way or another. But a more convincing view might be that Churchill was simply using the Eastern question to "sabotage his party's stance" and advance the standing of his Conservative splinter group, the "Fourth Party" (Roy Foster, 1981). In any case, understanding Lord Randolph's actual position is difficult because of his numerous contradictory and paradoxical positions on the matter. In an article in *Fortnightly* in 1883, Randolph Churchill praised the late Benjamin Disraeli's policies on "imperial rule and the great Eastern development of the empire" (Foster, 1981).

While the full complexities of the "Eastern Question" are too innumerable for this article to explore, it is clear how Winston Churchill understood his father's views on the government's occupation of Egypt in 1882. The biography of his father explains that Lord Randolph believed "the whole policy of intervention seemed a flagrant political blunder and a crowning violation of Liberal principles". Winston believed his father saw it as a "wicked" and an "unjust war" (Churchill, 1906). While the occupation was supported by some of the Tories on the grounds "the ministers had done their duty to the national interest", their support was most likely a gamble to undermine the Liberal party and its leader William Gladstone (Shannon, 1999). Though Gladstone was half-hearted about British intervention, he allowed his government, as Winston Churchill put it, to be "dragged deeper and deeper into the horrible perplexities of the Egyptian riddle" (Churchill, 1906). Eventually the liberal Gladstone embraced his role as imperialist and had "eager outbursts of triumphalism and vainglory" (Shannon, 1999).

This reverse in Gladstone's approach to foreign policy illustrates the cultural lens through which the Liberal Party viewed the British role the East and what the nature of Britain's relationship

with the Ottoman Empire should be. Gladstone saw the Ottoman Empire in religious terms and thus as an Asian power which was fundamentally non-European. In a letter to Edwin Freshfield, Gladstone said “[w]ith regard to the condition of the Turkish Empire I cannot regard the Musslaman rule in Europe as normal or permanent” though he stops short of saying they should be forced past the straits and out of Europe. He does add that “in Asia I have ever supposed they had a greater chance of duration with a fairer field” (Matthew, 1982). This is confirmed by his condemnation of the Berlin Treaty in 1880 which re-established a greater Turkey-in-Europe. Compounding Gladstone’s anti-Ottoman outlook was his sincere philhellenic approach to the Eastern Mediterranean. He supported Greek claims in Thessaly, Epirus, and Crete and lambasted the Berlin treaty as “insane” because he thought it supported the integrity of Ottoman holdings against Greek territorial ambitions (Shannon, 1999). These differences in world view of the Conservatives and Liberals had interesting effects on the young Churchill’s understanding of the Ottoman Empire (Toye, 2011).

One of Churchill’s earliest and serious reflections on the Ottoman Empire was before his departure for India in 1897. In a series of letters between Churchill and his mother, they argued over the situation in the Balkans and the impending Greco-Turkish War (Ekinci, 2006).

Despite initially criticizing the Salisbury government’s support for the Ottomans against the Greeks, Churchill ultimately declared that he would be embedded on the Turkish side. In a letter to his mother on 21 April 1897 Churchill said while his sympathies were “entirely with the Greeks”, he thought that “the Turks are bound to win, they are in enormous strength and will be on the offensive the whole time” (CHAR 28/23/36-38). By 28 April, Churchill was asking for money to be sent to the Ottoman bank. However, the Balkan War was over too soon for Churchill to get involved. According to Churchill’s autobiography *My Early Life* (1930), he met Ian Hamilton (later Sir General Ian Hamilton) on a transfer boat, and while Hamilton had promised his service to Greece, Churchill had promised his to Turkey. While Churchill’s allegiance to Turkey largely owes to his lust for glory, an additional explanation might be that he inherited a “Turkophile” attitude from his father. Churchill went on to write that Hamilton was a “romantic” and was thus “for the Greeks,” while he “having been brought up a Tory... was for the Turks” (Churchill, 1930).

