Aubrey Herbert and the “Other” Britain: A Turkish Perspective

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Gertrude Margaret Lowthian Bell (14 July 1868 – 12 July 1926)



Edwin Samuel Montagu (6 February 1879 – 15 November 1924)



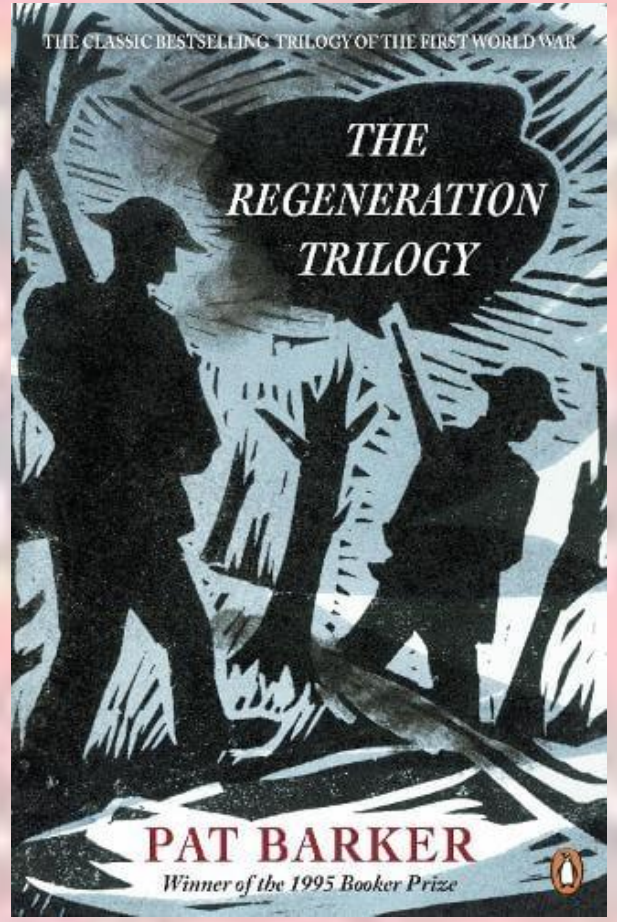
Aubrey Nigel Henry Molyneux Herbert (3 April 1880 – 26 September 1923)



Siegfried Loraine Sassoon (8 September 1886 – 1 September 1967)

