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For my father and grandfather,
Corporal Donald E.Erickson, United States Army Air Force,
27th Fighter Group, Italy, France, Germany, 1944–1945,
and
Sergeant First Class Edward O.Erickson, United States Army,
American Expeditionary Force, France, 1918–1919

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Foreword

“The Sick Man of Europe”: in the nineteenth century, everyone who made any pretense of keeping up with current affairs knew the phrase meant the Ottoman Empire. Hammered from inside by dissident nationalities wishing to break off in independent states, besieged from outside by ambitious imperial powers, the Ottomans seemed little more than victims who, in turn, bullied the weak and helpless within their own frontiers. This image, stemming as it did largely from diplomatic relationships, slid naturally into a portrayal of Ottoman military efforts, which were seen by all casual observers as antiquated and corrupt. When, and if, the Turks managed a military success of sorts, it was attributed to their European allies (if they had any), as, for example in the Crimean War, or the stupidity of their enemies, as in Osman Pasa’s defense of the lines of Plevna in the Russo-Turkish clash of the 1870s.

Much the same sort of interpretation has colored Turkish military history in the early twentieth century. If Ottoman forces managed to push the British off the Gallipoli Peninsula, this was due to the inept command of British generals; when they captured an entire British expeditionary force at Kut-al-Amara in Iraq, this was due to the negli-gence of General Townshend, who managed to pen himself into a cul-de-sac. If General Allenby took a surprisingly long time—indeed, the entire final two years of World War I—to push the Turks

out of Palestine and back to Damascus, it was because the Turks had German advice and the British had incredible logistical difficulties. When, after the Great War, the Turks won some military respect for driving the Greeks into the sea at Izmir, the explanation was seen to be a national reaction against a foreign invader, combined with the inspired leader-

ship of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk): real enough factors, but perhaps more was involved.

Such a litany alone should give pause for reflection, and even, perhaps, the idea that the Turks, for all their problems of holding the empire together through the mechanisms of unwieldy government and economic structure, had, in fact, not done too badly in military terms. Historians and students alike would do well to remember that in World War I, the Ottoman Empire, though fighting in Gallipoli, Pales-tine/Syria, Iraq, and the Caucasus, lasted as long as both the Hapsburg and Hohenzollern Empires and considerably longer than that of the Romanovs.

Only in recent years have historians begun to correct the record, and Ed Erickson is in the forefront of this development. His book on the Ottoman Army in World War I, *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War,* is without question, a major contribution in that respect, as is this new study on the Balkan Wars. Through his familiarity with the Turkish language and the access he has obtained to Turkish records, most notably modern Turkish Army studies of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century campaigns, he has opened up an important window through which we are beginning to understand just how the Turks responded to their own military situation and did their best to incorporate the most important contemporary military innovations in weaponry and tactics at any particular time. Lieutenant Colonel Erickson (U.S. Army, retired), knows from his own extensive experience how military machines operate; his own familiarity with the Turkish and Balkan landscapes from his service in the area unquestionably contributes to the value of his research.

I first met Ed Erickson when, a good many years ago, he came as an undergraduate to Colgate University; here he and I and a handful of other students very definitely ran counter to contemporary trends in our study of military history through the ages—a pursuit, indeed an avocation, that Ed has carried with him throughout his career. Like any professor who is proud of a former student, I would be delighted to take full credit for his ensuing career as a professional historian, but it would hardly be just: after all, he came to Colgate already a dedicated “ama-teur” in the true sense of the word; that is, he studies military history for the love of it. Lieutenant Colonel Erickson’s work overall and, indeed, its reader-ship prove an important point. In the last several decades, the historical profession has experienced revolutionary developments in the area of gender, ethnic, and working-class studies, which have exploded the limits of traditional politically focused history. All that is to the benefit of the field; unfortunately, military history has, in the process, been lumped together, and marginalized, with political and diplomatic stud-

ies, as antiquated and tradition bound. But one need only explore the pages of the *International History Review* or the *Journal of Military History* or sense the excitement of some of the sessions of the Society of Military History’s annual meetings to realize that a similar revolution is underway in the military field as well. Most notable in this respect is the growing number of studies that treat non-Western military history from the viewpoint of the indigenous participants, and not merely from that of outside, Western observers whose reflections have been passed on by generations of scholars as the accepted canon. In that sense, Ed and other military historians who go at their subjects from within are just as much revolutionary revisionists as those who are working in other, more visible fields. It must never be forgotten that those awkward wars were of massive importance to the lives of the inhabitants of the nations that were affected, whatever their class, gender, or ethnicity. Military life cannot really be disassociated from civilian life: after all, if the Turks really were making important strides in modernization of their military methods, perhaps that reflected a society that was in transition to the modern era, and not simply the supine, decaying “Sick Man” so often portrayed. The evidence for the Ottoman Empire is increasingly strong from the era of World War I; as Colonel Erickson now demonstrates, important antecedents must also be sought in the massive, but little known, Balkan Wars of 1912–1913.

Briton C.Busch
William R.Kenan Jr. Professor of History
Colgate University

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Preface

Defeat in detail is a doctrinal military term that means to defeat an enemy by destroying small portions of its armies instead of engaging its entire strength. Practically speaking, this happens when the mass or weight of one army is brought to bear against smaller portions of an opposing army, thereby achieving decisive superiority This is most often seen when an army divides itself into smaller groups, which can easily be separated and defeated in isolation. Sometimes defeat in detail is accomplished sequentially over time. Armies that suffer such a defeat almost always violate the principle of war of concentration of focus.

The Ottoman Empire engaged in the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 against the Balkan League (composed of Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia) and was decisively defeated in detail. In short summary, the Ottoman Empire split its field armies into groups and thereby created the conditions necessary for its enemies to achieve numerical superiority on the battlefield. In the initial engagements, this was further exaggerated by the Turks' attachment to the operational offensive, which robbed them of their inherent defensive advantage. The Ottoman armies were then defeated in succession. In the eighty-eight years since those wars, no critical analysis that examines the specific reasons for the Ottoman defeat has been conducted. This book seeks to fill that gap by examining the operations of the Ottoman Army from October 1912 through July 1913.

The historiography of the Balkan Wars exists in two layers separated by a half century of time. The first layer is expressed in Western European languages and consists mainly of the memoirs of Western observ-

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ers, which were published immediately after the wars. Many of these authors were military observers or medical personnel accompanying the combatant armies, and it is unlikely that they spoke Ottoman Turkish or any of the Balkan languages. These works, therefore, tend to consist of secondhand information about what happened during the battles; moreover, they are not particularly reliable. There are also several memoirs from high-ranking Ottoman generals, which are very useful but are limited to the particular individual's direct involvement. Most of our contemporary perceptions of the Ottoman Army's performance in the Balkan Wars are derived from these early works, which were published prior to World War I. In general terms, this perception has characterized the Ottoman Army as poorly led, prone to demoralization, and lacking in military effectiveness.

The second layer of the historiography of these wars is composed of works written during the past twenty years. This body of work is drawn mainly from the official histories and records of the Christian nations that participated in the wars. The histories of the members of the Balkan League are written in Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbo-Croat. These histories are difficult to obtain and difficult to translate. A particular problem is that some of these histories use the Gregorian calendar, making direct comparison of events difficult. The authors using these sources have tended to use them in topical essays and articles rather than in books or monographs. The best work to mine these resources is Richard C.Hall's *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (2000).

A capstone body of work, a third layer of historiography if you will, that connects, analyzes, and unifies the campaigns and battles of the Balkan Wars simply does not exist. This is partially a result of the lost fifty years of research and the fact that both scholars and amateurs have shied away from examining these wars. Unfortunately compounding the problem, the war does not lend itself to an easy and meaningful explanation. The events seem insular and episodic, and constructing a framework of understanding is extremely difficult in and of itself. It should be noted, however, that the diplomatic history of the Balkan Wars is fairly well covered, due mainly to the involvement of the Great Powers and the relevance of the diplomacy to the origins of World War I.

Defeat in Detail is written from the perspective of the Ottoman Army, with the Turkish General Staff's official histories as the principal research vehicle. Purists will note that such a research base is entirely derived from secondary sources. This is by design, and not from neglect. There is more than enough material available in the Turkish histories to adequately address the topic at the level of detail and complexity offered in this book.

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The Turkish General Staff's official campaign histories are written in modern Turkish. These histories are based directly on the rich archival holdings of the Turkish General Staff's Military Archives and Strategy Institute (ATASE) and are fully documented. They contain excellent maps, copies of the most important operations orders, and full-text versions of all major treaties and agreements. Most of the campaign histories

were updated in 1993 and are available for sale in Turkey. In chronology and in content, they correspond closely with the known events of the wars. These campaign histories represent the most comprehensive and detailed treatment of the campaigns and battles of any of the accessible source material.

The principal question concerning all official histories today is their relationship to the original documentation. Regarding the Turkish Army's official histories, it would take a sustained effort by a historian with unique and total access to explore and verify the original documentation. This is unlikely to occur in the near future. Nevertheless, the textual material of the Turkish official histories aligns very well with the Greek Army's official history, the Balkan War essays contained in Bela K.Király and Dimitrije Djordjevic's edited volume, *East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars* (1987), and Hall's recent work. The major differences between these sources concern the number of troops involved in battles and the number of casualties sustained. In some cases, each side appears to overestimate the opposing forces and the casualties they inflicted on the enemy. Reciprocally, in some cases, casualties reported by the combatants themselves appear to be understated. I have noted in this book when discrepancies occur and offered my opinion on a reasonable estimate of what actually happened. On balance, I believe the Turkish Army's official histories are credible and offer an accurate portrayal of the actions and activities of the Ottoman forces during the Balkan Wars.

Beyond the historical works cited lie the archives of the combatant nations themselves. These are extremely difficult to access, with the Serbian and the Turkish perhaps being the hardest from which to gain permission for research. Even today, all the nations involved in the Balkan Wars closely control the release of official information to the public. Moreover, the incredible problem of languages makes fully coordinated research by a single individual almost impossible.

I was asked recently, "Why would anyone want to write about a losing army?" I responded that some of the more interesting and effective armies in history were defeated yet were an endless source of discussion: the Grande Armee, the Army of Northern Virginia, and the German Army in two World Wars stand out as examples. Simply put, the Turks and their army fascinate me. I wanted to know why they had

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been beaten so badly in such an important war. In this book, I have attempted to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Explain the transition of the Ottoman Army to a European Continental army system that relied on conscription and a system of organized reserves.
2. Determine the readiness posture of the Ottoman Army during the period 1877 through 1912.
3. Examine the effect of German advice and assistance, with particular attention to the activities of General Colmar von der Goltz.
4. Determine the extent and execution of the Ottoman Army's reorganization during the period 1908 through 1911, with particular emphasis on the genesis of the triangular infantry division.
5. Examine and explain the Ottoman Army's mobilization and war plans.
6. Analyze and assess the effectiveness of the Ottoman Army's mobilization and changes to its war plans.
7. Analyze the battles and campaigns at the operational level of war.
8. Assess the overall effectiveness of the Ottoman Army in terms of its command and control capability.
9. Construct an accurate summary of Ottoman military effectiveness that addresses positive and negative aspects of performance.
10. Examine the aftereffects of the Balkan Wars on the Ottoman Army and the lessons it learned from them.
11. Construct an accurate picture of the Ottoman Army's order of battle from 1877 through August 3, 1914.

Although I had previously done substantial research on the Ottoman Army in World War I, and was familiar with some of the history of the Balkan Wars, I was unprepared for the idea that the Ottoman Army was extremely advanced in its organizational architecture. Moreover, I found myself wondering why I had not known that the Ottoman Army was a learning organization with a demonstrated capability to react to, and correct, its mistakes. I came away from the project with a sense of astonishment that the Ottoman Army's history during this period is literally unknown outside Turkey. It is evident (at least to me) that much of the army's effectiveness in World War I had roots in the period 1908 through 1914.

I tried to bring the Ottoman Army to life and render an accurate portrayal of its identity. All too often, the Ottoman Army has been depicted as ill-clad faceless mobs of Turks, more Asian than European, ineptly attempting to conduct modern war. Nothing could be farther from the truth. By 1912, the Ottoman Army was, in many ways, more

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advanced than some European armies. It was, for all intents and purposes, an army constructed on the German model. Readers familiar with the "German way of war" will recognize many connections in command,

staff, operational, and tactical procedures. I include quite a few summaries of the Ottoman Army's operations orders, which will give the reader a sense of how the individual commanders' intent and concept of operations were communicated to the army. A number of organizational charts and orders of battle are included that substantially add to our understanding of how the army organized itself to fight the war. I also tried to create enough maps (thirty-one in all) to visually demonstrate how the Turks envisioned and then fought their battles. In my overall organization, I roughly followed Hall's format from *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* which I consider to be the premier presentation of a military situation that is extremely difficult to explain.

I am proud to include an appendix (Appendix A) on aviation by my good friend Bülent Yilmazer from Ankara, Turkey, who has written an outstanding account of the air operations of the Balkan Wars. Bülent's appendix adds important information to our understanding of the evolution of airpower and, I believe, will stand as the definitive account of this subject in English for some time to come. Readers wishing to learn more about the naval operations of the Balkan Wars are encouraged to read the chapter titled, "The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913" in Bernd Langensiepen and Ahmet Güleryüz's superb *The Ottoman Steam Navy, 1828–1923* (1995).

I hope that you enjoy reading this book as much as I enjoyed researching and writing it. As with my previous work, I also hope that this book serves as a platform to generate interest in the history of the Ottoman and Turkish Armies in the twentieth century.

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Acknowledgments

Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912–1913 was a very difficult book to construct compared to my previous work *(Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War).* The problem I encountered while researching the Balkan Wars was that there was no larger historiography within which I could frame many of the events of the wars. In comparison with World War I, the Balkan Wars offer a very lean plate of published works from which to draw meaning and contrast. Consequently, this project was more arduous, and so the encouragement of my friends and colleagues has been an important source of inspiration and strength.

First, I could not have completed this book without the continued support of my wife, Melanie. Second, I owe a debt of gratitude to my editor at Greenwood Publishing Group, Dr. Heather Ruland Staines, for her confidence and support in helping my work see the light of day, and to Nicole Balant, my copyeditor, of Publishing Synthesis, Ltd. Third, I want to extend a special thanks to my friend and colleague Dan Calla-han, who has been a constant source of encouragement and who gra-ciously gave my first draft a thorough working over. Fourth, Dr. Briton C.Busch and Dr. Richard C.Hall read my manuscript and offered many insights that helped clarify numerous fine points.

I also want to thank our French foreign exchange student at Norwich High School, Benoit de Calan from Arras, for his translation of key parts of the memoirs of Mahmut Muhtar Paşa. There are many other friends who helped me research many fine points and details. My good friend, Bülent Yilmazer in Ankara, Turkey, whose fine appendix appears in this book, was instrumental in finding quick answers to complex questions.

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There are many members of the World War One List who have helped and shared their knowledge with me. Among these are Francesco Davini, Koert Debyser, Martin Kaser, Eberhardt Kettlitz, Geoffrey Miller, Richard Smith, Dr. Yigal Sheffy, and Mike Yared. I also want to pay a special compliment to my librarian, Ruth Mason, for her outstanding efforts in finding many obscure books through the interlibrary loan system. I could not have finished this book without her assistance.

Finally, I would like to thank fellow Balkan Wars researcher Feroze Yasamee who helped clarify numerous points of contention. I eagerly await his book on this subject.

Any errors in translation of Turkish and German works cited are my own.