The flexibility of Churchill’s views on Turkey might be seen in light of his own ambiguous political identity during the early years of his career. It was already evident that by 1897, Churchill “did not regard the Conservative Party as his natural political home” (Toye, 2011). In the same letter that he denounced Lord Salisbury’s foreign policy with Russia and Turkey as “foolish” and “wicked”, Churchill confessed to his mother that he was “a Liberal in all but name” (CHAR 28/23/31-33A). Despite this Churchill entered Parliament in 1900 as a Conservative but by 1902 he had become frustrated with the Conservative Party’s penchant for protectionist economic policies. In May 1904 Churchill formally switched to the Liberal Party, not as a rejection of Conservative policy regarding Turkey but from a desire to refute protectionism and an interest in domestic social reform (Toye, 2011).

Despite becoming a “Liberal *enfant terrible*”, Churchill’s view of Britain’s foreign policy toward Turkey remained closer to the traditional Conservative perspective (Toye, 2011). That is to say that the Ottoman Empire would be best treated as an ally, especially since there were so many Muslims in India who had an allegiance to the Ottoman Caliph. So Churchill went out of his way to create personal friendships with members of Committee of Union and Progress and

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even pushed for an Anglo-Ottoman alliance in 1911 during the Tripolitanian War (Dockter, 2015). Significantly, this was based on Churchill's belief that the British Empire was "the greatest Mohammedan power in the world" and that Britain was the "only power who can really help and guide [Turkey]" (Gilbert, 1972). Here it is obvious that Churchill sees Turkey as an Islamic power and thus Asian power while still being a European power, much like Britain is a European power with a large number of Muslim subjects in Asia.

As the First World War loomed on the horizon, it became clear that the Ottoman Empire would not be a neutral nation but would instead go to the Central powers. Churchill's fears remained focused on Turkey's theological power among Muslims. In November 1914 the Ottoman Empire declared war on the allied powers and shortly afterwards the Sultan and Caliph declared a jihad against Britain and the Allies. When news of this reached Churchill, he became very fearful that "the weight of Islam will be drawn into the struggle on the German side". Aware of the German desire to exploit Britain's position in Asia, Churchill became concerned the call to jihad would serious effect the outcome of the war. In January 1916 he recorded his thoughts:

The Mohammedan influence in Asia will carry with it all kindred forces along in Egypt and along the North-African shore. It is in Asia, through Mesopotamia, Persia, Afghanistan, and ultimately India that England will be struck at and her crown of acquisitions cancelled out. India is the target, Islam is the propellant, and the Turk is the projectile. (CHAR 2/71/6-9)

This further underscores Churchill's view of the Ottoman Empire as a religious and Asian power. However, he still simultaneously understood the Ottoman Empire (and thus Turkey) to be a European nation as well. After the First World War, Churchill kept a relatively positive view of Turkey. His Cabinet memorandum of 7 June 1920 strongly criticized the Treaty of Sèvres, which awarded Thrace and Smyrna to Greece, as unjust and noted that it was unenforceable, because it "would condemn to anarchy and barbarism for an indefinite period the greater part of the Turkish Empire" (Gilbert, 1977). In his memoirs of the First World War Churchill praised the Turkish nation saying "The Turk was still alive. In his breast was beating the heart of a race that had challenged the world, and for centuries had contended all victoriously all comers" (Churchill, 1929).

However, Churchill's views of Turkey as a European power changed in 1922 when he reluctantly accepted Lloyd George's position that the new Turkish nationalist forces led by Mustapha Kemal (Ataturk) must halt their advance toward reclaiming Constantinople and pushing back into Europe. On their march the Turkish Nationalists encountered the British garrison at Chanak and a standoff ensued. Lloyd George and the Cabinet issued harsh ultimatums threatening war if the Nationalists continued, but the nationalists refused to yield. Lloyd George released a press communiqué which implied that France, the dominions, and the Balkan States were all as resolute as Lloyd George and Churchill to halt The Turkish Nationalists. It was released to the press before any external powers were made aware of it and its aggressive tone alienated the allied and commonwealth powers as well as the British public who were not interested in fighting a new war. This ultimately destroyed the coalition government and Churchill found himself without an office, while Lloyd George was never elected to office again.