Siegfried Sassoon





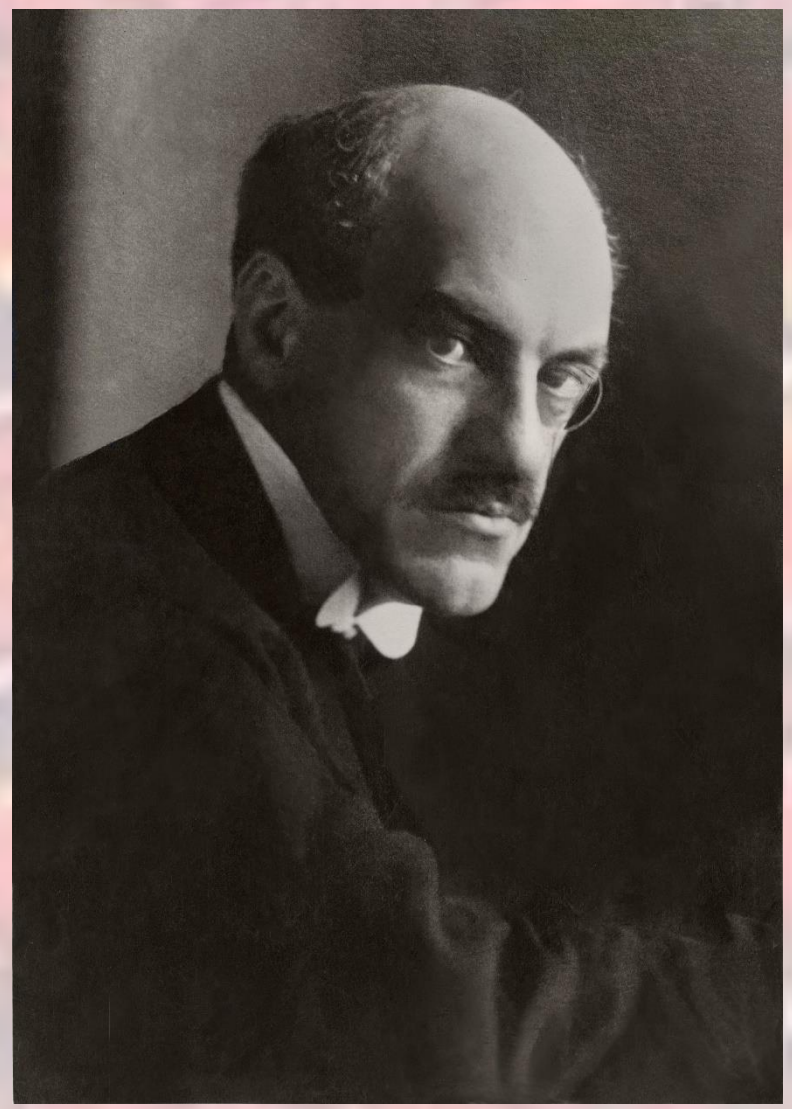
Gertrude Bell

“Oh my dear they are making such a horrible muddle of the Near East. I confidently anticipate that it will be much worse than it was before the war […]. It’s like a nightmare in which you foresee all the horrible things which are going to happen and can’t stretch out your hand to prevent them.” Letter to Aubrey Herbert, April 1919



Edwin Montagu

“The suggestions made from time to time for the fate of Turkey have […] always shocked me as being animated by a vindictiveness which we have shown to no other of our enemies.” Letter to George Curzon, August 1919.