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1
Defeat and Military Reform, 1877–1910

PROLOGUE

After the Crimean War, the Balkan Peninsula became the focal point of both Ottoman domestic and Ottoman

diplomatic problems. The Turks under the Osmanli (Ottoman) dynasty had conquered the peninsula in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and added to their possessions there as late as the sixteenth century. The area was a complex tapestry of ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities, many of whom were antagonistic toward Ottoman rule. Overlaid on these problems were the competing regional aspirations of the Great Powers, in particular, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Great Britain. Adding to the stress of these internal and external threats, the Ottoman Empire itself, called the “sick man of Europe,” was a decaying and inefficient bureaucracy shambling toward the twentieth century. The Europeans tended to refer to the inhabitants of the empire simply as Turks (although there were many other peoples living within it).

There were multiple crises afflicting the empire during the period 1855 to 1912, most of which resulted in the loss of Ottoman territory and subjects. On the edges of the empire, the Ottomans lost control of Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Crete, Cyprus, and parts of Caucasia. None of these areas were seriously contested by them as none were critical to the continued survival of the empire itself. In the Balkans, however, parts of which had been under Turkish domination for over five hundred years, the Ottomans fiercely contested the loss of power and control of the area. By 1830, Greece had gained independence and Serbia had achieved autonomy, and by 1878 Romania had broken free

of Ottoman rule as well. The stage was now set for a series of events that would finally result in the ejection of the Turks from their Balkan possessions.

In spring 1875, an uprising occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in the Sanjak of Novi Bazar, which touched off a major crisis. There had been a bad harvest during 1874 and, in a case of exceptionally bad timing, the Turks had increased taxes that year. The uprising was encouraged by a new sense of nationalism, provoked and encouraged by Serbia and Russia. Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire traded diplomatic notes, while in the afflicted regions, Christians slaughtered Muslims and vice versa. In December 1875, Great Power diplomacy somewhat defused the situation. By May 1876, the foreign ministers of the League of Three Emperors (the Dreikaiser Bund of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia) met in Berlin and agreed on a settlement that guarded the rights of the Christian minority and included stipulations that if the Ottomans failed to ensure reforms, the powers might use force to compel compliance.

Almost immediately, in mid-May 1876, uprisings began in Bulgaria. Located much closer to Constantinople than the remote and poor Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria was prosperous, and it was also inhabited by a substantial Muslim population. Its retention was critical for the survival of the empire as well as for the retention of the remaining Ottoman provinces in the Balkans. As the revolts spread, hundreds of Muslims were massacred and the Ottomans lost control of many villages and several forts in the northern border passes. The Ottoman response was immediate and decisive: the Turks rushed all available troops to Bulgaria. Determined to avoid a repetition of the Bosnia crisis and the intervention of the powers in their affairs, the Ottomans reacted violently to the Bulgarian revolt by ruthlessly crushing the insurgency. The world press inflamed Western public opinion by calling the events the Bulgarian “horrors” and “massacres.”1 Contemporary Bulgarian claims were in the area of one hundred thousand dead. The European press noted that many of the dead were defenseless Christian villagers, including women and children. American missionaries put the total of Christian dead at fifteen thousand. Modern estimates put the Christian dead at about four thousand and the total Muslim dead at a considerably higher figure.2 Regardless of the cause or of blame, atrocities were widespread on both sides.

In Europe, there was a huge outcry for action. In Russia, public pressure was particularly acute to help the Bulgarians and support Pan-Slavism. There was also great public reaction in Great Britain. In 1876, in what might today be called a “media blitz,” William Gladstone even published a pamphlet about the “Bulgarian Horrors.” In Constantinople, Muslim public opinion was inflamed as well and student

demonstrations broke out demanding both action in Bulgaria and reform at home. Sultan Abdulaziz, unable to deal with the mounting problems, was deposed and was succeeded by Murat V on May 30, 1876. Unfortunately, Murat suffered from depression and bouts of nervous-ness, and was unfit to rule the empire. After an examination by a Viennese doctor, Murat was deposed by the cabinet.3 On August 31, Abdulhamit II, a conservative but reform-minded man, became the new sultan.

Over the summer months of 1876, more trouble was brewing in the Balkans as Serbia provoked what came to be called the First Balkan Crisis. Prince Milan of Serbia, in league with the Montenegrins, secretly declared war on the Ottoman Empire on May 30. Milan claimed that Ottoman oppression in Bosnia-Herzegovina hurt Serbian trade interests and national pride, but it is likely that the Serbs were disturbed over the possibility of Ottoman reforms unfavorably altering the balance of power in that province. With the support of Russia and

Romania, Milan publicly declared war on the Ottomans on July 2, 1876. The war went poorly for the Serbs, despite the influx of thousands of Russian volunteers, including the Russian General Chernayev, who became the new Serb commander in chief. Russian enthusiasm and assistance were not enough, and neighboring Christian Romania withheld support entirely. The early Serb defeats forced the issue in Saint Petersburg, as the czar and his advisors pondered a response. Interven-tion was actively considered, but the Russians were nervous about provoking an Austrian reaction. Instead, Russia reached out diplomatically to Austria-Hungary, and representatives of both met at a secret conference at Reichstadt on July 8. In an agreement, they decided on two hypothetical cases that might generate a coordinated Russian and Austrian response. First, in the event of a Serbian and Montenegrin defeat, they would guarantee the survival of the Serb and the Montenegrin states (as well as that of the insurgents in Bosnia-Herzegovina). In the second case, the defeat of the Turks, they generated agreements about the redistribution of the Ottoman lands in the Balkans. Austria-Hungary would receive the bulk of Bosnia-Herzegovina and some lands along the Dalmatian coast, and Russia would regain Bessarabia (lost in 1856). Among the lesser powers, Serbia would receive the Sanjak of Novi Bazar; Montenegro would receive a portion of Bosnia; Bulgaria, Rumelia, and Albania might form autonomous states; and Constantinople was envisioned as a free city. Although this agreement had no binding force behind it, as a statement of broad anti-Ottoman objectives, it was very significant.

The well-equipped Ottoman Army defeated the Serbs in a week-long battle at Alexinatz fought August 19–24, 1876.4 Further disastrous encounters were in store for the unfortunate Serbs as they attacked

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the Ottoman positions several times more in September5 and they were routed with severe losses, particularly in officers. Eventually the Ottomans, who were tiring under the financial strain of the war, pulled out of Serbia in November, and the war sputtered to a halt. The possibility of a renewed Ottoman push into Serbia that could precipitate Russian intervention forced the German chancellor and foreign minister, Otto von Bismarck, to support a British proposal for an international conference to mediate the crisis. On November 4, 1876, the representatives of the powers met in Constantinople and bitterly set about advancing their own national agendas. The Russian ambassador, Count Nikolai Ignatiev, in particular, advanced the idea of a “big Bulgaria.” Various agreements were tested and disposed of, many involving the securing of minority rights of Christian subjects in the Ottoman Empire and almost all involving the loss of Ottoman territory without compensation.

Simultaneously in the middle of the international conference, the reformist Ottoman cabinet, led by Midhat Paşa, forced through a new Ottoman constitution, in December 1876. The new constitution formed a parliament that, theoretically, brought minorities into the legislature and granted them individual rights. Furthermore, and unfortunately for the organizers of the international conference, the new constitution decreed that the empire was an integral whole.6 Ottoman negotiators became increasingly opposed to the demands of the powers as it appeared that the new constitution would end many of the concerns that had generated the conference in the first place. The final proposal involved the division of Bulgaria into two vilayets supervised by Christians, the imposition of a Belgian Army constabulary, and the redistribution of Muslim lands. Its proposals having been rejected by the Ottoman cabinet, the conference collapsed on January 20, 1877.

Meanwhile, in December 1876, Russia sent troops to the Romanian frontier as a diplomatic message and show of force. Bismarck, under-standably nervous over the possible upset of his newly crafted balance of power and by the slow pace of the international conference, encouraged the Russians and the Austrians to renew their dialogue. On January 15, 1877, Russia and Austria-Hungary signed the Treaty of Budapest. This treaty more or less gave the green light to Russia to intervene in Ottoman affairs as the Austrians pledged neutrality in the event of a diplomatic rupture between the Russians and the Ottomans. There were other clauses: Austria-Hungary was left free to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina at a time of its own choosing, and the Russians were left free to seize Bessarabia, and a neutral zone between Russia and Austria-Hungary was decided upon. In an important additional convention to the treaty, they agreed in principle to support an independent Bulgaria, Albania, and Rumelia, but not to support the enlarge-

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ment of Serbia. They also agreed in principle to support the Greek claims on Epirus and Crete. The broad concepts envisioned at Reichstadt had reached fruition.

Belatedly, on February 28, 1877, the Ottoman Empire formally concluded a peace agreement with Serbia. The prewar border was restored, and the Serbs made pledges regarding the sponsoring of terrorism and the safeguarding of Muslim minority rights. Montenegro refused to sign a similar agreement. Although the war against Serbia and Montenegro was all but over, it was becoming apparent that the Russians, who had

mobilized their army in November 1876, were massing troops for an offensive south, out of Romania. The British, hoping to defuse the situation, issued the London Protocol in March, asking the Turks to implement reforms and demobilize their army.7 The Turks refused, and the Russians obtained permission for their formidable armies to transit Romanian territory on April 16, 1877. The czar declined offers of active support from the Romanians, the Greeks, the Serbs, and the Montenegrins and on April 24, the Russians declared war on the Ottoman Empire.

THE RUSSO-TURKISH WAR OF 1877

The Russo-Turkish War of 1877 was fought in two widely separated theaters of war: Bulgaria in Europe and Caucasia in Asia. Unfortunately, there is no recent major study of this war available in the English language, and the episodic coverage of the campaigns tends to focus on the great siege battles of Plevna, Shipka Pass, Kars, and Erzurum.8 For their part, the Turks themselves have only recently begun to reexamine their own battle histories of that war. The campaigns of the war lasted from late April 1877 through the armistice of January 31, 1878, and all ended in disaster for the Ottoman Empire. By July 1878, the Turks had lost Bulgaria in the Balkans, Ardahan, and Kars in Caucasia, and Russian armies were at the gates of Constantinople. Additionally, they lost substantial quantities of men and arms in the great siege battles of the war.

After the Crimean War, the Turks had introduced a series of military reforms, beginning in 1869. These reforms included the creation of active and reserve forces organized in the European style; the purchase of modern weapons, particularly breech-loading rifles for the infantry; and advisors and trainers from a variety of European nations. Conscription, proven in both the Austro-Prussian War and the Franco-Prussian War, was introduced in the Ottoman Empire in 1874. Conscripted locally at age twenty, men served in the active army (Nizamiye) for four years in the infantry or artillery and then spent two years in the first

reserve (Ihtiyat). At age twenty-six, men passed into the second reserve (Redif), which was organized into four classes of successively older men. Cavalrymen served for an additional year on active service and spent only a single year in the first reserve. Total length of service with the colors was twenty years.9 Because of political uncertainties, only Muslim men were conscripted; Christians were excluded and had to pay a tax instead.

In 1877, the Ottoman Army was organized into seven numbered armies, each containing a varied number of infantry divisions, cavalry, artillery, and engineer formations. During peacetime, each army performed army-level inspectorate functions within its own operational areas, and in wartime, the mobilized armies in combat theaters transitioned into field army headquarters. The Ottoman Second Army faced the Russians initially along the Danube, and the Ottoman Fourth Army faced them in Caucasia. The Ottoman Third Army confronted the Serbs in Macedonia, and the Ottoman First Guards Army garrisoned the capital of Constantinople. The Ihtiyat and the first class of the Redif had previously been called to the colors to fight rebels in Herzegovina in 1875, the second Redif class had been called up in 1876 for the war with Serbia and Montenegro, and the third Redif class was called up in November 1876, following the Russian mobilization and deployment. General mobilization affecting all inspectorates went into effect in January, and by spring 1877, the Ottoman Army had 276,000 officers and men on active duty facing the Russians, of whom 186,000 were stationed in the Balkans and 90,000 were stationed in Caucasia.10 Table 1.1 shows the deployment of the Ottoman Army in 1877.

Infantry divisions of the Ottoman Army contained two brigades and were consecutively numbered in the army to which they were as-

TABLE 1.1 Disposition of Ottoman Forces, 1877

Macedonia	*Bulgaria*	*Constantinople*	*Caucasia*
Third Army	Second Army	First Guards Army	Fourth Army Corps
	First Infantry Division	First Regular Infantry Division	
	Second Infantry Division	Second Regular Infantry Division	
	Cavalry Division	Cavalry Division	
	Field Artillery Regiment	Artillery Division	
	Fortress Artillery Regiment	Engineer Regiments (two)	
Syria	*Arabia-Yemen*	*Mesopotamia*	
Fifth Army	Seventh Army	Sixth Army	

signed.11 As the Ihtiyat and Redif swelled the forces, some infantry divisions grew to four brigades of infantry, and additional provisional infantry divisions were formed as well. To command this force, there were twenty thousand officers, 90 percent of whom were assigned to the infantry regiments. At the higher levels,

the Ottoman Army had 132 trained General Staff officers assigned to the seven armies. These General Staff officers were trained in the production of orders, standardized tactical situation procedures, and the use of maps. The soldiers in the infantry were relatively well disciplined and solid but suffered from a lack of marksmanship training. The Ottoman field artillery was the best trained combat arm, primarily because of the excellence of its field artillery school. Logistically, the Turks were fairly well equipped with modern weapons and had adequate supplies of munitions and food stored in their fortress cities.

The Ottoman mobilization plan was of recent vintage; it had been written in 1869. When mobilized, the reinforced field armies in the operational areas grew to army-level organizations in size and composition of forces. In the former Second Army area, the reorganized Ottoman force on the Danube front in Bulgaria was broken down into the Eastern Danube Army, commanded by Ahmet Eyüp Paşa, and the Western Danube Army, commanded by Osman Nuri Paşa. Its concentration plan positioned most of its mobile forces along the Danube River to contest the Russian crossings, in a fortress belt known as the Quad-rilateral (Varna, Silistre, Rusçuk, and Vidin). Other forces garrisoned Sofia and the Shipka Pass to the south. While this deployment spread the Ottoman army thinly along the Danube, it made excellent use of the strategic terrain available for the defense. In the absence of a Russian fleet (destroyed in 1855 and not yet rebuilt), the Ottoman Navy established maritime supremacy in the Black Sea.

There were three avenues of approach into Bulgaria: the first along the sea, the second through the Shipka Pass, and the third to the west, around the mountain barrier to Sofia. Ottoman sea supremacy made the coastal route untenable for the Russians, who therefore, upon forcing the Danube, planned both to assault Shipka Pass and to drive around the mountains to Sofia. They began crossing the Danube on June 22, 1877, at several widely separated points and rapidly established foot-holds on the south bank. From these bridgeheads, they consolidated and began to push the Turks away from the river. Some Ottoman detachments were encircled by the Russians and destroyed with their backs to the river. The worst of the early defeats for the Turks came at Niğbolu, where about seven thousand men armed with 113 cannons were forced to surrender in a pocket along the Danube on July 16, 1877. Much of this early Russian success was attributed to friendly Bulgari-

ans, who assisted them by interdicting supplies and movement and also by slaughtering Muslim villagers.12

The Turks began to retreat and to regroup their forces. The largest group, under Osman Paşa, began to concentrate around the city of Plevna and to fortify it with earthwork field fortifications. The city blocked the western approach around the mountains to Sofia, and Osman understood that its retention spelled defeat for the Russians.