An explanation of Churchill's acquiescence to Lloyd George's liberal anti-Turkish view might be found in Churchill shock and disgust at the Armenian massacres which had taken place at the hands of the Turks (Dockter, 2015). Gilbert wrote that Churchill "had been shocked by

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the Turkish slaughter of Armenians throughout 1921" (Gilbert, 1979). Indeed, Churchill was circulating memoranda on the dangers to Armenia as early as August 1919 (CAB/24/87) and in his memoirs he noted that news of Turkish atrocities committed on Greek and Armenian Christians "appeared daily" (Churchill, 1929). This combined with Churchill's watchful eye on public opinion and his inclination toward action, probably made his switch to Lloyd George's position relatively simple, despite the years he had put in working to a more sympathetic resolution with Turkey. Though he lost his position, Churchill would take his sympathetic views of Turkey into the Second World War as well.

Churchill's vision for Turkey

As the Second World War raged Churchill sought to keep Turkey as a neutral nation. He also hoped he could convince President Ismet Inonu to join the allied cause. Churchill was right to be worried. The relationship between Britain and Turkey began to deteriorate going into the 1940s because of a reduction in the Anglo-Turkish chrome trade. As a result, the Foreign Office seemed to be unable to develop a policy that took into account in any coherent way "the realities of the Turkish economy and the daunting facts of German expansionism [...]. This had to wait until Churchill took over Turkey personally" (Dennison, 1997). This lukewarm approach to Turkey was enforced by Anthony Eden's ambivalence toward the Turkish policy, Harold Macmillan's personal relationship with Turkish officials and the British Ambassador, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen belief that neutrality was all Britain could hope for and that an alliance would never materialise.

Churchill sought to develop the relationship almost personally from 1943 and his reason for pursuing "Turkish belligerency" against Nazi forces was "a concept dating back to *at least* the First World War" (Tamkin, 2009). Churchill believed that advances in North Africa, lands previous held by the Ottoman Empire, might help bring Turkey into the war. Churchill corresponded with Roosevelt and Stalin to discuss the advantages of the Turkish alliance. Churchill believed this would allow the "the bombing of Romanian oilfields", "opening a shipping route to the Soviet Union" and "supply naval assistance in the Black Sea" (Tamkin, 2009). These strategic objectives replicate Churchill's objectives in 1915 during the Dardanelles campaign, another indication that Churchill's ideas were heavily predicated on nineteenth century ideals and Edwardian concepts.

Churchill's reliance on nineteenth century thinking regarding Turkey can be seen in two-distinctive but interconnected concepts. The first is Churchill's geographic imagination of where Turkey actually was. In 1942, when Churchill proposed to restructure the Middle East Command, his suggestion illuminates his view that he had "always felt that the name "Middle East" for Egypt, the Levant, and Turkey was ill chosen. This was the Near East" (Churchill, 1951). This is clear because Churchill used the term "Middle East" freely. At times, Churchill included Turkey in the "Middle East" and was thus "prepared to see the Middle East jump into Europe" (Davison, 1960). For instance, Churchill wrote General Wavell on 26 November saying that there was a possibility that the "centre of gravity in the Middle East" might shift from "Egypt to the Balkans and from Cairo to Constantinople" (Churchill, 1949). This letter also reveals that Churchill's failure to form a static version of the "Middle East" was, at least in some way, connected to Turkey's role as the former caliphate. This is further evidenced by Churchill's tendency to revert back to the Victorian designation of "Near East" (which was

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synonymous with the Ottoman Empire) as well as tendency to use the term “Constantinople” instead of “Istanbul” in official letters during the Second World War.

The concept that illustrates that Churchill continued his nineteenth century thinking regarding Turkey was his insistence that by being allied with Turkey meant that the entire Islamic World was also an ally. In a BBC broadcast on 12 November 1939, Churchill stated: “Turkey and the whole of Islam have ranged themselves instinctively but decisively on the side of progress” (Gilbert, 1993). Churchill’s speech indicated that his understanding of the Turkey’s position in the “Middle East” never really evolved past nineteenth century ideals. In the Edwardian era Churchill’s views would have been more logical, but it seems anachronistic in the early 1940s. By then, Turkey had become mostly secular and “Westernized” after Atatürk’s reforms. The Turkish connection to Islam as a religion was nowhere near as prominent as it had been in the Edwardian era. But Churchill maintained this view which connected Turkey to the Middle East and so he saw Turkey as something of a European fulcrum which could help secure Middle Eastern security.