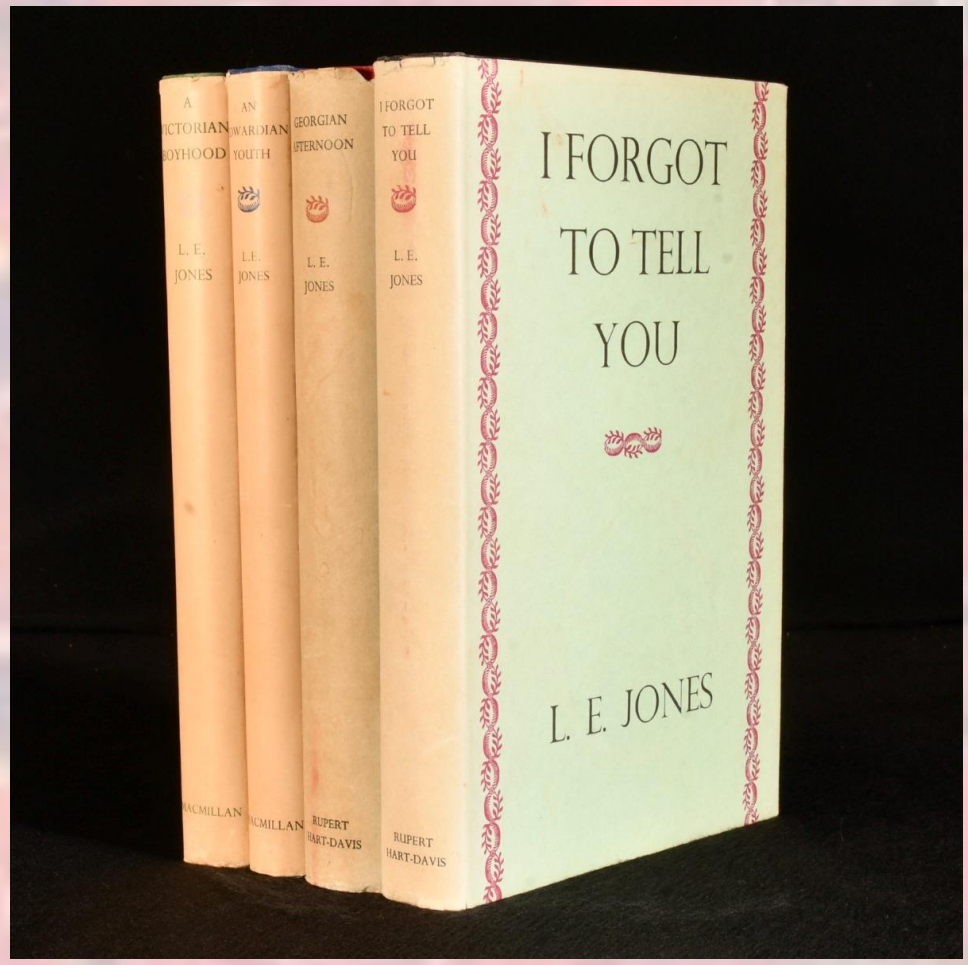
Edwin Montagu



“If you turn the Turk out of Constantinople and also cut him off from the Sea of Marmora, deprive him of Smyrna, leave him no strip of territory in which he is free, this is a policy which so far as I can discover no expert either in the Foreign Office or in the India Office views without grave political alarm from the point of view of the whole Mohammedan world.” Letter to Lloyd George, April 1919.

Lawrence Evelyn Jones

“Aubrey lived in high romance. Every girl was a poem to him and to most of them he wrote one. He simmered and bubbled and boiled over with enthusiasm, for whatever Aubrey had in his head he made at least a phrase, sometimes an epigram, often some verses […] All his thoughts were open and at our service, he had no reserves with those he liked; and because his mind was singularly original and fertile, as well as romantic, there was no resisting the charm of his conversation. His activities were abreast of his knightly imagination.”