The First Battle of Plevna was fought on July 19, 1877, and won by the Turks. Osman Paşa had concentrated all available Ottoman troops and entrenched them well. The heavy Russian infantry assault failed, and losses were put at three thousand men. Expecting further Russian attacks, Osman's men began to strengthen their fortifications. On July 30, the Russians attacked a second time, with a superiority of thirty-five thousand men against Osman's twenty-two thousand. However, the Russian attack was poorly coordinated and poorly delivered, and it ended in the Russian troops being cut to pieces by Turkish fire; perhaps as many as seven thousand Russians were lost that day.

To the south, a Russian coup de main had seized the vital Shipka Pass, and the Ottomans were determined to take it back. Another Ottoman army of seven infantry brigades had been formed and transported by sea to the theater of operations. This army was titled the Balkan Army and was commanded by Süleyman Paşa. Süleyman's attacks began on August 21 and lasted until August 25, with negligible results save the loss of about ten thousand Turkish soldiers. Shipka Pass remained in Russian hands.

At Plevna, Osman Paşa was ordered to make a stand and further entrenched himself around the city. In early September, the Russians again attempted to break the Ottoman lines, in the Third Battle of Plevna. A Romanian Army of some thirty-two thousand men reinforced them. Altogether, the combined Russian-Romanian army had over 118,000 infantry and almost five hundred cannons. The attack began on September 9, with a sustained and heavy artillery bombardment. The main Russian infantry attack was conducted on September 11, and again the attacks were poorly coordinated and repulsed with heavy losses. With fall approaching and Osman's army seemingly occupying an impregnable position, the Russians settled in to besiege Plevna.

To the south, Süleyman continued his costly attacks on Shipka Pass, but without success. Combat over that critical point would continue to rage throughout September and October 1877, with the Russians retain-ing final control. Plevna was almost completely encircled by that month, and in November, Osman's troops were reduced to starvation. A failed breakout attempt by the Turkish defenders sounded the death knell of Osman's command, which surrendered on December 10, 1877. About fifty thousand Ottoman troops were removed from the Ottoman

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Army's order of battle when Plevna surrendered. It had been widely reported by the press, especially in England, as a heroic fight against unequal odds. While the brutal winter swept over the Balkans, the fighting continued as the victorious Russians entered Sofia. Thirty-three thousand Ottoman troops were encircled at Shipka Pass in early January 1878 as the Russians rolled in from the west. The unstoppable Slavic alliance moved on the Ottoman capital in mid-January. Adrianople soon fell as the Russians raced eastward into Thrace. Finally, Ottoman resistance solidified at the last-ditch defensive position of Çatalca. The Western Danube Army and the Balkan Army lay shattered, and perhaps as many as one hundred thousand Ottoman troops were in the hands of the Russians. To make matters even worse, at the strategic level, an enemy army now lay between Constantinople and the remaining Ottoman possessions in Macedonia, northern Greece, and Novi Bazar.

At the opposite end of the empire, in Caucasia, a similar story was playing out. By autumn 1876, Ottoman forces in the Fourth Corps area were mostly mobilized and under the command of Ahmet Muhtar Paşa. The Ottoman defense rested upon the fortified cities of Kars and Ardahan, which blocked the routes to the strategic city of Erzurum. An early Russian offensive seized Ardahan on May 17, 1877, which led to further Russian operations in the Elişkirt valley in June. The Russians also pushed along the coast and invested Batum. They then invested and bypassed Kars. Moving onward toward Erzurum, the Russians attempted to storm the fortress city on November 8 but failed. Erzurum was then put under siege; it remained blockaded until January 1878. In the climactic battle of the campaign, the Russians seized Kars in a moonlight attack, November 17, 1877. The Turks lost over twenty-four thousand men, killed or taken prisoner.

An armistice brokered by the Great Powers brought the war to a halt on January 31, 1878. Russian successes and the Russian Army standing on the doorstep of the Straits alarmed the British, and the imminent involvement of the Serbs and the Greeks alarmed the Austrians. It appeared that, absent a peace settlement, the Slavs would literally dismember the Ottoman Empire before any power in Europe could stop them. In truth, the Russians were greatly exhausted, and dissention among the Slavic nations was increasing. On March 3, 1878, the Russians forced the Ottoman government to sign the humiliating Treaty of San Stefano. This treaty favored the ideas of the Pan-Slavs by establishing a Greater Bulgaria, which stretched from the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea and from Adrianople to Macedonia. Furthermore, it ratified the independence of Romania and forced the Turks to institute reforms in their remaining Greek provinces. Of particular irritation to the Great Powers was the fact that under the terms of the treaty, the Russian Army

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would remain in Bulgaria for two years. The Russians also formalized the acquisition of Kars and Ardahan. The treaty was a diplomatic disaster for the Ottomans, but one that they could not easily refuse.

The success of the Russians so angered the Austrians that war appeared imminent. Bismarck, ever ready to tinker with the deteriorating balance of power that he had carefully crafted, intervened and set up a conference of the powers in Berlin. Many of the details had previously been worked out with British support in London. History records this event as the Congress of Berlin, held in July 1878. Overall, the congress achieved Bismarck's broad objective of halting a general European war by establishing a more favorable conclusion for the Turks. In brief, the idea of a Greater Bulgaria was shelved, and an independent rump state of northern Bulgaria was established. Eastern Rumelia and the Aegean coast remained under Ottoman rule. Serbia and Montenegro both saw small gains but failed to achieve the national Slavic unity that both sought. Austria-Hungary received Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Great Britain received Cyprus. Romania achieved independence, but at the expense of ceding to Russia the province of Bessarabia. Additionally, Russia retained Kars and Ardahan and annexed the Black Sea coastal port of Batum. Bismarck resolved the crisis and maintained the balance of power in Europe, and in doing so he also ensured the continued existence of the Ottoman Empire in Europe.

In reality, although most participants seemed to win something at the conference (the Ottomans excluded, of course), there were residual ill feelings. Bismarck's Dreikaiser Bund (The League of Three Emperors) was dead, and the restructured Balkans became a tinderbox of nationalism. Russia won the war but suffered a complete diplomatic defeat at the peace table. It mattered little that the czar's original war aim was simply to save Pan-Slavism; Russian military successes had suddenly evolved into an aggressive foreign policy. The Ottoman Empire, although partially dismembered, survived mainly because of the geostrategic implications of the power vacuum that its dissolution would cause. In the final analysis, the Congress of Berlin, and therefore the Russo-Turkish War of 1878 itself, destroyed a delicate web of European diplomatic relationships that had been in place since the downfall of Napoleon. The long slide toward World War I had begun.

Militarily, what was the result of the war for the Ottoman Army? First, serious weaknesses in the conduct and

coordination of the operations of higher formations (army level) were ruthlessly exposed. Ottoman armies fought isolated and unsupporting operations against the enemy. Second, the proficiency of the officer corps to conduct tactical operations was judged to be below the European standard. It mattered little that the Ottoman Army was frequently outnumbered and outgunned; its overall performance was poor. On the other hand, when dug into

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field fortifications, at the tactical level the Ottoman Army proved rock steady and fully capable of stopping Russian infantry advances. Indeed, the storming of Kars excepted, most of the Ottoman losses resulted from encircled forces surrendering because of imminent starvation. Finally, the Ottomans had used their sea supremacy to halt Russian advances on the Black Sea coast and to transport the Balkan Army to Dedegaç (modern Alexandroupolis, in Greece).

MILITARY REFORM, 1878–1900

In the wake of the Russo-Turkish War, it was glaringly apparent that dramatic military reform was in order. The Ottoman sultan, Abdulhamit II, took a personal interest in the work and was responsible for many of the military reforms that took place over the next thirty years. The sultan formed the High Commission of Military Inspection to investigate the weakness of the military forces and to recommend legislative measures necessary for modernization.13 The membership of the commission was largely an assembly of experienced army officers loyal to the sultan. The sultan also turned to Europe for military and naval assistance by inviting German officers to the empire to serve as advisors and trainers.

Major changes were instituted in the army beginning in 1882, with the establishment of a German military mission in the Ottoman Empire under General von Kaehler.14 Of particular significance was the assignment of Lieutenant Colonel Wilhelm Leopold Colmar Freiherr (Baron) von der Goltz to the German military mission. Von der Goltz was a highly trained Prussian General Staff officer and was already the noted author of the book *The Nation in Arms (Das Volk in Waffen),* which would make an impact on the Prussian Army as well as the Ottoman Army. He was an advocate of a comprehensive national conscription system and modernization. He had also developed strong beliefs regarding tactical theory. Based on his study of the Franco-Prussian War and the more recent Russo-Turkish War, von der Goltz believed that modern offensive operations against entrenched infantry were now only possible by using closely coordinated supporting artillery fire. Upon his arrival in Constantinople, von der Goltz was assigned as the inspector general of the Ottoman Army but, upon the death of General Kaehler, he became the head of the German Military Reform Mission, in 1883. Von der Goltz was promoted to brigadier general and served in the Ottoman Empire until 1896, where he exercised an enormous influence over the reorganization and modernization of the sultan's military forces. In his sev-enties, in 1914, von der Goltz was recalled to active duty and returned to Constantinople as a field marshal, serving yet again as an advisor.

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He finally died of typhus in Baghdad in 1916, while serving as the commander of the Ottoman forces in the Mesopotamian theater.

On the recommendation of von der Goltz, the Ottomans instituted major reforms in their army Under these reforms, a continental territorial system was established on November 25, 1886, and the empire was divided into seven military districts, each of which contained a numbered army A further category of mobilized manpower was established by extending the national service obligation for men by an additional two years. These men were organized into a territorial home guard called the Müstafiz, which substantially enlarged the total strength of the Ottoman Army. Conscription itself was reorganized and made more comprehensive. The army districts were put in charge of conscription, and the processing and timing of the draft levies was standardized. Organizationally, infantry division tables of organization and personnel strength based on the German model were established and instituted. The basic tactical organizational structure of active Ottoman field armies, which contained two infantry divisions, each with two brigades of two infantry regiments, was retained.

The Redif (the first reserve) was formally organized into battalions, regiments, brigades, and divisions, which were then assigned missions that would place them alongside the active forces in wartime. The newly created Müstafiz was assigned a home defense role, which made most of the Redif formations available for deployment in the new mobilization scheme. Each Redif regiment had a centrally located depot for the storage of its weapons, uniforms, and other materials. The depots had stocks of food and fodder stored for use when the reservists reported. Civilian animals used to pull reserve caissons and wagons were also identified and earmarked for active service. Nizamiye companies on active duty were assigned to home station garrisons so that draftees were assigned, with other local men, to the army. These companies also

assisted in the activation of the reserve forces during mobilization. Reserve headquarters for the control of the Redif formations were also assigned to permanent garrison home stations in Europe and Anatolia. Training plans based on German methods and standards were established, but shortages of ammunition and money limited the opportunity for men to train and to maintain proficiency in military skills.
Von der Goltz also expanded the Ottoman Army's schools system for officers and noncommissioned officers along German lines. He assigned German instructors to the Ottoman Harbiye War Academy, and additionally, some Ottoman Army officers were sent to the German War Academy in Berlin. The output of the Ottoman Harbiye War Academy was expanded to produce about a hundred officers a year15 and continued to rise. In total, from 1873 through 1897, the Harbiye War Academy graduated a total of 3,918 officers.16

After the destruction of the Janissary Corps in 1826, the command of the military forces of the Ottoman Empire was in the hands of the Headquarters of the Commander in Chief (Babi Seraskeri). By the 1880s, the antiquated Seraskeri had military engineering and transportation divisions, but it was unable to perform modern general staff functions in compliance with European standards. Mirroring most European nations trying to establish modern military staffs under the Prussian model, the Ottoman General Staff was created, but it was organized clumsily into two staff components having separate, and overlapping, functions. The General Staff (Erkani Harbiye) was created to perform traditional general staff functions, such as administration, staff studies, war and mobilization planning, and logistics. A second, personal, court General Staff (Maiyeti Seniyye Erkani Harbiye) was also created as a mechanism for the sultan to convey his wishes into the military struc-ture.17 Although the sultan remained the titular head of the Ottoman military structure, actual control of the forces now passed into the hands of the chief of the general staff. This arrangement would continue until 1900, when the Ottoman Ministry of War (Harbiye Nezareti) was established. The Babi Seraskeri itself continued until 1908, and thereafter its function was subsumed into the office of the commander in chief (Başkomutanlik).
The development of parallel staffs had obvious drawbacks, and there was much confusion and anxiety because of this organizational structure. There was no coordination between the staffs, and agreement over fundamental issues such as weapons procurement and troop disposition was difficult to achieve because the staffs tended to compete for control over the military structure.18 Many of the newly trained General Staff officers, steeped in the thinking of von der Goltz, gravitated toward the General Staff, which had close associations with the German reform mission. As a result there were wide gaps in doctrinal thinking between the officers of the two staffs. On the positive side, this arrangement encouraged the sultan, actively interested in the modernization program, to directly participate in the effort. The army received a large share of the empire's annual budget as a result of Abdulhamit's personal interest and attention.
The sultan made a determined effort to modernize the army through the acquisition of modern weapons. Purchases of heavy cannons were made through the Krupp works in Germany between 1885 and 1888. Most of these guns went to the coastal fortifications at the Dardanelles and the Bosporus, but some went to the new defensive works at Çatalca. German artillery experts accompanied these guns to instruct Ottoman officers and soldiers in their use. Partly as a result of the emphasis that von der Goltz placed on the role of field artillery in offensive operations, the Ottoman Army began to reequip itself with modern 75 millimeter

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(mm) and 87mm field artillery pieces as well.19 Hundreds of thousands of modern Mauser rifles were also put on order to replace the aging inventory remaining after the Russo-Turkish War.
In 1891, the Hamidiye Tribal Light Cavalry (Hamidiye Aşiret Hafif Süvari) was formed from Kurdish and Turkmen tribal volunteers in eastern Anatolia.20 The Hamidiye cavalry was formed in areas adjacent to the Turco-Russian frontier and was intended to maintain order in the rural eastern Ottoman provinces. Although organized into regiments, the cavalry was irregular (having been intentionally modeled on the Russian Cossack regiments),21 and it was undisciplined and largely untrained. The commanders of the regiments and companies were usually tribal chiefs, but regular officers sometimes accompanied the formations as they carried out their duties. Similar irregular cavalry formations were formed soon after in the Fourth Army area, composed of Arab tribesmen; however, these formations did not last in the Ottoman order of battle. Hamidiye regiments were intended to have 1,200 men assigned and were authorized one regimental commander, two majors, four captains, and eight lieutenants to command the regiment. Actual strength varied greatly from regiment to regiment, and as service was voluntary, the number of men present fluctuated according to the local popularity of the regiment.22 A Hamidiye Tribal School (Hamidiye Aşiret Okulu) was established in Constantinople to provide training for tribal officers assigned to Hamidiye regiments, but few actually attended. The Hamidiye cavalry was composed of forty regiments in 1892 but grew to sixty-three regiments

by 1899, when it contained about fifty thousand men.23

In actuality, the Hamidiye cavalry was used almost immediately in eastern Anatolia during the suppression of Armenian terrorism in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The Hamidiye cavalry under the command of tribal officers was ill suited to this type of mission, and as a result, many excesses, including massacre, murder, and rape, were committed by its irregular formations. Many of the cavalrymen had personal or tribal grievances against their neighbors that exaggerated the problem and contributed to the outbreak of atrocities. The Hamidiye cavalry's performance was a direct result of poor training and lack of professionalism superimposed on an emotionally charged mission requiring highly disciplined troops.

