



THE USE OF PROPAGANDA IN TURKEY BEFORE AND DURING WW1

Despite having been seen as a European war, which is true to some extent, the Great War called for arms men and women from North America, Africa, Asia and Australasia. It is also one of the first examples of total war in which countries used every means available. This type of wars is called total war. There are no civilian people as everybody is deemed soldier. All the economical and manpower resources are allocated to overcome the enemy. One of the most important features of total war is PROPAGANDA. The rulers should convince their people about the rightfulness of their war. People should believe the cause that they will fight for. Because of the technological development in Europe, majority of the people could read or write. The daily circulation of newspapers and magazine were high. This reality gave the rulers the idea of using them as means of propaganda.



Because of the technological developments in today's world, mass media, television, Internet, social media, posters, bulletins, demonstrations and meetings are being used as means of propaganda. But about a century ago, in 1910, technology was not so advanced. Mass media was not as common as ever. Nevertheless, newspapers and magazines were making high circulations because of the high literacy rate in some countries. In 1914, the development rates of the countries were different and the techniques used for propaganda were different as well. England, for example, was a well developed country and the literacy rate was high, so the government was able to use written media as an effective way of propaganda. On the other hand, Turkey was an under-developed country and literacy rate was lower than 10 %. It was a large empire and there were different communities in it. Each community had its own language. For these reasons, propaganda activities on written media were not very effective.

PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES AT PRE-WAR STAGE IN TURKEY

1. RELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA AND THE CALL FOR JIHAD (HOLY WAR)





The Call for Jihad – Two Different Posters

The Ottoman sultans, since the same time since Yavuz Sultan Selim, had the title of "Caliph of the Muslim". This title gave them the right to represent the Sunni sect of Islam. Jihad is an act that the Ottoman Empire used only once, which corresponds to World War I. Ottoman Sultan Mehmet Reşat, using this title, declared a Jihad fatwa. It was expressed in this fatwa that all Muslims in the world should unite to join the Holy War against Britain,

France and Russia. This fatwa is publicized in Istanbul with ceremonies; And various people were sent to various parts of the world to be announced to Muslims. Nobody answered the call of the Sultan except for Pakistan because of several reasons. First, The British had a great influence on the Arab tribes in the Middle East and they had already convinced them to fight against the Turks. The same situation was the same in Islamic African countries. France had a great impact on Tunus, Algeria, Morocco, Senegal and etc. Despite the various propaganda efforts, the Arab States took their position with the British against Ottoman Empire. The second reason for the failure of propaganda efforts was because the Ottomans were in alliance with two old enemies from the Christian world. One was the Germans and the other was Austro-Hungarians. In order to create a good impression on the



Hajji Wilhelm's visit to Jerusalem

Muslim folk, German Kaiser Wilhelm II visited Istanbul, Jerusalem and Damascus respectively. In Damascus, near the graveyard of Saladin, The German Kaiser declared that "German Emperor is the protector of all Muslim world. After that, a big propaganda activity was done by Turkish and German propaganda makers. It is

even said that the Kaiser converted into Islam after this trip. People in Turkey started to call him as “Hajji Wilhelm”.

2. HARB MECMUASI – WAR MAGAZINE



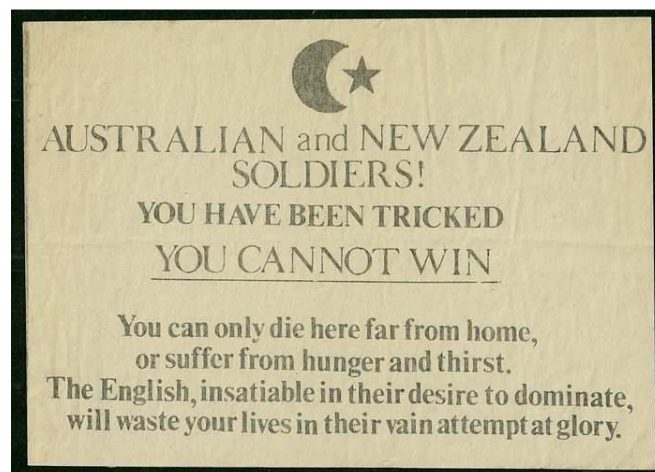
The First Issue of Harb Mecmuasi

This magazine was published by Turkish military during WW1 in Istanbul to raise the morale of the soldiers and inform people behind the lines. The main purpose was to make counter-propaganda against the British. Ottomans didn't have a professional propaganda team. After the British started to make propaganda activities in the trenches and newspapers, Turkish war ministry decided to publish a magazine. British said that

- Ottomans and Germans were weak and they were soon beaten.
- That was not a holy war. Muslims died for German ambitions.

The goal was to deny this news. The magazine showed very nice pictures from Gallipoli and other fronts. They wrote heroic stories about war. However, Ottomans were financially weak, and after two years the magazine stopped.

3. PROPAGANDA IN THE TRENCHES



During Gallipoli Campaign, The British and the French threw notices and piece of papers from planes and balloons onto the Turkish troops.

- If you surrender right now, you can go to your hometown.
- If you surrender, you will be welcomed in POW camps in Egypt in a five star comfort.

- The Sultan is captured, and the war is already over.
- Germans use Turks for their own benefit.

These were some examples. In return, Turks threw pictures of captive British soldiers in good condition. They wrote that Turks are not wild people; they behave well to the captives. Moreover, Turkish officers noticed that there are Muslim colony soldiers in French army. They chose sweet-voiced soldiers to recite the azan (call for prayer). In this way, they tried to make them understand that both sides are Muslim.

4. GERMAN ORGINATED PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES

Many goods for propagandizing came from Austria and Germany. There were postcards, stamps, medals, badges, posters, china, dining plates and etc. There were pictures of leaders and flags of the Central countries on them. Germans were well aware that propaganda was an indispensable part of the warfare. Before the war, several Turkish music concerts and art exhibitions of Turkish painters were shown in Vienna and Berlin to create a nice portrayal of Eastern Muslim ally.







AUSSTELLUNG

VON BILDERN
"TÜRKISCHER
MALER



GEOFFNET VON 9-4h

15. MAI - JUNI 1918, WIEN
K.K. UNIVERSITÄTS-FESTSAAL

DRUCK-GESELLSCHAFT F. GRAPHISCHE INDUSTRIE (WIEN) V.