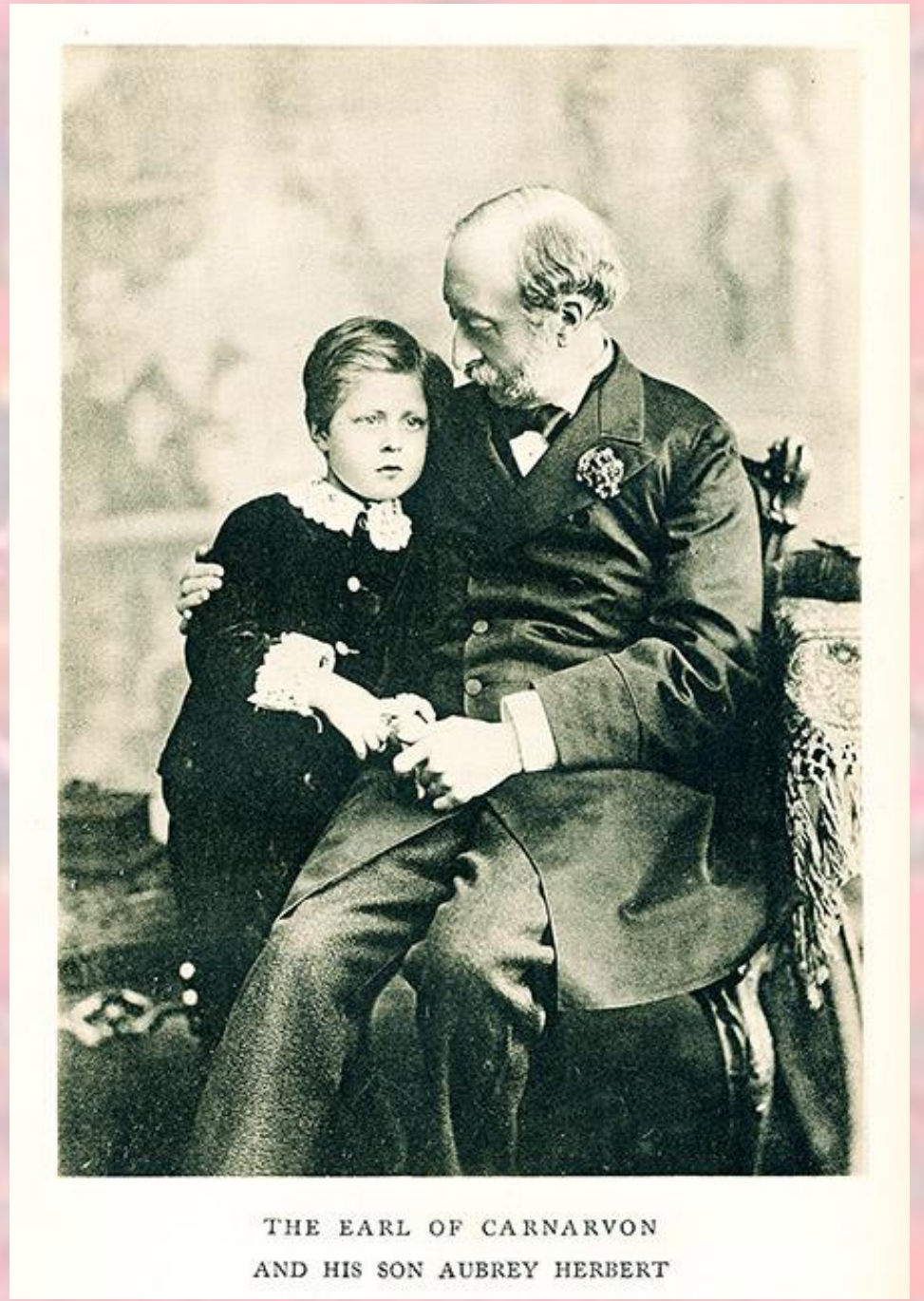
Aubrey Herbert on *«The Spectator»*

“Will these men from the country who have done so much be able to hold their own against European intrigue and the rapacity of the West? *Inshallah*. God builds the nest of the blind bird, says the Turkish proverb.”



Margaret Fitzherbert

“In politics his sensitive conscience proved a barrier to advancement. […] twice […] a cabinet minister […], [o]n both occasions he had felt impelled to resign office on matters of principle”, on Henry Herbert, Earl of Carnarvon