On April 17, 1897, the Ottoman Empire declared war on neighboring Greece, and the re-formed Ottoman Army had its first opportunity to test its mettle. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, Greek terrorists and irregular fighters had been crossing the border continually to stir up trouble among a discontented minority population in Epirus. However, the proximate cause of the war was the ongoing Greek revolt on the Ottoman-controlled island of Crete. In late January, Cretan

rebels, augmented by volunteers from mainland Greece, declared the island's union with Greece. Greek Prince George led a force of ten thousand Greek soldiers to occupy the island in February. The Greeks "cut a swath of destruction, slaughtering Muslims"24 on the island to which Ottoman soldiers responded in kind. On April 10, Prince Constantine led another Greek force across the northern border toward Yanya (Janina) but was pushed back by the larger and better-equipped Ottoman Army. The Ottoman Army, some fifty-eight thousand men strong under the command of Müşir (Marshal) Ibrahim Ethem Paşa, then advanced into Greece. After defeating the Greek Army of forty-five thousand men at the battle of Dömeke, the Turks advanced on Athens (much to the discomfort of the Great Powers), reaching the area of Thermopolyae. The Russian czar intervened to secure a cease-fire at the request of the Greek king, George I, and hostilities ended on May 19–20, 1897. On December 4, 1897, a final peace agreement was signed in Constantinople between Greece and the Ottoman Empire.

The war was inconclusive with the exception of the loss of Crete, but military observers made note that the quality of Ottoman junior officers had improved considerably under the reforms of von der Goltz. It was also noted that the field artillery, despite a lack of good horses, which impeded tactical maneuverability, was good and well handled.25 Ibrahim Ethem Paşa's Ottoman Army, in all likelihood, could have pushed on rapidly to Athens; however, the Ottoman government did not desire to add to its already overwhelming problems with dissident minorities by reacquiring control of Greece.26

THE NEW CENTURY, 1900–1908

The Ottoman Army entered the twentieth century with a sense of optimism born of the success resulting from operations in Greece and from the increasing efficiency of the army.27 By 1908, the regular Ottoman Army had 13,880 officers and 273,997 men assigned to operational units. Of this total, 1,342 officers and 35,196 men were actively involved in operations against rebels, brigands, and revolutionaries.28 There were additionally a substantial number of men assigned to other non-combat-related support and training functions (shown in Table 1.2). Counting these men, there were 26,611 officers, 286,112 men, 1,041 civilian officials, and 6,239 military students on active duty with the Ottoman Army in 1908.

The army had grown considerably and was composed of seven numbered field armies (Table 1.3 shows the disposition of the Ottoman Army in 1908), which fielded twenty-one infantry divisions, six cavalry divisions, five artillery divisions, an independent cavalry brigade, an

TABLE 1.2 Nonoperational Assignments, Ottoman Army, 1908

Assignment	*Officers*	*Men*	*Civilian Officials*	*Students*
Duty with Redif units	6,884	1,653		
Ihtiyat depots		4,552		
Seraskeri staff	558	116	948	
Other staffs	247	115		
Ceremonial units	301	336		
Special commissions	25			
Foreign schools	43			
Hospitals				
Constantinople	235	1,254		
Provincial capitals	785	3,960		
Military schools				

Constantinople	889			4,482
Provincial capitals	412			1,757
Army staffs	878	226	93	
Hamidiye Cavalry	1,678	173		
Total	12,731	12,115	1,041	6,239

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913) 1 Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbe Girişi (Inkinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 87.

independent cavalry regiment, an independent artillery brigade, two independent artillery regiments, eleven fortress artillery regiments, and a host of smaller, assorted combat and combat-support formations. Unusual for a major power, the Ottoman Army did not have corps-level headquarters established in 1908. Infantry divisions and artillery divisions were assigned directly under the operational control of the field armies. This was an organizational holdover from the previous century and probably reflected a shortage of mid-grade, trained general staff officers.29

The Ottoman Army was organized into seven field armies, each of which controlled an operational area and also performed peacetime duties as inspectorate headquarters. The organizational stationing of the Ottoman Army in the early ninteenth century was based on the idea of locating the army headquarters in the major cities of the empire. The largest cities, Constantinople, Adrianople, and Salonika, all had army-level headquarters assigned within their boundaries. Unfortunately, geography placed these cities in close geographical proximity, and by 1908, the resulting stationing plan for the Ottoman Army was unbal-anced and strategically unsound. The First Army had operational con-

TABLE 1.3 Disposition of Ottoman Forces, 1908

BALKANS-MACEDONIA	*EUROPEAN THRACE*	*CAUCASIA*
Third Army	First Army	Fourth Army
5, 6, 17, 18 Infantry Division	1, 2 Infantry Divisions	7, 8, 19 Infantry Divisions
3 Cavalry Division	1 Cavalry Division	4 Artillery Division
four Fortress Artillery Battalions	1 Artillery Division	Erzurum Fortress Artillery Regiment
	Çatalca Fortress Command	
BALKANS-THRACE & SMYRNA	*SYRIA*	*MESOPOTAMIA*
Second Army	Fifth Army	Sixth Army
3, 4, 20, 21 Infantry Divisions	9, 10 Infrantry Divisions	11, 12 Infantry Divisions
2 Cavalry Division	5 Cavalry Division	6 Cavalry Division
2 Artillery Division	5 Artillery Division	15 Artillery Brigade
Adrianople Fortress Artillery Regiment	one Fortress Artillery Regiment	

ARTILLERY COMMAND		*LIBYA*	*ARABIA*	*YEMEN*
Bosporus:	one Coast Artillery Regiment	15 Infantry Division	Seventh Army	16 Infantry Division
Dardanelles:	Four Coast Artillery Regiments	one Cavalry Brigade	13, 14 Infantry Divisions	
		one Artillery Regiment	one Cavalry Regiment	
		one Fortress Artillery Regiment	one Artillery Regiment	

trol over Constantinople and the Bosporus and had units in Europe and Asia Minor. The Second Army had operational control over Adrianople, Thrace, and the Dardanelles and had units in Europe and Asia Minor. The Third Army had operational control over Salonika, Macedonia, Epirus, Albania, and Smyrna in Asia Minor. Map 1.1 clearly shows the fundamental geostrategic problem facing coordinated military operations within the First, Second, and Third Army areas.

Each army also performed inspectorate functions for the Redif divisions located within its respective area. As a result of the successful adaptation of von der Goltz's continental reserve system, the Redif system had matured to the point where it provided two thirds of the mobilized Ottoman field army.30 The Redif divisions were organized on the same pattern as the regular Nizamiye formations and included the same mix of supporting arms. Often, however, the infantry formations of the Redif divisions were not located in close proximity to their supporting artillery, cavalry, engineer, and transportation units. Men spent three years under the colors with active formations, then spent three more years asssigned as individual augumentees (Ihtiyatlik), followed by eight years in a reserve Redif unit, and finally ending their national obligation by six years in the home guard (Müstahfz). The Redif infantry divisions were thereby full of middle-aged men who

had no recent training in military skills. The Mobilization Division of the

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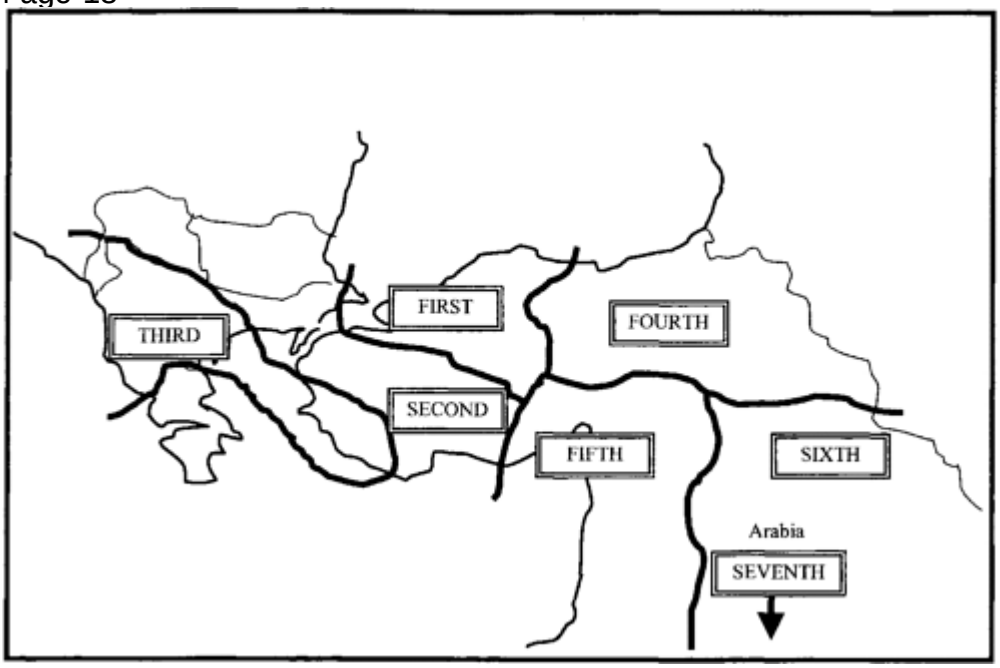

Map 1.1 Ottoman Army Areas, 1908

General Staff assigned each Redif division a full-time division commander and full-time battalion commanders in order to maintain the depots in a condition of limited readiness. Altogether, in 1908, there were 544,000 men organized in thirty-three Redif infantry divisions (Table 1.4 shows the arrangement of Redif divisions in each army area). Each Redif division was numbered sequentially and also used its main garrison city in its title. Unlike the regular Nizamiye structure, the regiments of the Redif were not numbered sequentially on a national basis, but were rather numbered according to their divisional and brigade unit of assignment.31 There were continuing troop diversions, which drained available strength from the active forces. The First Army had three infantry battalions and four artillery batteries deployed to Medina in Arabia. Two of the Second Army's infantry battalions were stationed on the island of Midilli. The infantry battalions of the Third Army were scattered around the area of operations on internal security missions. In Caucasia, many of the troops of the Fourth Army were scattered along the frontier to keep an eye on the Russians. The Fifth Army in Syria was proportionally in the worst shape and had deployed two thirds of the 9th Infantry Division, half of the 5th Cavalry Division, and the entire 5th Artillery Division to reinforce the Third Army in Macedonia. The Sixth Army in Mesopotamia was stable but undersupplied and weak.

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TABLE 1.4 Organization of Ottoman Reserve (Redif) Infantry Divisions, 1908

First Army area	*Second Army area*	*Third Army area*	*Fourth Army area*
1st Bursa Division	35th Çanakkale Division	9th Manastir Division	13th Erzincan Division
2nd Kastamonu Division	6th Bandirma Division	10th Köprülü Division	14th Trabzon Division
3rd Ankara Division	7th Afyonkarahisar Division	11th Salonika Division	15th Diyarbakir Division
4th Kayseri Division	8th Konya Division	12th Aydin Division	16th Sivas Division
Fifth Army area	25th Adrianople Division	28th Üskup Division	*Sixth Army area*
17th Damascus Division	26th Kircaali Division	29th Piristine Division	21st Baghdad Division
18th Akka Division	53rd Kirklareli Brigade	30th Pizren Division	22nd Basra Division
19th Aleppo Division		31st Serez Division	23rd Kelkit Division
20th Adana Division		32nd Berat Division	24th Musul Division
		33rd Görüce Division	
		34th Debreyi Bala Division	
		54th Gevgili Division	

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 1 Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbe Girişi* (Inkinci Baski) (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 87–90.

The Seventh Army fought rebel tribesmen in Yemen while simultaneously trying to keep order in southern Arabia.

There were other sources of military power to be found within the empire in 1908, as well. The Hamidiye Light Cavalry of sixty-one regiments was organized into seven cavalry brigades and three cavalry regiments. However, the Turks were unhappy with the poor discipline and low levels of military proficiency within several of the formations and formally dissolved twelve Hamidiye regiments on December 6, 1908. There was also a large and well-equipped gendarmarie (Jandarma), which performed internal security and paramilitary functions within the empire. In 1908, there were thirty Jandarma regiments and five independent Jandarma battalions. Altogether, there were 2,373 officers and 39,268 men assigned to mobile field Jandarma formations. Finally, there were 5,351 officers, 7,418 sailors, and 1,060 students assigned to the rolls of the Ottoman Navy.32

It was apparent by 1908 that the Ottoman Army was overdue for a complete organizational overhaul. The incoherent stationing plan of the First, Second, and Third Armies, based on populated metropolitan cities, violated the strategic integrity of western provinces of the empire and was a recipe for military disaster. Furthermore the complete absence of corps-level headquarters meant that, in wartime, major command and control problems would arise when army headquarters would have to exercise a span of control over as many as sixteen active and reserve infantry divisions. Compounding these problems was the ratio of reserve infantry divisions assigned to army inspectorates,

which varied greatly, from a maximum of twelve Redif divisions in the Second Army to four Redif divisions in the First, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Armies. In July 1908, the revolution of the Young Turks finally brought to power men who were determined to modernize the Ottoman Empire, and the army was one of the first government agencies to feel the change. Planning for the reorganization of the Ottoman Army consumed all of 1909, as the Ottoman General Staff worked to pattern the army on contemporary European models. Despite the personal interest of the sultan, there were many obstacles to modernization. Many of the army's artillery, caissons, and wagons were obsolete. Quantities of light and heavy infantry weapons were inadequate, and stockages of materials in the depots were both low and unevenly distributed. Training in the use of the available weapons was inadequate as well. Moreover, the navy was in an even worse condition. In terms of its human element, the army had serious difficulties in maintaining its strength. Although universal military conscription had been in effect for two generations, numbers of Albanians and Arabs refused to serve in the Ottoman military. This condition was exaggerated by the fact that the ongoing revolts in those areas further impeded the retention of local soldiers, who were reluctant to serve against their neighbors. In effect, this situation created an unfair burden on the more reliable Anatolian Turks (especially from the capital region, whose population tended to be more educated and cosmopolitan), who were forced to shoulder much of the antiterrorist, antibrigand, and antirebel-lion operations conducted by the army.33

The overall efficiency of the army was not high. Dietary deficiencies were common, and the overall condition of the average soldier's health was not good. Many men and animals were frequently reported sick and in the hospital. Rations were poorly balanced, and bread, the staple of the Ottoman kitchen, was sometimes in short supply. These problems made training marches physically difficult, and training was commensurately poor in many regiments. Training plans were especially weak at the lower levels, and the regimental officers were unskilled in the preparation of orders. Practical exercises and useful field training experiences were practically nonexistent. There was a surplus of captains and majors because the promotion of these mid-grade officers of ten to fifteen years' service was frozen. Rela-tionships between high-ranking officers and the rank and file were poor, and the army suffered from an overall lack of coordination between the various levels of the organization.

As usual, troop diversions continued to plague the army as the military was forced to respond to ever-increasing levels of brigandage and minor rebellion. The Fifth Army, in particular, was gutted by these diversions.34 The 9th Infantry Division sent its 34th and 35th Infantry

Regiments to Serez in the Balkans and its independent Rifle Battalion to Medina. The 10th Infantry Division sent its 36th Infantry Regiment to Piriştine and Usturma in the Balkans. There were problems associated with this policy. For example, the Fifth Army formations contained large numbers of Arabs, who did not find the mission in Europe especially meaningful.