At the Casablanca conference in January 1943 Churchill convinced Roosevelt that approaching Turkey was a good idea and he set off to meet with President Inonu in Adana, despite the War Cabinet’s advice that he not go and Eden’s apprehension at the plan. Churchill met with President Inonu on the 30 January 1943 and he laid out the case that Britain and the West could help build up Turkish defences with weapons if they would keep a neutral position and enter the war when they were ready (Tamkin, 2009).

The day after Churchill met President Inonu, he recorded his ideas on the post war order, which he called his “Morning Thoughts”. He preserved them in his memoirs laying out his vision for post war order in Europe and how Turkey might fit into that vision. As he imagined the first iteration of a European Union, he argued that this new “European government” would “only be made up of the great nations of Europe *and Asia Minor* as long established,” which not only implies Turkey had a major role to play in Europe but also that Churchill continued to think of the Turkey as a great power, much as it had been in Churchill’s youth (Tamkin, 2009). Churchill then imagines that this European Union will be made up of smaller units of countries including a Scandinavian bloc, a Danubian bloc and a Balkan bloc (Churchill, 1951).

While these outlines imply a role for Turkey in the European order, it wasn’t until Churchill’s meeting on 22 May 1942 with the American delegation at the British Embassy in Washington that he more fully articulated his vision. He explained to Henry Stimson, US Secretary of War and Vice President Wallace that the post war European Union might be composed of “some twelve states or Confederations, who would form the Regional European Council”. He continued that that he hoped in South Eastern Europe “there might be several Confederations”. Revealing just how much the nineteenth century strategy remained in Churchill mind he proposed “a Danubian Federation based on Vienna and doing something to fill the gap caused by the disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire”. He also proposed that “the Balkan Federation” might be joined by Greece and Turkey who would “play some part in the Balkan system” (Churchill, 1951). It is also important to note that Churchill told his private Secretary Jock Colville as early as December 1940 that he envisioned the Balkan confederation would have “Turkey at its head and Constantinople as its capital” (Colville, 1985).

Based on Churchill’s view of the how the post war European Union would work it is very clear that he saw Turkey as playing a key role in not only European affairs but also in the global

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order. However, Churchill's attempts to bring Turkey into the war were repeatedly frustrated until Turkey symbolically declared war on Germany in February 1945. He made it clear to President İnönü that in order to "have a seat at the Council" Turkey would have to be "among the victors". Turkey's reluctance to enter the war made Churchill fret about his ability to "protect them from Russia" (Tamkin, 2009). As a result of the Turkish policy of neutrality Stalin pressed his objective to control the Dardanelles straits. Relations between the Soviet Union and Turkey became so hostile that by March 1945, the Soviet Union terminated the "Treaty of Friendship" which the two powers had signed in 1925 with a view to renegotiate the terms including a new straits convention (Hale, 2000). This break down in Turkish-Soviet relations underscored the problematic nature of the Turkish policy of "active neutrality" (largely advocated by the Turkish Foreign Minister Numan Menemencioğlu) which was based on their own nineteenth century experience of playing European empires off one another. However, Soviet aggression and the revelation of a bi-polar world order revealed this approach would no longer work in the twentieth century and ultimately pushed Turkey toward Churchill and the welcoming West.

Post War Realities

The realities of the post war world were best articulated by Winston Churchill in his *Sinews of Peace* speech on 5 March 1946. Churchill described the "special relationship" between the US and UK as well as the "iron curtain" descending in Europe. Stalin's frustration with Turkey continued to grow as they continued to deny the Soviet Union shipping rights through the straits. Fears became palpable that Stalin intended to invade Turkey. Necmeddin Sadak, later the Turkish Foreign Minister, even claimed the Soviet Union intended to occupy the straits (fulfilling the Imperial Russian war aims in the First World War and Great Game) and install "a Communist government in Ankara" (Hale, 2000).