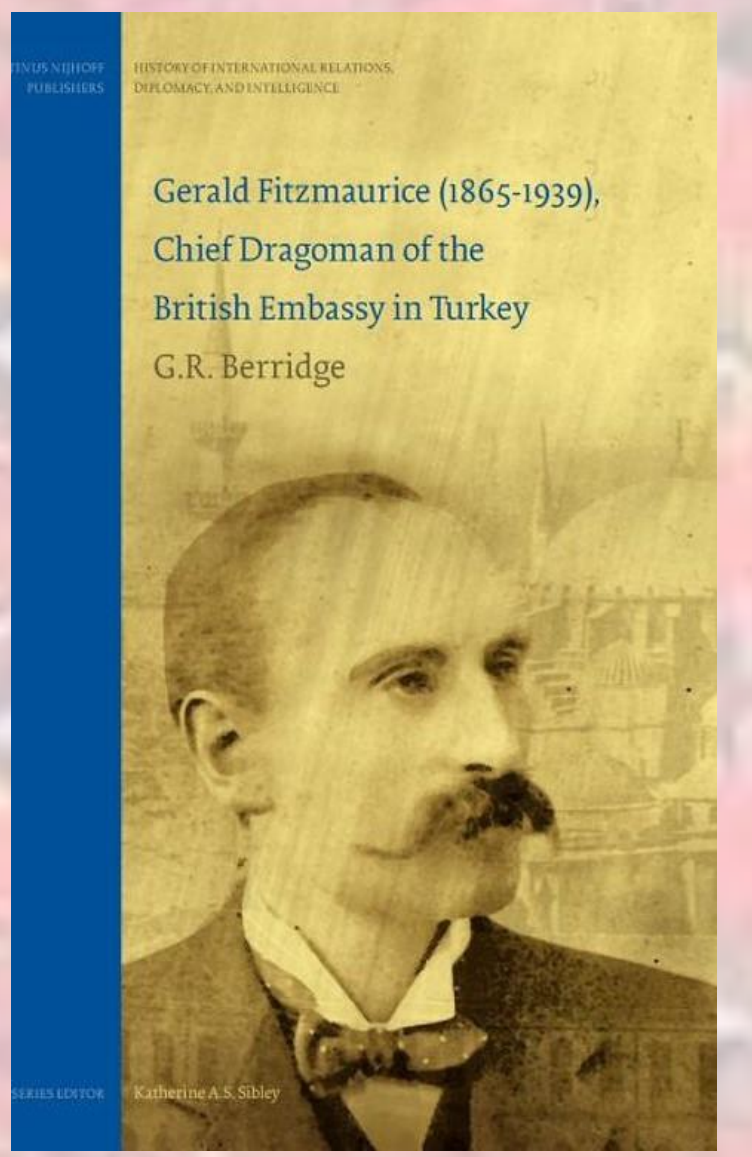
THE EARL OF CARNARVON
AND HIS SON AUBREY HERBERT

Aubrey Herbert, Turkish speaker

“Talaat said, in Turkish, to me, ‘We cannot speak in French in Germany, it is too unpopular, and I do not know English; we had therefore better talk Turkish’.” Then the German engineer interrupted them asking what language they were speaking. “’Turkish’, said Talaat, and for some time we talked bad German, which he occasionally translated, for my benefit, into Turkish. Then Talaat said to me, speaking in Turkish, ‘A curious thing has happened. This German believes that you also are a Turk, as he hears you talk Turkish to me. Now, for the first time, you are going to hear the whole truth about the Allies, and your own country.’”