One particular problem that the Ottoman Army faced was in the proficiency of its artillery. In peacetime, the independent artillery divisions controlled only active formations (Nizamiye) of regimental strength. The battalions of these regiments were manned at levels far below their authorized strength for wartime

operations, and they depended on augmentation by the men of the first reserve (Ihtiyat). Unfortunately without sustained and routine training, the Ihtiyat men tended to rapidly lose the technical proficiency necessary to operate the cannon effectively. In the small-scale Greek war of 1898, this was a minor problem, but in the event of a large-scale conflict, this was foreseen to be a serious deficiency.35

THE POLITICS OF THE OTTOMAN ARMY

From its earliest origins, the Ottoman Army was a political entity and was embedded in the political culture of the Ottoman State. Nothing illustrates this more than the events from 1908 through the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic in 1923. However, within the armed forces themselves, there were internal military politics at work on a continual basis, which had important consequences for the rising professionalism of the Ottoman officer corps.

In spring 1908, Grand Vizier Sait Paşa convinced the cabinet that the obsolete Ottoman command system ought to be updated. Although the state technically had a Ministry of War and a General Staff, neither was fully empowered to fulfill its duties in the European manner. Furthermore, the older regimental officers, who had not attended the war academy, tended to seek assignments in the antique headquarters of the commander in chief (Babi Seraskeri). This system, which had been in place for eighty-two years, was deemed by the government to be coun-terproductive to modernization. Therefore, the cabinet decided to em-power fully the Ministry of War (Harbiye Nezareti) to supervise the organizational, planning, acquisition, and logistical functions of the armed forces and, at the same time, eliminated the Babi Seraskeri. This took effect on July 22, 1908, and functionally meant a greatly enhanced role for the incumbent minister of war. Furthermore, the minister of war chaired a newly created Supreme Military Council, a deliberative body designed to establish military and naval policy. The Supreme Military

Council was composed of the minister of war, the chief of the general staff, and the field army commanders. The Ottoman ministers of war during the period 1908–1914 are shown in Table 1.5.

One might ask why eleven different men served as minister of war in an eight-year period. The short answer is politics. The minister of war portfolio was given as a political appointment, and the incumbent rose and fell with the prevailing winds of political fortune. Ottoman politics, as will be seen in the following chapters, was an unending struggle for control of the state. The Ministry of War, therefore, reflected the number of governments that rose and fell in this period. The position itself was very important during this time as the military represented and supported stability and modernization in the empire.

The rapid turnover of ministers must have had an effect on the Ottoman armed forces; however, this point is not well examined in the modern Turkish histories. Obviously, the lack of continuity must have had a more negative, rather than positive, effect on the services as a whole. The backgrounds of the ministers themselves were widely different. Nazim Paşa, for example, spoke French and was trained at St. Cyr. Ahmet Izzet Paşa spoke fluent German and had served in Germany as an exchange officer on a Prussian Army corps staff. The lack of continuity seemed to have manifested itself mostly in the procurement of weapons systems. For example, the Francophile Nazim Paşa briefly imported a limited number of French Schneider field guns, then

TABLE 1.5 Ottoman Ministers of War, 1908–1914

Minister of War	*Appointed*	*Relieved*	*Remarks*
Rüstü Paşa	July 22, 1908	August 7, 1908	
Recep Paşa	August 7, 1908	August 9, 1908	
Ali Riza Paşa	August 27, 1908	February 10, 1909	
Nazim Paşa	February 10, 1909	February 12, 1909	
Ali Riza Paşa	February 13, 1909	April 14, 1909	second appointment
Ibrahim Ethem Paşa	April 14, 1909	April 28, 1909	
Salih Hulusi Paşa	April 28, 1909	January 12, 1910	
Mahmut Sevket Paşa	January 12, 1910	July 9, 1912	
Hursit Paşa	July 9, 1912	July 29, 1912	acting deputy minister of war
Nazim Paşa	July 29, 1912	January 23, 1913	second appointment, assassinated
Mahmut Sevket Paşa	January 23, 1913	June 11, 1913	second appointment, assassinated
Ahmet Izzet Paşa	June 18, 1913	November 5, 1913	
Çürüksulu Mahmut Paşa	November 5, 1913	January 3, 1914	acting deputy minister of war
Enver Paşa	January 3, 1914	November 4, 1918	

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Illncü Cilt, 6ncu Kisim (1908–1920), Inci Kita* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1971), 242–243.

thought by many observers to be the finest in the world (and thus superior to the Ottoman Army's imported German Krupp artillery). However, the most important impact that the Ministry of War had on the Ottoman Army was in the appointment of the army's chief of staff.
On August 15, 1908, Minister of War Recep Paşa appointed Ahmet Izzet Paşa as the chief of the general staff (Erkani Harbiye Umumiye Reisi). Every succeeding minister of war retained him as chief of staff. Ahmet Izzet Paşa would remain in this position until January 1, 1914, when Enver Paşa replaced him. This position was the actual locus of power within the Ottoman Army. The immense organizational changes that the Ottoman Army underwent from 1908 through 1913 were the direct result of the work of Ahmet Izzet Paşa. His vision and iron determination to create an efficient army in the European tradition irrevocably changed the Ottoman Army. As Ahmet Izzet Paşa was a protégé of the German military mission, his tenure as chief of staff tended to reflect German thinking. This was especially true of his view of the primacy of the General Staff concept itself and the key role of the corps of trained General Staff officers.
The appointment and sustainment of Ahmet Izzet Paşa as chief of staff represented a triumph for the proponents of modern military education within the Ottoman Army. As the Ottoman Army evolved a multiechelon system of army schools that turned officers from military cadets to fully trained General Staff officers, many regimental officers were left behind. This was particularly true of the men who had entered the army prior to the 1880s and who did not benefit from the ever-grow-ing army schools system. These men were regimental officers, many of whom began as privates and were promoted within their regiments (the British Army called this type of officer a "ranker"). In the Ottoman Army they were called regimentals *(alayli),* and in their careers they tended to remain company grade officers. Many of these officers were illiterate, and most had no formal military education. By 1908, increasing numbers of them were quite elderly and most were opposed to modernization and change. At the other end of the spectrum were the "with schooling" officers *(mektepli),* who were graduates of the various army schools. The school system advanced men of promise by offering them the prospect of rapid promotion, and thus, the mektepli tended to be younger and advocates of change (all of the Young Turks, for example, were mektepli).
The alayli represented an obstacle to changing the thinking and operations of the army. Since Ahmet Izzet Paşa had massive organizational change in mind, it was a foregone conclusion that he would seek to reduce the influence and numbers of the alayli. Some of the alayli had already been discharged in 1908 by Mahmud Muhtar Paşa, and by 1909, many of the remaining regimental officers were in a state of near

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mutiny. On April 13, 1909, there was a mutinous demonstration by unhappy soldiers in the capital, which was actively supported by many active and retired alayli officers. This uprising was called the "31 March Incident" (using the old calendar). The mutineers demanded (literally) the deconstruction of the ongoing modernization effort, and in particular, the purging of the mektepli officers. Chaos reigned briefly, the prime minister resigned, the cabinet collapsed, and mektepli officers were hunted and killed on the streets. Finally, the Action Army (led and staffed by mektepli officers) arrived in the capital and restored order, on April 24, 1909.
This was the provocation that the Supreme Military Council needed to complete the purge of the alayli officers. In the council, Ahmet Izzet Paşa was the main advocate for action and change. It is highly likely that he provided the impetus for the anti-alayli, legal provisions that followed. The Supreme Military Council wrote and engineered the passing of two laws that targeted the regimental officers. The first, passed on June 26, 1909, was the Law for Age Limitation. This law established maximum age limits for the officer grades in the Ottoman Army. There were, for example, sixty-year-old alayli lieutenants serving in the army. Since many of the alayli were older than their mektepli counterparts, this law quickly retired many of the older alayli who were holding down commands and slowing the assignments of younger, more capable men. The second law came shortly thereafter, on August 7, 1909, and was called the Law for the Purge of Military Ranks. This law revised the rank structure and established educational and time in grade provisions for the officer corps. It was designed to end the patronage system that afflicted the army and had helped to advance unqualified alayli. Several additional laws followed that guaranteed regular leave and established a regular pension and retirement system. These changes were the first real steps toward the creation of a professional Ottoman officer corps.
All these events had an immediate and tremendous impact on the Ottoman Army. Ahmet Izzet Paşa's alignment with the mektepli set the stage for the vast reorganization of the Ottoman Army that would occur in 1910–1911. While the regimental officers continued to exist within the Ottoman Army, these men rapidly fell by the wayside or were sidelined in unimportant assignments. After 1910, the school-trained professional officer dominated the important positions within the army. This was an especially important development, which would have a long-term positive effect on the Ottoman Army's combat efficiency.

THE ARMY REORGANIZATION OF 1910

By late 1910, all organizational planning was complete, and the Ottoman Army was poised on the threshold of a major reorganization

designed to streamline its command and control architecture. This reorganization fundamentally altered the command structure of the army by introducing the army corps headquarters as an echelon of command. Equally important was the breakthrough reorganization of the Ottoman infantry division, based on the tactical ideas of Colmar Frieheer von der Goltz. The new organizational architecture brought the Ottoman Army in line with contemporary Continental European armies in its doctrinal approach to the operational level of war and organizationally put it ahead of the Europeans at the tactical level of war. These changes were put into effect in late September 1910 (immediately after the annual fall maneuvers) and reflected significant changes in the army's thinking.

The most exciting organizational development in the reorganization of the Ottoman Army's architecture came at the division level. The genesis of the idea seems to have originated in the mind of von der Goltz, who is known to have championed the concept of the offensive supported by direct support artillery at the tactical level. After he had departed the Ottoman Empire in 1896, von der Goltz had gone on to extremely important assignments in the German Army. He had established an excellent reputation with the Turks and was known for the soundness of his training programs and maneuvers. By the end of 1900, von der Goltz had been promoted to the rank of general of infantry, and in January 1902, he was the commander of the I Army Corps in Königsberg, East Prussia. While commanding at that level, von der Goltz participated in numerous army maneuvers and continued to refine his thinking about tactical doctrines. There is substantial evidence that von der Goltz keenly followed the events of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Throughout the war he maintained a running correspondence with the Ottoman military observer Colonel Pertev Bey (later Pertev Paşa).36 Pertev accompanied General Nogi's Japanese Third Army at the siege of Port Arthur and witnessed the Japanese-style infantry asaults. Later, Pertev Bey, who was both a former aide-de-camp of von der Goltz and his protégé, presented von der Goltz with his tactical study of Japanese operations at Port Arthur.

Another view of the origin of the Ottoman Army's reorganization is found in the recollections of Ahmet Izzet Paşa, who in 1927 claimed reponsibility for the restructuring of the army into corps and reconfig-ured infantry divisions.37 Ahmet Izzet Paşa maintained that he developed the basic reorganizational scheme in winter 1908 and that the Ministry of War decided to let him test his ideas in August 1909. However, most of his narrative and comments deal with corps-level arrangements and army corps end strength figures.38 There is very little discussion in his book about the changes at the division level involving the implementation of the three-regiment infantry division, which leads

to the conclusion that Ahmet Izzet Paşa was uninvolved or disinterested in these particular matters. In any case, in his position as chief of the Ottoman General Staff, Ferik Ahmet Izzet Paşa was responsible for the planning and implementation of all organizational matters.

Von der Goltz continued to maintain an interest in the Ottoman Empire and the operations of the Ottoman Army. On July 12, 1909, he returned to Constantinople on an inspection tour. He was accompanied by Major von Berge-Herrnsdorff of the General Staff of the German VI Army Corps. While on the tour he appeared very interested in the ongoing reorganizational planning efforts of the Ottoman General Staff and advanced several ideas that he had developed, based on his studies of the Russo-Japanese War. Among these ideas were his thoughts on tactical operations at the division level and divisional organizational structures. In early August 1909, von der Goltz observed the annual army maneuvers near Adrianople and had many opportunities to speak with Turkish officers. Apparently, his ideas fell on fertile ground. By late October 1909, the Turks were engaged in full-scale division-level maneuvers designed to test various combinations of army division configurations. Von der Goltz was put in charge of the first set of test maneuvers (Manöverleiter) and developed a tactical scenario pitting the "West" (Bulgarians) against the "East" (Turks). Heavily observed by military attachés from Constantinople, the first three-day test exercise began on October 31, 1909. The centerpiece of the maneuver was a new experimental divisional structure that von der Goltz called the combined division, which contained one infantry brigade, one cavalry brigade, and one artillery regiment. At the end of the maneuvers, von der Goltz put together a working group of officers to critique troop performance during the exercise and to study the results of the tests.39 Subsequently, in November, he went on to observe other army-level maneuvers in Macedonia, and by December von der Goltz was back in Constantinople. In January 1910, despite the cold and frost, he put the troops back out in the field north of Constantinople for more maneuvers in a force-on-force exercise using two of his combined divisions. Although von der Goltz returned to Germany in spring 1910, Ottoman Army maneuvers continued throughout the

spring and summer in the Balkans and Thrace and also in Caucasia, where new, division-level configurations were tested. After a careful analysis of the unprecedented test maneuvers (and probably following the inclinations of von der Goltz), the Ottoman General Staff made its decision regarding the reorganization of the Ottoman Army.

On July 10, 1910, the army published its instructions for reorganiza-tion.40 (Devlet-I Aliye-I Osmaniye Ordusunun Teşkilat-ı Esasiye Nizamnamesi). In this publication, the Turks adopted the European army corps organization, but with significant and far-reaching alter-

ations. Instead of the standard European army corps of two assigned infantry divisions, the Ottoman General Staff chose a revamped army corps model of three infantry divisions. A full-strength regular Ottoman Army corps of three infantry divisions would contain forty-one thousand men and 6,700 animals. The implementation date of this change was set for January 8, 1911. The reason for the delayed date of implementation was simply that the Turks had no surplus of officers, men, animals, and equipment with which to create new headquarters. In order to produce these assets, especially the number of trained general staff officers necessary to fill the corps staff positions, the Ottoman General Staff had to consider further structural changes in the architecture of its army.

The most radical Ottoman organizational reform came at the division level. Because of the tactical ideas pioneered by von der Goltz, the Ottoman General Staff decided to eliminate both infantry brigade headquarters from its infantry divisions. The Turks decided to reduce their standard square infantry division, comprised of two brigades of two infantry regiments each, down to a triangular division of three infantry regiments. Additionally, Ottoman Army infantry divisions received an artillery regiment of three battalions. This triangular structure mirrored their new corps structure and was a dramatic breakthrough in tactical organization (Figure 1.1 shows the different organizations). Under this arrangement, the number of infantry battalions in an infantry division was reduced from sixteen to nine. Additionally, the division had a rifle battalion (composed of light infantry similar to the German Army's Jäger battalions) and a musical band assigned, as well. This was a remarkably prescient decision. Later, in the static trench warfare envi-ronment of World War I, the large, four-regiment infantry division proved to be extremely unwieldy and organizationally unsuited to tactical requirements. In particular, the larger divisional structure was ill adapted organizationally to maintaining a portion of its strength in contact (i.e., in the trenches) while at the same time maintaining a portion in reserve. The Turkish model enabled an infantry division to establish a rotational system to feed regiments into the front lines, which proved to be a major part of the organizational solution to the tactical requirements of trench warfare. The German Army would be the first European Army to begin converting its four-regiment divisions to the Turkish model, in 1915. Every major combatant European army would change its organizational structure to this model by 1918, and the basic triangular structure of infantry divisions pioneered by the Turks continues in the world's armies to the present day.