At the beginning of 1946, Turkey remained low among US strategic priorities but as the climate continued to deteriorate it became clear that something had to be done. With a view to reassure Turkey, the *USS Missouri* was ordered to enter the straits to return the body of the much loved Turkish ambassador Mehmet Munir Ertegun. While the full effects of the *Missouri's* arrival on 5 April 1946 (one month after Churchill's speech in Fulton) are still debated in Turkish historiography, it is clear this at least signalled to the Soviets the West's intention to prevent Turkey becoming a Soviet satellite (Bakin, 2010). Admiral Leahy, the US naval Chief-of-Staff proclaimed to Churchill that "the arrival and stay of such a powerful American fleet in the straits must be entirely beneficial" (Gilbert, 1988).

The intended effect was successful and pushed Turkey closer to the British and US sphere of influence. However, the Soviets continued to push for control of the Straits and at times press their claim on the Kars and Ardahan regions of Turkey. Amidst this tension and facing severe financial difficulties, the Attlee Government made it clear to the Truman Administration in February 1947 that it could no longer support Greece or Turkey. This was something of a disaster for Churchill's post war vision. The South Eastern flank of the European Union might begin to fall under the spell of Communism and Soviet intrigue. Much to Churchill's delight, Truman stepped into the breach by adopting the Truman doctrine a year after Churchill's speech at Fulton. The United States pledged to contain Soviet threats to Turkey and Greece and the primary objective was to ensure that Turkey maintained control of the Straits. In order

to achieve this, the US invested approximately \$100 million in Turkey as a component of the Marshall Plan (Bilgin, 2008). However, Turkey had relatively full gold reserves owing to a loan taken out with the allied powers prior to the war. This additional investment from the Marshall Plan became a sticking point for less well off countries in Europe and became something of “an embarrassment” for Turkey who still needed the funds to keep the Soviet Union at bay (Deringil, 1992).

Upon hearing the news, Churchill published a revealing article for *Life* magazine which exposes how much his world view was predicated on nineteenth century strategic notions, particularly concerning Turkey and the Middle East. Churchill proclaimed that “Great Britain is not capable alone of maintaining stability in the Eastern Mediterranean basin”. Implying that Truman’s Soviet containment was the intellectual inheritor of Britain’s “Game Game”, Churchill continued “The decline of British power has been accompanied by the rise of the expansion of Soviet Russia. The ambitions of this mighty communist Empire and oligarchy go far beyond the dreams of the Czarist days” (CHUR 4/72). Britain had supported the Ottoman Empire against Russian expansion, for Churchill Allied support of the Republic of Turkey must have seemed very familiar.

But Churchill was also wise enough to understand times were changing. The British Empire was in a serious decline. India and Burma were gaining independence and Britain had become a junior partner to the US. But Churchill still recognised a roll for Britain as a mentor State of the US in the post war order. He also recognised a role for Turkey as the guarantor of South East Europe and the Middle East against Soviet extremism and “Bolshevik barbarism”. As he told President Inonu in October 1948, “I rejoice that the United States as well as Great Britain are in such close sympathy with Turkey”. He added “I trust you are keeping your the gallant Turkish Army in good order to defend, if need be, your native lands” (Gilbert, 1988).

Churchill also continued to push for Turkey as a European state with Middle Eastern duties. He supported Turkey’s position on the Council of Europe in 1949. At Strasbourg on 11 August 1950 Churchill’s speech echoed his fear of Soviet expansion and called for a united “defensive front”, in which he called for all nations to do their best including Turkey (Gilbert, 1988). This indicates that Churchill felt strongly that Turkey should play a part of a united European Army, though Churchill later doubted the utility of a multi-national European army (CAB 128/25).