Aubrey Herbert on Gerald Fitzmaurice

“He could often talk the Turks’ language as well as the Turk; he used the same silences and gutturals as deep as the Pashas, some of whom he had grown to respect. […] Now in the place of the old pashas, with their stately presence, their high honorifics, their venerable beards, he was called upon to meet a miscellany of Jews from Salonika, of Turkish Boulevardiers, and moustachioed Syrians from Lausanne, who spoke to him, not in Turkish but in the French of Pera.”



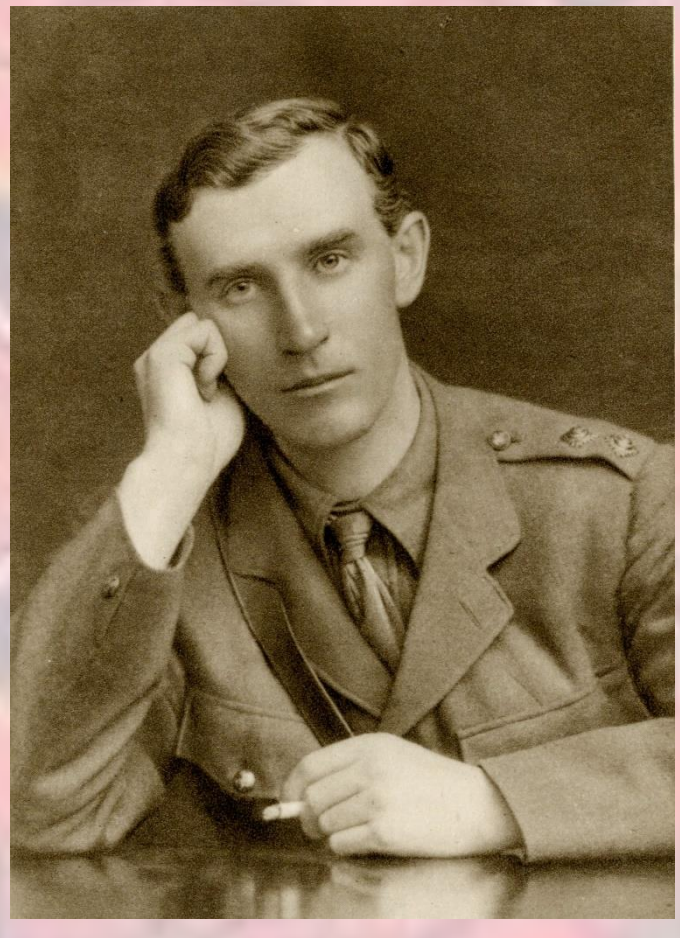
As Aubrey Herbert, also Carlo Sforza hanged out with the Young Turks.