The Redif infantry divisions retained both their unique local character and their nonstandard number of assigned infantry regiments. Some Redif formations were also augmented by detachments of the home

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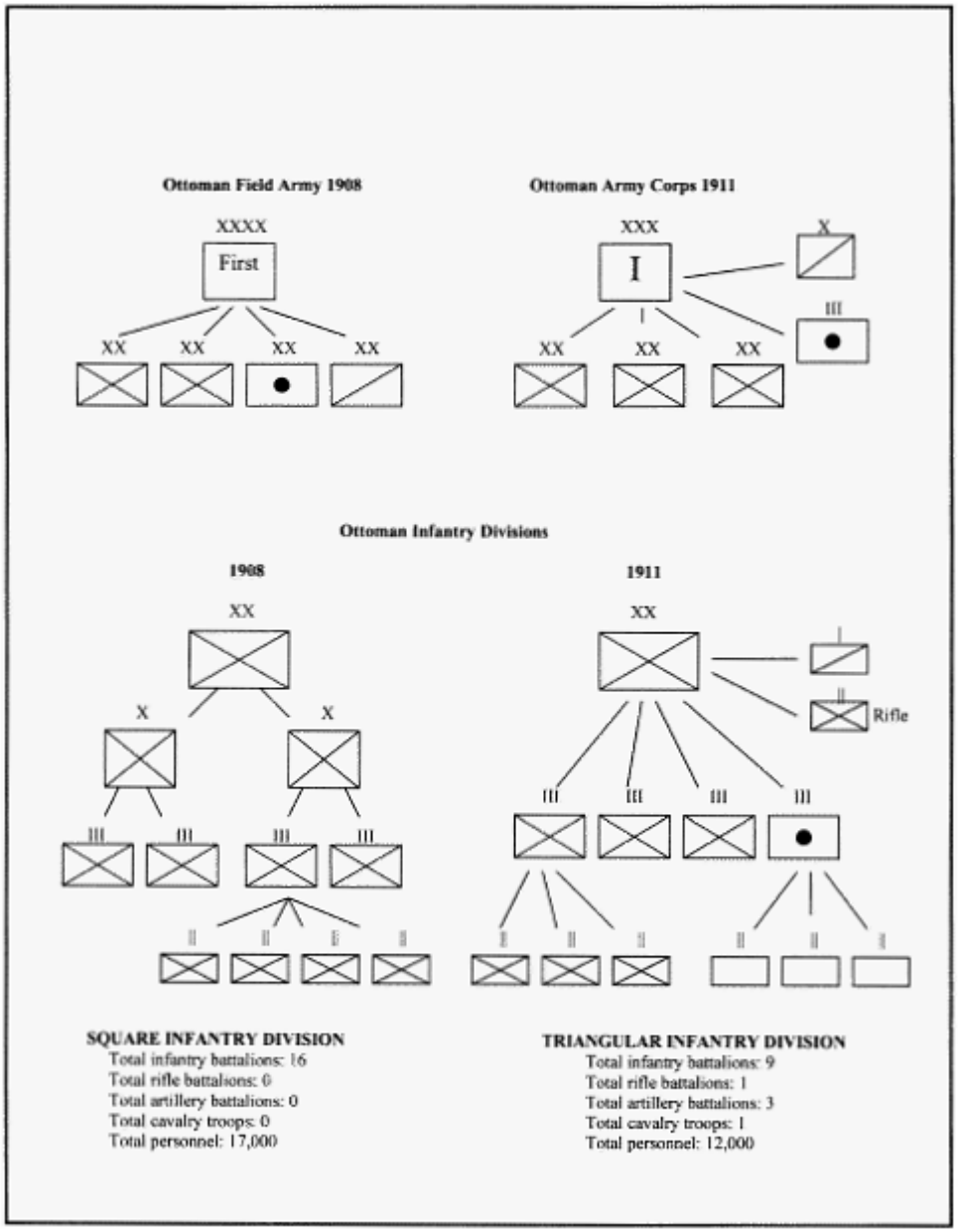

Figure 1.1 Ottoman Army Organization, 1908 and 1911.

guard *(müstahfz)* in order to increase their combat power. The Redif infantry divisions were also reorganized into separate, numbered Redif army corps, reflecting the changes in the regular army. To increase their combat power, the reserve corps were also assigned regular Ottoman Army cavalry, artillery, and other support formations as additional augmentation in wartime.

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Other organizational changes followed rapidly in September 1910. These additional major changes were outlined in the army's subsequent instructions for reorganization *(Teşkilatı Cedidenin Veçhi Tatbikini Mübeyyin Talimattır)* and are listed below.41

1. The first and second Redif were eliminated and the troops were merged into a single reserve element simply known as the Redif (organized reverve formations).
2. The First Army organized an additional eleven infantry battalions.
3. The Fourth Infantry Division moved to Dedeağaç, the 8th Infantry Division moved to Van, and the 19th Infantry Division moved to Erzincan.
4. The Second Army was given six batteries of quick-firing artillery (three batteries of 105mm guns and three batteries of 150mm howitzers).
5. The artillery divisions were inactivated and the battalions redis-tributed.
6. The Hamidiye Tribal Light Cavalry was reorganized and merged with regular army cavalry units.
7. The number of support units in the European operational areas of the Second and Third Armies was

increased.
8. Infantry regiments were authorized either three or four (depending on geographic location) machine-gun detachments.

The annual fall maneuvers were held in October 1910 and had been planned by the Ottoman General Staff previously, in May.42 It would appear from Pertev Bey's description of the maneuvers that the Ottoman General Staff used this exercise as a final test for its newly reorganized infantry divisions. The exercise pitted the "Eastern Army," commanded by Zeki Paşa, against the "Western Army." commanded by Abdullah Paşa, and was held in Thrace near Lüleburgaz. For the conduct of the exercise, the First Army provided the staff of the Eastern Army, and the Second Army provided the staff of the Western Army. There were no army corps headquarters used in these maneuvers, only the new type of infantry division. Although the Turks desired to test the corps headquarters, the continuing operational requirements in Yemen had drained the First and Second Armies of qualified staff officers.43 Pertev's listing of the forces engaged shows the mix of varying divisional structures that the Turks fielded in the maneuvers (see Table 1.6).

The maneuvers put over sixty thousand men in the field for a twelve-day period, of which four days and nights (October 7–11, 1910) were of simulated combat. In the exercise, the Eastern Army (employing the new-style infantry division) was on the defensive around Adrianople, while the Western Army (employing the old-style infantry division)

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TABLE 1.6 Ottoman Forces Participating in the October 1910 Maneuvers

Formation	*Infantry Battalions*	*Cavalry Squadrons*	*Artillery Batteries*	*Remarks*
Eastern Army				
First Infantry Division	10	1		8New Style
Second Infantry Division	9	1		6New Style
Samsun Redif Division	8	1		3Reserve
Independent Cavalry Brigade		9		2
Western Army				
Third Infantry Division	13	1		6Old Style
Twentieth Infantry Division	13	1		6Old Style
Karahissar Redif Division	9	1		3Reserve
Independent Cavalry Brigade		12		2

Source: Pertev Demirhan, *Generalfeldmarschall Colmar Freiheer von der Goltz, Das Lebensbild eines grossen Soldaten* (Göttingen, Germany: Göttinger Verlagsanstalt, 1960), 148–149.

simulated offensive operations by crossing the border and initiating hostilities. The infantry, cavalry, and artillery were issued blank ammunition to add realism to the training. The principal defense line of the Eastern Army was along the Ergene River. The exercise also attached Redif infantry divisions alongside the active Nizamiye infantry divisions. The maneuvers were closely observed by Ottoman officers from the Third and Fourth Armies and by numerous attachés and foreign officers. Judged to be successful, these maneuvers were the last major field exercises conducted by the Ottoman Army prior to the outbreak of the First Balkan War.

The most operationally significant change was instituted on January 8, 1911, and introduced army corps headquarters into the organization of the Ottoman Army.44 The army corps had been in general continental use for a hundred years and grouped several infantry divisions (the European standard was two) under a lieutenant general. Doctrinally, the army corps enabled an army commander to maneuver larger elements of his force at what is known as the operational level of war. Functionally, the army corps shortened the span of control for an army commander by introducing a lesser number of army corps-level headquarters between himself and his larger number of infantry divisions. This change was long overdue in the Ottoman Army, which by 1911 had grown to a substantial size. Although new in the Ottoman Army, the army corps itself was not a new development within the European military community, and there was a wealth of European experience that the Ottoman staffs could use as a model for their new headquarters.

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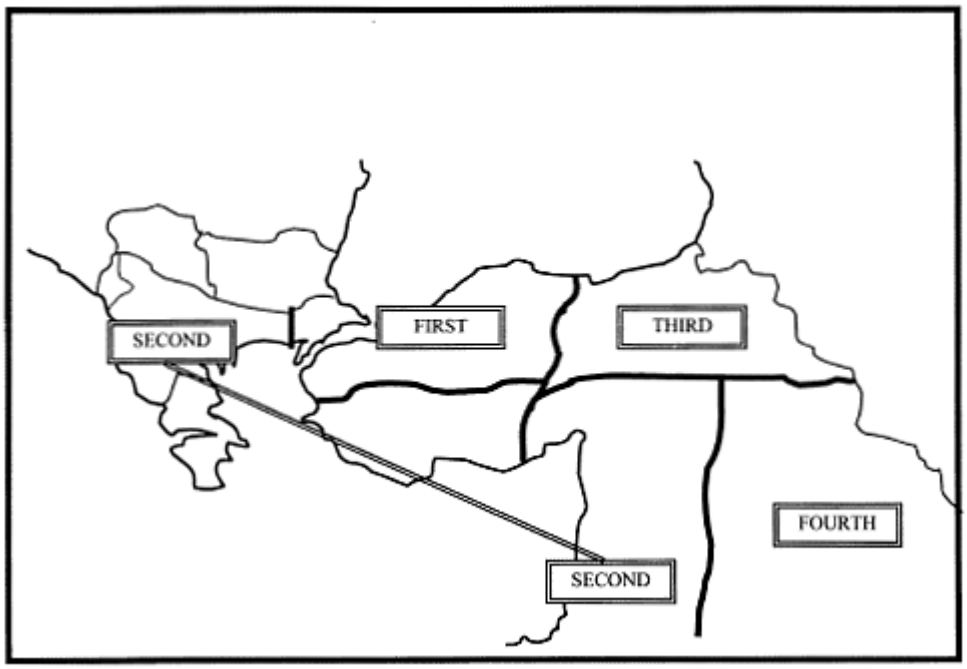
At the higher levels, the Ottoman General Staff finally decided to reorganize its numbered field armies along strategically sound principles. The former seven armies were reorganized into four field armies: the First, headquartered at Constantinople, was responsible for the defense of the Turkish straits and Adrianople; the Second, headquartered at Salonika, was responsible for the defense of the Balkans; the Third, headquartered at Erzincan, was responsible for the defense of Caucasia; and the Fourth, headquartered at Baghdad, was

responsible for the defense of Mesopotamia. The Second Army also had operational control over Syria and Palestine, from which it drew its reinforcements in time of war. This revised array of armies recognized strategic threats from the Christian Balkan states and from Russia, but not from Great Britain (then controlling Egypt), which was considered friendly to the Ottoman state. Map 1.2 depicts the new field army areas. Additionally, there was an independent army corps in Yemen and independent infantry divisions in Arabia and Libya. The field armies continued to serve as peacetime inspectorates responsible for the training of the regular formations and the mobilization of the Redif formations within their operational areas.

To say that these changes were sweeping vastly understates what happened to the Ottoman Army in 1910 and 1911. The changes profoundly affected the army and were expected to take up to ten years to



Map 1.2 Ottoman Army Areas, 1911.

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fully implement.45 Their comprehensive, multiechelon nature needs to be analyzed in some detail.

First, at the strategic level, the total overhaul of the field armies necessitated the complete rewriting of all mobilization, concentration, and operational campaign plans. This was especially true in the new Second Army area, which absorbed the former Third Army areas of Macedonia, Albania, and Epirus. While the Second Army divested itself of eastern Anatolia, it gained a planning responsibility for Syria and Palestine. The new First Army area was largly unchanged except for assuming control of the strategically critical fortress city of Adrianople and the vital Dardanelles defenses. The Fourth Army essentially redesignated itself as the Third Army and assumed no new responsibilities other than restructuring the Hamidiye Tribal Light Cavalry (see Appendix B for a complete listing of this organization in 1911). Similarly, the Sixth Army redesignated itself as the Fourth Army and assumed no new responsibilities. Although long overdue, the Ottoman armies in the strategically critical Balkans and European Thrace consequently underwent the most radical organizational changes.

Second, by forming corps-level headquarters, the Ottoman Army sought to create organizations where none had existed before. There were no trained corps commanders or corps staffs, nor were there the physical assets available to form these elements. Obviously, by reducing the number of field army headquarters and eliminating the brigade headquarters within its infantry divisions, the Ottoman General Staff created some of the personnel and equipment overhead necessary to staff these new headquarters. However, the physical act of bringing together officers, men, animals, and equipment in order to meld them into coherent and efficient staffs was a process that would take years, even under the best of circumstances.

Third, at the divisional level, the elimination of the brigade headquarters produced a new organizational dynamic at the tactical level within the Ottoman Army. The division commander, normally a major general, formerly dealt with two brigadiers who orchestrated the operations of their regiments, which were commanded by colonels. In the new architecture, the division commander would now have to issue orders to three colonels, each commanding an infantry regiment. Ottoman military doctrine in 1910 was based on contemporary German doctrine, but by moving to a new organizational structure, the Turks moved into uncharted doctrinal waters. Every plan, every march table, every logistical planning matrix, every tactical

template was based on a German organizational model that was now obsolete. Therefore, a huge doctrinal void existed, which had to be filled by new theory, planning, and experiences.

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As a consequence of the restructuring of its infantry divisions, the Ottoman General Staff was left with a surplus of infantry regiments and newly raised infantry battalions unassociated with infantry divisions. It solved this issue by melding these unassociated regiments into a larger number of new infantry divisions. Thus, the overall number of infantry divisions in the Ottoman Army increased from a 1908 total of twenty-one infantry divisions to a 1911 total of forty-two infantry divisions.

There must have been intellectual and personal consequences for the Ottoman officer corps resulting from the organizational changes. There was an immediate need for fourteen new corps commanders and fourteen new lieutenant generals, a rank that had hitherto not existed within the Ottoman Army. While the available pool of senior trained general staff officers had studied corps-level operations at the Harbiye War Academy, none of these men had any direct experience serving on corps staffs or in command of army corps (although a few of the best General Staff officers had served abroad on corps staffs in Germany and France). Moreover, the promotion opportunity for colonels to make brigadier (one-star general) changed substantially in 1910 with the elimination of the brigade. A small number of brigadiers immediately assumed command of the newly created infantry divisions (a post nominally held by a major general). Furthermore, the colonels commanding infantry and artillery regiments now reported directly to division commanders and were thus responsible for thinking and acting at a higher tactical level. Cumulatively, these changes must have had a profound professional impact on an officer corps that had been very stable for the better part of two generations.

Finally, it should be noted that the extensive reorganization of the Ottoman Army was done for reasons of military efficiency and effectiveness. There appear to have been no political controls or agendas from the grand vizier or cabinet that affected the reorganizational process. In fact, the rapidity with which the Turks reorganized their army is astonishing. This indicates a high level of freedom of action for both Ahmet Izzet Paşa and the Ottoman General Staff.

NOTES

1. Stanford J.Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire; Volume 2, Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 160–162.
2. Ibid., 162.
3. Ibid. 166.
4. Ibid. 166.
5. Ibid. 172–173.
6. Ibid. 172–180.
7. Ian Drury, *The Russo-Turkish War, 1877* (London: Osprey, 1994), 4.