After 1951, Churchill regained power and his government sat until 1955. However, his interest in the European project began to wane in the face of cold war politics and pressure for the United States. Churchill’s government encouraged Turkey to join NATO in 1952, perhaps as a way of placating Turkey after it had been left out of NATO in 1949 despite Italy being invited in (Hale, 2000). However, it was becoming clear Turkey’s inclusion had more to do with its role as a strategic partner in the Middle East than its links to the post war European order.

To some degree this had to do with the change of government in Turkey. In 1950 the Democrat Party led by Adnan Menderes came to power for the first time. His administration pursued a policy to get formal American support much more aggressively than its predecessor (Bilgin, 2008). This meant accepting American terms regarding strategic regional roles and playing a strong Cold War ally. This led to Turkey’s inclusion in the Bagdad pact (1955) with Pakistan and Iraq and to their membership in the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). This “northern tier” strategy was meant to further contain the Soviets using Turkey’s position in the West and Pakistan’s in the East, with Iraq to hold the centre.

Churchill recognised the role for Turkey as the guarantor of South East Europe and the Middle East against Soviet extremism and “Bolshevik barbarism”

Churchill also embraced Turkey's Middle Eastern role because it was more in-line with American containment strategy, especially as Egyptian nationalism increased tension in the Eastern Mediterranean. Churchill hoped Turkey would help hold the Suez against Egyptian nationalist as part of a four-power-pact with the US, Britain, and France (Gilbert, 1988). At a cabinet meeting on 4 December 1952, it was agreed after Adnan Menderes' visit to London, that relations between the two countries were "more cordial than they had been for many years". It was also added that "[t]he full cooperation of Turkey, on which we could now rely, would be of great assistance to us in connection with the many problems arising in the Middle East" (CAB 128/25). Despite these strategic concerns, there were still echoes of Turkey's European cultural identity which Churchill's Government continued to indulge. One of which was the British Embassy's gifts of scotch whiskey as New Year's gifts for prominent Turkish figures. This tradition meant that in 1951 eight boxes of whiskey were sent to the Embassy to be distributed (FO 195/2675). Even when with full pressure of the United States operation view that Turkey was a Middle Eastern country and with geo-political demands of the Cold War, Churchill still thought of Turkey as something of a European power.

Conclusion

Winston Churchill's views of Turkey as European state are complex. They can be traced back to his Victorian youth and early days as an Edwardian statesman. During this period Churchill's own changing political alignments and the First World War meant that he pursued differing and at times contradictory strategies concerning Turkey. But he even as a Liberal he never succumbed to the blatant anti-Islamic feelings of Gladstone or the Phil-Hellenic desire to allow Greece to rule the Eastern Mediterranean which was encouraged by Lloyd George, though Churchill came close during the aftermath of the First World War concerning the Chanak Crisis.

However, those nineteenth century prejudices are virtually absent from Churchill's views of Turkey's role in the aftermath the Second World War. This could be explained by Churchill's desire to find an ally in Turkey against Germany and prevent something mirroring the Central alliance in the First World War. It could also be explained by Churchill's embrace of Atatürk's reforms in Turkey and the country's move toward Western style secularism. What were clearly left from the nineteenth century were the strategic notions of Turkey bolstering the Southern European flank and providing an alliance with other Islamic states.

These nineteenth century strategic concepts made their way into reality of the post war world. While political aspirations of the new government in Turkey and the United States preference for regional structures pushed Turkey into a more Middle Eastern sphere, Churchill continued to encourage the state into Western alliances such as the Council of Europe and NATO.

Churchill always celebrated the complex identity and dual role of Britain; at once a European state and an Empire and Commonwealth in its own right. There is no reason why Churchill would have not also celebrated the complexities of Turkish identity and its dual role as a European state and a Middle Eastern state. In fact, many of Churchill's strategies concerning Turkey and the Eastern Mediterranean depended on Turkey's unique position as European, anti-communist power and an Islamic force for containment in the Middle East. Churchill remarked in his article for *Life* that he had to "go back to Europe and Asia because they showed

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him maps of these continents at school" (CHUR 4/72). In Churchill's mind, even in the Cold War, Turkey was at once in Europe and in the Middle East just like the maps he saw as a student at Harrow so many years ago.

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