“It caused a scandal, yet those I saw were the future leaders of the Turkish Republic. And I felt that they were not boasting when they told me without emphasis that they could maintain their independence in Anatolia, where most of them were already inclined to retreat.”



Raymond Asquith to Aubrey Herbert

“I have an idea for when you go in – go in as a Labour candidate – don’t you see the theatrical capabilities of that? The young aristocrat with ideals and sympathies which carry him passionately out of his class – a tribune of the people – Gracchus, Rienzi, Tolstoy anyone you like. It would explain your clothes too.”



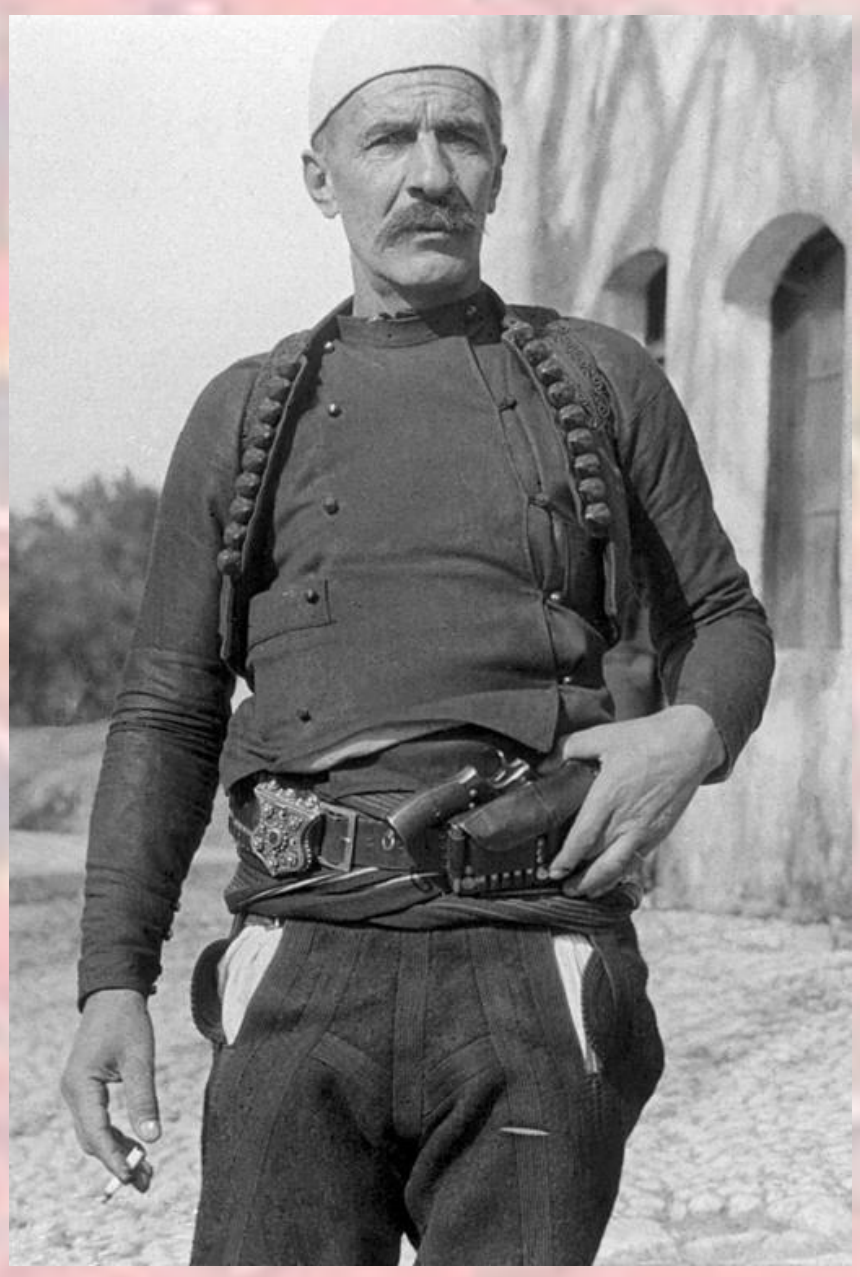
Talat to Aubrey Herbert

“Never, I think, in the history of the world, did one power have such a commanding position and so obsess another, as did Great Britain to Turkey, when we made our revolution. […] You drove us into the arms of Germany.”



Aubrey Herbert to Isa Boletin

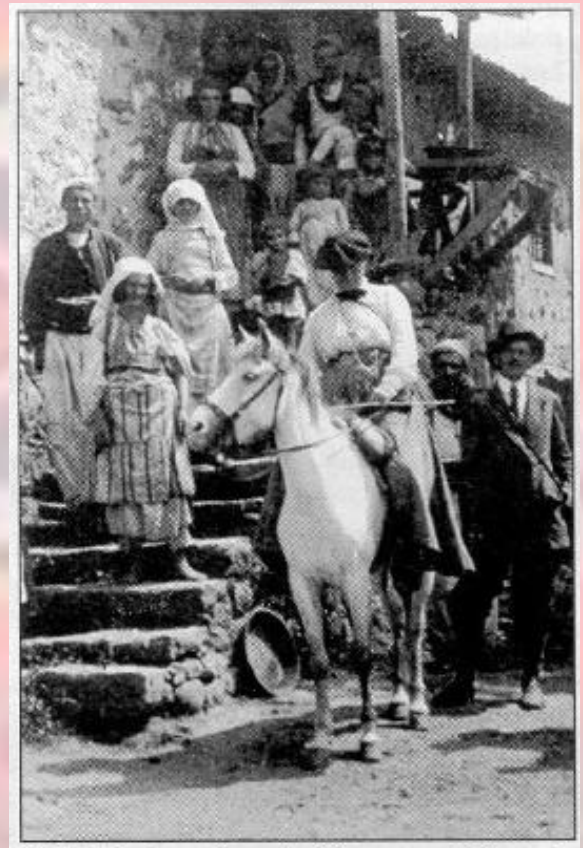
“I have too much land of my own and don’t want yours. It is a bad business being a landlord today. Lands bring you in practically nothing”



Mary Edith Durham

(18 December 1863 - 15 November 1944)