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8. Readers may wish to consult W.E.D.Allen and Paul Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields: A History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Border, 1828–1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 109–217; David G.Chandler, *Atlas of Military Strategy* (New York: Free Press, 1980), 196–197; Drury, *Russo-Turkish War;* and David Woodward, *Armies of the World, 1854–1914* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1978), 78–82.
9. H.Hikmet Süer, *1877–1878 Osmanli-Rus Harbi Rumeli Cephesi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 33.
10. Ibid., 38. There were probably an additional three hundred thousand more men assigned to the other corps areas.
11. Ibid. Source information for the subsequent paragraphs may be found on pages 34–40.
12. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire,* 182–183.
13. Ibid., 245.
14. Walter Goerlitz, *History of the German General Staff, 1657–1945* (New York: Praeger, 1956), 97.
15. William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 29. The Harbiye War Academy was founded in 1834 as a technical school of military science. Under von der Goltz, the Harbiye evolved into a modern staff college.
16. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire,* 249.
17. Ibid., 245.
18. Turkish General Staff, *Turk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncu Cilt, 6ncu Kisim (1908–1920) 1nci Kita,* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1971), 240–241.

19. Ibid., 129–131. See also Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire,* 246.
20. Ibid., 129.
21. Ibid., 130–131.
22. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire,* 246.
23. Ibid., 246.
24. Ibid., 206–207.
25. Woodward, *Armies of the World,* 83.
26. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire,* 206–207.
27. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), I Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbe Girişi* (Inkinci Baski) (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 80. Material from subsequent paragraphs comes from these pages as well.
28. Ibid., 86.
29. The British Army, in 1914, and later the American Army, in 1917, would experience difficulty in creating the divisional and corps staffs necessary for the establishment of mass armies. The great Continental powers, Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, and Russia, had fielded corps-level headquarters since the 1870s and had developed sufficient numbers of trained and experienced mid-grade staff officers to accommodate wartime expansion in 1914.
30. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi* (1912–1913), 87–89.
31. Ibid., 88–90. For example, the First Bursa Division had the First Bursa Brigade and the Second Bursa Brigade, which were composed of the First and Second Bursa Infantry Regiments and the Third and Fourth Bursa Infantry Regiments, respectively.
32. Ibid., 90–91.
33. Ibid., 136–137. Additionally, wealthy Turks could pay their way out of military service or greatly reduce the length of time of service, which further compounded the shortage of good men.

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34. Ibid., 137.
35. Ibid., 138.
36. Pertev Demirhan, *Generalfeldmarschall Colmar Freiheer von der Goltz: Das Lebensbild eines grossen Soldaten* (Göttingen, Germany: Göttinger Verlagsanstalt, 1960), 74–91.
37. Ahmed Izzet Pascha, *Denkwürdigkeiten des Marschalls Izzet Pascha* (Leipzig, Germany: Verlag von K.F.Koehler, 1927), 165–172.
38. Ibid., 295–302.
39. Ibid. The material about von der Goltz's activities during this period is taken from pages 130–142. Pertev noted that the opportunity to be in the field again with the Turks so excited the sixty-six-year-old general that he had the energy and enthusiasm of a twenty-year-old cavalryman.
40. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi,* 140–141.
41. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913),* 139.
42. Edward J.Erickson, *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2001), 6.
43. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi,* 402.
44. Erickson, *Ordered to Die,* 139.
45. Minister Assim to Lieutenant Colonel Napier, January 4, 1911, Enclosure to Lindley letter, in G.P.Gooch and Harold Temperley, ed., *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898–1914; Volume 9, The Balkan Wars, Part I* (London: HMSO, 1933), 246.

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2
Revolution and the Eastern Question, 1877–1912

THE EASTERN QUESTION

The Ottoman Empire entered the twentieth century beset with problems caused by the nationalistic movements of its subject minorities. In the Balkans, Serb, Greek, and Bulgarian Christians in Macedonia and Epirus continually waged a campaign of terror that ended just short of open rebellion. In the eastern provinces (vilayets) of Anatolia, unhappy Armenian and Greek subjects were waging a similar campaign

against Ottoman sovereignty. In far away Yemen, Muslim tribesmen were waging a guerrilla war in the open against the Ottoman Empire. Arabia, Sinai, and Akaba were the sites of further tribal unrest. Compounding these domestic problems, the Great Powers continued to meddle in Ottoman affairs throughout this period, both in the Balkans and in the heart of the empire.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century the “Eastern Question” was a popular term used to describe the possible results of the power vacuum that would occur should the Ottoman Empire lose control of its Balkan provinces. It was most famously used in 1876 by Britain’s William Gladstone in his pamphlet titled, “The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East.” Great Britain, Russia, and Austria-Hungary had long-standing political interests in the Balkans and had much to gain or lose should the Eastern Question be resolved unfavorably. France, Italy, and Germany, all of which had developing interests in the region, soon joined them. Despite the apparent Continental tranquility of the fading days of the Concert of Europe, there were great tensions among the Great Powers. These tensions affected the global geopolitical

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climate and, combined with the pressures of imperialism, brought the Great Powers into direct confrontation in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. In most of these confrontations, the disputes were bilateral (between two of the powers) and limited in scope of interest, and they seldom seriously risked the possibility of a general European war involving the alliance systems then in place. But the Eastern Question propelled the Great Power rivalries onto a collision course in the Balkans on a variety of levels that created dangerous conditions, poten-tially leading to war among the Great Powers themselves.

The failed Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683 marked the high-water mark of Ottoman power in Europe. The empire began its actual decline by losing Hungary in 1699 (under the Treaty of Karlowitz) to the Hapsburgs, whose empire then became a competitor for influence in the Balkans. The Russians gained an interest in the Balkans by defeating the Ottomans in 1774 and forcing them to sign the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji. Under this treaty, the Russians gained Black Sea ports, trading rights inside the Ottoman Empire and, very importantly, became the protector of Orthodox Christians within the Ottoman Empire. Later, as the Ottoman Empire declined in the nineteenth century, both Russia and Austria-Hungary actively pursued policies that were ultimately destructive to the stability of the Balkans and to the long-range possibility of continued European peace.

The Ottoman Empire, the perennial “Sick Man of Europe,” appeared to be falling apart at an alarming rate during the nineteenth century. The ruling class was unable to govern effectively or to maintain the pace of modernization and industrialization that the Europeans were undergoing after 1750. Its millions of minority subjects were often in a state of rebellion, and the Ottoman response to such problems was to institute violently repressive military measures. In the first half of the eighteenth century, Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania gained either independence or some form of autonomy and Russia took large areas of Ottoman Caucasia. For a brief period during the Crimean War, the Ottomans appeared to rejoin the ranks of the Great Powers by joining the Anglo-French coalition against the Russians, but shortly thereafter, the decay continued. Former ally France assumed a protectorate over Tunisia in 1881. Former ally Great Britain took control of Cyprus in 1878 and Egypt in 1882. The ancient enemy, Russia, took Bessarabia from Romania in 1878 and established an independent Bulgaria at the same time. Bulgaria itself annexed the Ottoman territory of East Rumelia in 1886. Montenegro and Serbia expanded slightly as well, and Austria-Hungary brought Bosnia-Herzegovina under its influence.

Within the Ottoman Empire itself, the intolerably slow pace of change and the failure to establish political equity for the minority peoples

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inflamed nationalist feelings in every corner of the empire. In eastern Anatolia and in Caucasia, Christian Armenians were openly seeking political autonomy. In Yemen, disaffected Muslim tribesmen were seeking to throw off the Turkish yoke, and the stirrings of nationalism were beginning to affect the Arabs. Orthodox Greeks in Crete and in Epirus were attempting to achieve independence and unity with the Greek state. Serbs were stirring up trouble among the Slavic peoples of Novi Bazar and in Macedonia. Muslim Albanians were beginning to form national committees with autonomy in mind. However, after 1878, the most active location for minority dissent and revolt was in the Ottoman vilayets collectively called Macedonia.

Historically, although Macedonia was the homeland of Phillip II and Alexander the Great, there had rarely been an independent Macedonian state. In the year 2000, a rump state of Macedonia exists consisting of an ex-Yugoslavian province centered on the city of Skopje and the Vardar valley. Two-thirds of the population of the present state are Orthodox Christian Slavs who speak a distinct language, and Greece and Bulgaria also have sizable minority populations in modern Macedonia. In the 1870s the word *Macedonia* meant the two

Ottoman vilayets of Salonika and Manastir (Map 2.1). Occasionally, parts of the vilayets of Adrianople and Işkodra were sometimes included in the definition of Macedonia. Ottoman Macedonia was predominantly populated by Orthodox and Muslim Bulgarians, but populations were greatly intermixed by ethnicity and religion. Table 2.1 shows the population of the six Ottoman Balkan vilayets in 1908.

THE "MACEDONIAN QUESTION"

Modern Turkish histories present the idea that the Macedonian Question was the essential ingredient in understanding the volatile mix of problems that ultimately led to the Balkan Wars.1 Because the population of Macedonia was primarily Bulgarian, it was influenced heavily by the events of 1878. It is very likely that the establishment of the Greater Bulgaria envisioned by the Treaty of San Stefano, and which included much of Macedonia, whetted the nationalistic appetites of a substantial portion of the Bulgarian population of Macedonia. However, the Great Powers were opposed to the idea of a Greater Bulgaria, which had strong ties to Russia, and dissolved the state at the Berlin Conference in 1878. The concept of Macedonian independence was likewise addressed at the conference but was discarded also. Instead, Macedonia was given a special autonomous status under Article 23 of the Treaty of Berlin on July 13, 1878. Under the terms of this article, the Ottoman government was charged with establishing separate statutes

Map 2.1 The Operational Theater, 1912.

for the governance of the Balkan vilayets. However, the treaty established no international group or commission to oversee the implementation of such a regime, and consequently, no substantial internal changes occurred postwar in the Ottoman provinces.

The establishment of an autonomous Bulgarian nation state in 1878 was a tremendous source of

encouragement to the subject minorities remaining in the truncated Balkan possessions of the Ottoman Empire.

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TABLE 2.1 Population in the Ottoman Balkan Vilayets, 1908

Vilayet (Province)	*Population*
Adrianople	250,000 Muslim Turks; 3,000 Orthodox Turks; 370,000 Orthodox Bulgarians; 115,000 Muslim Bulgarians; 3,500 Orthodox Albanians; 220,000 Orthodox Greeks; 30,000 Armenians; 15,000 Muslim Gypsies
Salonika	333,440 Muslim Turks; 446,050 Orthodox Bulgarians; 98,590 Muslim Bulgarians; 168,500 Orthodox Greeks; 55,320 Jews; 24,970 Orthodox Vlachs; 22,200 Muslim Gypsies; 16,320 mixed race
Manastir	11,550 Muslim Turks; 330,800 Orthodox Bulgarians; 23,900 Muslim Bulgarians; 61,930 Orthodox Greeks; 64,945 Orthodox Vlachs; 218,650 Muslim Albanians; 34,700 mixed race
Kosovo	89,350 Muslim Turks; 251,000 Orthodox Bulgarians; 13,680 Muslim Bulgarians; 112,870 Orthodox Serbs; 150 Orthodox Greeks; 910 Orthodox Vlachs; 418,250 Muslim Albanians; 21,905 mixed race
Işkodra	12,000 Muslim Turks; 80,000 Muslim Albanians; 30,000 Orthodox Serbs; 140,000 Catholic Albanians; 10,000 Vlachs; 40,000 Muslim Serbs; 5,000 Jews; 5,000 Gypsies
Yanya	10,000 Muslim Turks; 180,000 Muslim Albanians; 25,000 Catholic Albanians; 110,000 Orthodox Albanians; 20,000 Orthodox Bulgarians; 110,000 Orthodox Greeks; 180,000 Vlachs; 6,000 Jews; 7,000 Gypsies

Source: Aram Andonyan and Zavren Biberyan (Türkçesi or Turkish translator), *Balkan Harbi Tarihi* (Istanbul: Sander Yayinlari, 1975), 86–87.

Popular uprisings broke out in Macedonia in 1878 and 1879 but were suppressed. A secret nationalist organization called “Unity” was formed in 1880, as was a provisional body that styled itself the “Tran-sitional Government.” These organizations appealed to the Great Powers to intervene and establish an independent Macedonia, causing the region to become a topic of special interest in the diplomatic relations between Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Germany.

Diplomatically Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Germany had been bound together by the Dreikaiser Bund, but the Berlin Conference ended cooperation between the partners by creating an atmosphere of distrust. In overturning the Treaty of San Stefano, the Berlin Conference had created an emotional antagonism on the part of Russia toward its alliance partners. Undeterred and working hard to put the crumbling pieces of his carefully crafted alliance system back in order, Bismarck

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subsequently orchestrated the secret Austro-German Alliance of 1879. The treaty was a limited-scope alliance that promised mutual military assistance in the event that Russia attacked either Germany or Austria-Hungary. Its intended purpose was not to organize against Russia, but rather to drive Russia back into the arms of the Germans. In this regard the treaty was very successful, and by 1881, Russia was again engaged in diplomatic negotiations with the Germans and Austrians.

On June 18, 1881, the representatives of Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Germany signed a convention titled the League of the Three Emperors. The convention was not a renewal of the Dreikaiser Bund, nor was it a military alliance; instead, it was a precoordinated settlement of the Balkan problems arising from the Berlin Conference. The first article pledged the signatories to observe neutrality in the event of a war with another European power and obligated them to consultation in advance to coordinate a mutually acceptable outcome for any future war with the Ottoman Empire. In article two, Russia pledged to renounce any claims to Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Sanjack of Novi Bazar, and furthermore, all parties pledged to agree in advance to any new territorial changes in the Balkans. Article three reaffirmed the closing of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles in wartime to any naval power. Articles four through seven dealt with the expiration period and ratification. There was a very important Separate Protocol, a secret annex to the treaty, that spelled out their policy for the Balkans. In the annex, Aus-tria-Hungary reserved the right to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina at a time of its own choosing but the status quo of the Sanjack of Novi Bazar was maintained. The Ottomans were to be dissuaded from reoccupying Eastern Rumelia, and the three powers would not oppose the eventual occupation of that province by Bulgaria. Finally, the powers agreed to discourage the Bulgarians from aggression against neighboring Ottoman provinces, particularly Macedonia.

The League of the Three Emperors reaffirmed the principle of the Berlin Conference that the remaining Balkan vilayets would remain under Ottoman control. This turn of diplomatic events did not please Serb, Bulgarian, or

Greek nationalists inside or outside the Ottoman Empire. Nationalist committees dedicated to achieving independence soon sprang up. In Sofia, Bulgarians organized the Adrianople Region-Macedonia Committee in 1890, and in Salonika, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Committee and Organization was formed in 1893. The Bulgarian group focused its efforts on Thrace and Macedonia by an external propaganda campaign, while native Macedonians waged an internal campaign of terror. In 1895 another insurrection of mostly Bulgarians broke out but was quickly repressed by the Turks. The dissidents were also encouraged by the activities of the smaller Balkan Christian states, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece in particular, all of

which had substantial minority populations in Macedonia. The outbreak of the Turco-Greek War of 1897 briefly inflamed the activities of the rebels, but the tempo slowed when it became apparent that the Ottomans were fully capable of conquering Greece.