Edith Durham (mounted) on war relief work, North Albania, June 1913

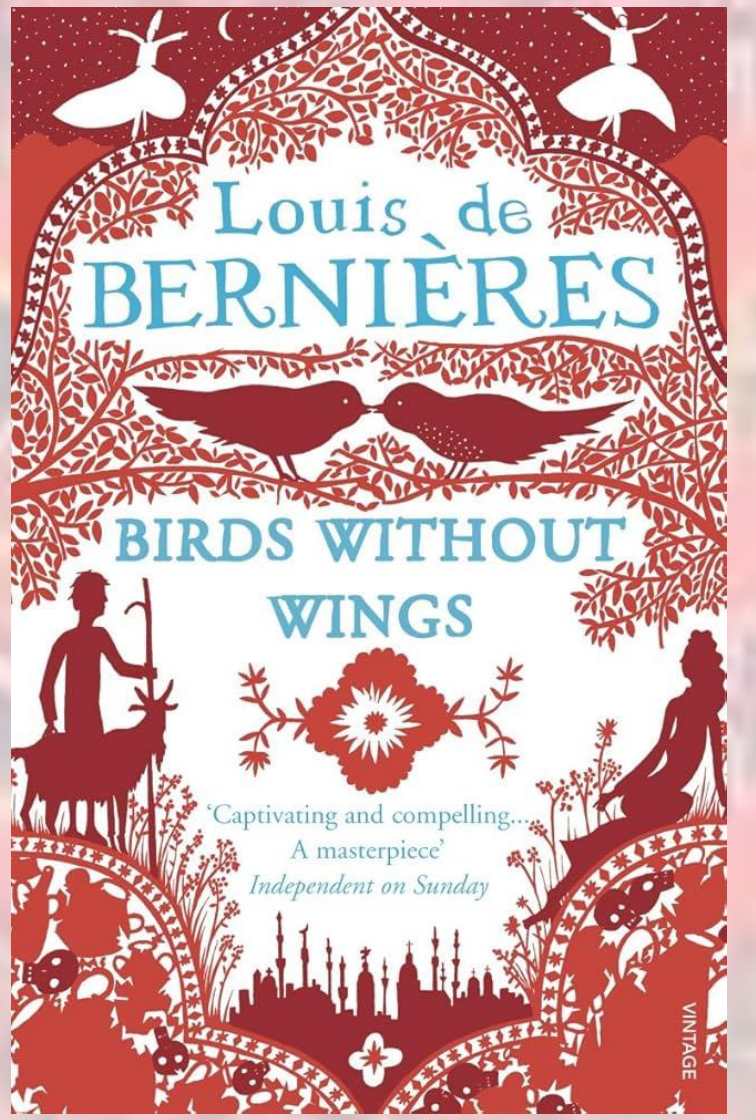
Mark Sykes to Aubrey Herbert

“I perceive by your letter that you are pro-Turk still. […] Your policy is wrong, Turkey must cease to be.”



Fictional character «Karatavuk» brings to mind Aubrey Herbert

“It was when we were burying the dead that everything changed between us and the Australian and New Zealander Franks. The British Franks sent a special officer who spoke Turkish and Arabic, and his name was Honourable Herbert. This officer was the only one who could coordinate what all of us were doing, and so we Turks took orders from him, and so did the Australian and New Zealander Franks. Honourable Herbert gave us receipts for money and other things that were found on the dead. […] In the early evening we had to finish our work, and the British Frank, Honourable Herbert […] said: ‘Tomorrow you can shoot me’, and we all said, ‘May God prevent it’. He came to our trenches and some other Franks came, and they shook hands with us, and the Franks looked down on us and said, ‘Bye-bye, Abdul’, and when they went we all gave them a salaam.”



The London Conference in 1921

“Bekir Sami’s proposals, like many other things of that time, were discreetly broadcasted, and became known to the Bolshevists, who demanded Sami Bey’s head upon a charger, and duly received it. […] Negotiations broke down and war raged again in Asia Minor. […] For the sake of the Greeks and Turks, and, indeed, our own reputation, it is a pity that Talaat Pasha was not able to have his way and to achieve peace”.



La delegazione turca Kemalista che prende parte al Convegno di Londra, di passaggio a Roma.
1 Bekir Sami Bey, ministro degli esteri del governo di Angora e capo della delegazione; 2 Colonnello De Bisogni, che ha accompagnato la delegazione da Rodi a Roma; 3 Cav. Guisi, console a Losanna, che la accompagna a Londra.

Kemalists and Bolsheviks agreed upon the Treaty of Moscow (16 March 1921).



Thank you!