As the new century dawned, there was a resurgence of nationalistic feeling in Macedonia. However, the predominantly Bulgarian committees were worrisome to the Serbs and the Greeks, who felt that political representation under the Bulgarians might be worse than it was under the Ottomans. As a result, there was much brigandage and terror in Macedonia, some perpetrated by Christians on Christians rather than on the Muslims. The sultan proposed changes in 1902, but they were too little, too late. In 1903, the Salonika committee bombed the Osmanli Bank in the city of Salonika, causing many casualties. Suddenly, the long-expected revolt was in full swing as Macedonian Slavs and Albanians joined the Bulgarians in rebellion. The revolt lasted over the three months of summer, and the Turks calculated that altogether, twenty-six thousand Macedonian rebels joined the cause.2 The Ottoman Army quickly and ruthlessly put down the rebellion, and at the end of the revolt, approximately fifty-three hundred Turks and six thousand Macedonians had died. Thirty thousand Macedonians had fled to neighboring Bulgaria, and an additional seventy-one thousand Macedonians were left homeless by the destruction.3 Fifteen hundred rebels had been captured and were in Ottoman prisons. Slaughter on such a wide scale immediately gained the attention of Russia and Austria-Hungary.

In a rare display of cooperation in July 1903, Russia and Austria-Hungary put forward a reform proposal known as the Mürzsteg Program, which was designed to radically restructure the Ottoman Jandarma (gendarmarie) and civil government in the Macedonian vilayets. Under the regime of this program, a European general was to be appointed as the commander of the Jandarma, and foreign officers were to be assigned to the command structure as well. Additionally, under Russian and Austro-Hungarian supervision, civil servants and judicial officials proportionally representing the Christian population were to be installed within the government structure. The two powers forced the Ottomans to agree to the Mürzsteg Program, and by 1905, implementation was underway. However, other European powers that had an interest in the region under the Berlin Conference jumped in to participate and to add a multinational dimension to the final program. Russia and Austria-Hungary remained in charge overall of the restructured Jandarma organization, but the commander was an Italian general named De Giorgis, who brought twenty-five foreign officers of differing nationalities to serve with him in Macedonia. The powers then proceeded to apportion the remaining vilayets into areas of responsi-

bility for Jandarma operations under their own supervision: Austria-Hungary administered Üsküp, Italy administered Manastir, Russia administered Salonika, and France and Great Britain administered the cities of Serez and Drama, respectively The Germans did not receive an area but instead set up a school for Jandarma officers and government officials in Salonika.4 Under the new regime, the volatile situation in Macedonia eased somewhat, but brigandage and terrorism continued, particularly along the frontier regions.

There were also significant problems in Albania (the Ottoman vilayet of Işkodra) with the rising tide of nationalism. Until the late 1800s the mostly Muslim Albanians were generally content to live under Ottoman rule. Indeed, historically, the province provided many soldiers and leaders for the empire. However, as a result of the Conference of Berlin, some of the border regions of Albania were lost to Serbia and Montenegro. Moreover, many Albanians were unhappy with the suppression of their language and culture under the Turks. In 1880, the empire ceded even more Albanian land to Montenegro. This event seemed to galva-nize Albanian nationalism, and soon rebel bands dedicated to achieving cultural and political autonomy formed in the mountains. Unlike the Macedonians who drew significant external support from Bulgaria and Greece, the Albanian rebels were largely self-sufficient. Consequently, they lacked the funding, weapons, and organization necessary for a provincial rising en masse until 1910. The rebels attacked isolated villages, local officials, and the railroad system, but they were generally more of a nuisance than a genuine military threat. However, over the last part of the nineteenth century, these attacks grew worse.

GREAT POWER INTERFERENCE

The policy of Balkan cooperation between Russia and Austria-Hungary continued after the Mürzsteg Program as the powers attempted to stabilize the area. However, 1904 and 1905 brought military and naval disaster to Russian arms as the Japanese pounded them into surrendering Port Arthur and the surrounding hinterlands in the Russo-Japanese War. The Russian Navy was all but destroyed, and the Russian Army was hammered mercilessly and lost hundreds of thousands of men as casualties and prisoners of war. One of the significant effects of the Russo-Japanese War was to refocus Russian foreign policy on Europe and the Balkans. By 1906, Russian Foreign Minister Isvolski was willing to pursue an aggressively forward policy aimed at the Balkans and the Turkish straits. At the same time, in Austria-Hungary, Foreign Minister Baron Aerenthal and the new chief of the general staff, General Franz Conrad von Hötzendorff, jointly developed a similarly

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aggressive foreign and military policy aimed at throttling Serbia. Thus by 1908, both Russia and Austria-Hungary had foreign ministers and military leaders who were willing to cooperate to achieve their separate agendas in the Balkans. In October 1908, at a secret meeting at Buchlau in Bohemia, Aerenthal and Isvolski orally agreed that Austria-Hungary would support some future change to the Straits Regime and Russia would not object to the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Isvolski departed the meeting for Paris in order to conduct further discussions with his French allies. Much to the Russians' surprise, while the Russian minister was in Paris, on October 6, 1908, the Austrians announced the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

There were many unintended consequences of this action. The Austrians did not bother to consult with the Russians prior to their unilat-eral annexation. To the czar and the Russian people, the Austrian action appeared as a betrayal of the Slavic Serb population in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As a consequence, there was a public outcry and a reawakening of Pan-Slavism in Russia. Other Great Powers soon became involved as the Russians sought compensation and adjustments. Bulgaria took advantage of the uncertainty to declare its final independence, and the Cretans revolted again. The gathering crisis was finally resolved by a German démarche on March 21, 1909, which forced the militarily unready Russians to choose between war and humiliation. The impact of the crisis was that Russia was humiliated and emerged determined to be ready the next time the Austrians moved in the Balkans, even if it meant going to war. The harmony of Mürzsteg was finished, as was the diplomatic cooperation of the adjacent Great Powers, which was necessary to ensure the long-term stability of the Balkan Peninsula.

THE YOUNG TURKS

Modern Turkish military history properly begins in 1908 with the accession of the Young Turks to power in the Ottoman Empire. As the antique Ottoman Empire entered the twentieth century, it was apparent to most educated Turks that radical political and economic reform was needed if the empire was to continue its survival as a political entity. These modern thinkers formed political groups and gave rise to the movement, which was called the Young Turks. The Young Turk movement attracted a powerful mix of Turks, including intelligentsia and liberal thinkers, as well as numerous educated military and naval officers. The most prominent of these groups was the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). Naturally, this movement was perceived as a threat to the Sultanate of Abdulhamit II, who sought to suppress it

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both inside and outside of his empire. The army officers who secretly joined these groups maintained active cells in Damascus and Salonika.

In late 1907, the Second Young Turk Congress met in Paris. In atten-dance were CUP members, the Salonika Group, and Armenian Daşnaks. The delegates ended the congress by declaring that the sultan's regime should be deposed, by violence if necessary, and parliamentary rule should be established. Over spring 1908, conditions in the Ottoman Empire deteriorated as Abdulhamit's grip on his people eased, and small revolts broke out. Salonika proved to be the hotbed of revolution, and regular troops were sent to suppress it there. Uprisings soon followed in the Balkans, and finally, on July 23, 1908, the sultan agreed to accept the Young Turk proposals and work toward modernization. The revolution was almost bloodless.

The CUP was unprepared for such a quick about-face by the sultan and hurried to establish itself in Constantinople. Three members (part of a committee of seven) were sent to the capital to influence the government. These were Staff Major Cemal Bey, Talat Bey, and Cevit Bey. The impact of the Young Turks was immediate as comprehensive programs designed to modernize the empire were established. Preparations for reestablishing parliament were made and, for a time, it looked as if the empire stood on the threshold of establishing full civil liberties for its minorities. Even democracy appeared to be within reach. Unfortunately, most of these plans were stillborn, as the Young Turks fell out both with the minorities and with the more

conservative elements, which sought to slow the course of Westernization and modernization.
In April 1909, a counterrevolution occurred when elements of the army supported the sultan and forced out the Young Turks. The Young Turks in the army now coalesced and marched on Constantinople to restore order. An improvised, so-called Action Army (the Turkish words Hareket Ordusu are literally translated as Operations Army), commanded by Hüseyin Hüsnü with Mustafa Kemal at his side, took the capital on April 24 and restored order. The commander of the Third Army, General Mahmut Şevket Paşa, now took the reins of command and declared martial law. He reconvened parliament, which immediately deposed Abdulhamit, on April 27, 1909. Soon thereafter, the empire entered into a brief period of constitutional democracy.
For the next two years, the Ottoman Empire functioned with a democratic government propped up by the Ottoman Army. Mahmut Şevket Paşa exerted a stabilizing influence over the civilian government, lend-ing army assistance for routine civil administrative matters, such as tax collection. He intentionally severed civilian control over the military and reciprocally worked to keep military CUP members from interfer-ing in the civilian government. Filling the leadership vacuum, the CUP,

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which had been dispersed by the winds of the events of 1909, returned to the capital as a legal civilian political party determined to modernize the country. Soon other political parties emerged, and for a brief period there was healthy democratic legislative activity in the Ottoman Parlia-ment, most of which was dedicated to amending the Constitution of 1876 and formally establishing the primacy of parliament. Of particular importance was legislation that initially broadened the rights of the myriad groups of minorities within the empire. Later, more restrictive laws were passed, which prohibited the formation of political societies that threatened the unity of the empire, banned the printing of newspa-pers that did not support the constitution, and limited public gather-ings. Powerful new antiterrorist laws designed to enhance the ability of the government to suppress rebellions were also passed, which suspended the civil liberties of accused terrorists.5 This new legislation conflicted with the liberal Ottoman tradition of minority toleration and served to inflame minority unhappiness with the new government.
The new government supported the modernization of the army and navy by purchasing artillery for the former and battleships for the latter. There were upgrades in the local city infrastructure of Constantinople that gave the appearance of progress. However, the administration was hamstrung by the capitulations and unable to deal effectively with the fundamental economic problems of the empire that retarded modernization. Taken as a whole, there was the appearance of great progress but, with the exception of the army and navy, the changes were cosmetic rather than substantive. Even the procurement of weapons focused on major items of equipment, such as cannons and battleships, which lent the physical appearance of power to a poorly trained military machine.
The new restrictions of minority rights accelerated the growth of minority dissent in the Ottoman Empire. The Christian Armenian population began to organize committees dedicated to the creation of an autonomous Armenia. The Armenian Daşnak Committee launched a wave of terror in the eastern Anatolian vilayets. Closer to the epicenter of Ottoman power, the Bulgarians and Greeks in Macedonia again began to foment terrorism and the Albanians again rose in revolt. The Albanians were particularly disappointed in the failure of minority reforms because some of the most influential CUP members were Albanians. In the early days of the new parliament, Albanian representatives had come to Constantinople, fully expecting to legitimize the Albanian language and culture within the political context of an Ottoman state. Frustrated and disappointed, the Albanians revolted in winter 1910. Unlike the previous rebellion of mostly guerrilla bands, this was a national revolt that attracted thousands of formerly peaceful citizens. The rebellion attracted both Muslim and Christian Albanians, and the Ottoman Army had difficulty suppressing it. By summer 1911,

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the government had relaxed many of its repressive measures, hoping to end the revolt. Unfortunately for the Turks, the Albanians demanded the formation of an Albanian state, governed by its own parliament, that consolidated the provinces of Işkodra, Kosovo, Manastir, and Yanya. Negotiations soon broke down, and by June 1912, Albania was again in full revolt.

THE BALKAN PACT

In 1903 a revolution in Serbia brought to power Premier Nikola Pašić, who would remain in power, more or less, until 1926. Pašić was an ardent nationalist and was devoted to the idea of creating a Greater Serbia uniting all southern Slavs. He was also virulently anti-Austrian, and diplomatic relations between Serbia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire gradually worsened. Pašić was responsible for the famous Pig War between the two states, over economic issues. Austria's direct annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908 added fuel to the fires of nationalism that Pašieć was stoking. There was a large Serb minority in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which the

Austrians immediately began to treat with heavy-handed tactics. The now infamous secret nationalist society known as the Black Hand movement sprang into being in Belgrade to support the disaffected Bosnian Serb minority. There is no question that senior members of the Serb government supported and fostered its growth. Russia, now alienated diplomatically from the Austrians, encouraged the Serbs to act confrontationally toward Austria-Hungary.

Thus, the Balkan Peninsula now had two minor, but strong, regional powers that were both interested in national expansion aimed at ab-sorbing neighboring territory inhabited by their respective minorities. Unfortunately, the Great Powers, which had formerly held their ambi-tions in check, were now marginalized by confrontations among themselves. In 1909 the Serbs and the Bulgarians opened talks aimed at resolving the regional issues that their respective national minorities had laid at their doors.

By 1911 the Bulgarians were openly hinting at the restoration of the Greater Bulgaria created by the Treaty of San Stefano. In fall 1911, Serbia and Bulgaria exchanged proposals for an alliance. After months of negotiations, the two states signed a preliminary friendship and peace agreement on March 7, 1912, which was followed up by a full-blown peace and friendship accord on March 13, 1912. The agreement provided for cooperation against Austria-Hungary but was primarily directed against the Ottoman Empire. The agreement also recognized the Bulgarian interest in Thrace and southern Macedonia and the Serb interest in Kosovo and Albania. Unfortunately, the lack of an agreement

on the partition of Macedonia led to a confusing situation. In the event that Macedonia did not become autonomous and the Serbs and Bulgarians could not agree to the disposition of the “disputed zone.” the Russian czar was to serve as arbitrator. This effectively tabled the problem. The avoidance of this critical issue in spring 1912 had fateful consequences during the following year and directly led to the Second Balkan War. Although popular with the Bulgarians, the treaty was not liked by many Serbs, who thought that it gave away too much.6

The two states concluded a working military agreement on May 12, 1912. This fourteen-paragraph treaty provided very specific conditions under which the two parties promised to provide military assistance to one another. Generally, each power promised to put at least two hundred thousand soldiers in the field in response to a variety of circumstances. The Bulgarians promised to help the Serbs against Austria, and the Serbs promised to help the Bulgarians against the Romanians. Both promised to coordinate their strategy and operations against the Ottoman Empire. Finally, paragraph thirteen of the agreement provided for direct discussions between the General Staffs of Serbia and Bulgaria.

The General Staff convention7 concluded later that month outlined the basic joint strategy that Bulgaria and Serbia would employ against the Turks. In concept, the Serbs would throw a right wing of two infantry divisions through Montenegro toward Üsküp. Five Serb infantry divisions and one Serb cavalry division would attack toward Kumonova, in the center, to destroy the Ottoman Vardar Army. A left wing of three Bulgarian infantry divisions would attack and seize Üsküp. The remainder of the Bulgarian Army would attack the Turks along the Meriç River (in Thrace). The staffs exchanged intelligence and shared their secret maps of the Ottoman positions with each other as well. Finally, they agreed to be ready for operations by the fall. Cumulatively, these secret agreements and military conventions between Bulgaria and Serbia formed the basis for what has become known as the Balkan Pact or Balkan League.

Relations between Bulgaria and Greece were also growing stronger in 1911, and late in that year, negotiations were being aggressively pursued. On May 29, 1912, Greece signed a defensive alliance with Bulgaria that pledged mutual assistance in the event of a war with the Ottoman Empire but little else. Significantly, there was no mention of any possible divisions of Ottoman territory. On the eve of war, on October 5, 1912, the general staffs of Bulgaria and Greece concluded a military convention8 supplementing the May 29 agreement. In this convention, Bulgaria agreed to put at least 300,000 soldiers into the field against the Turks, and Greece pledged a minimum of 120,000 men. Both armies promised to put armies of observation on the frontiers facing the Turks not later than the twentieth day of mobilization, and both com-

mitted themselves to offensive operations. Most important, the Greeks promised to use their naval assets to cut Ottoman communications between Europe and Asia. The Bulgarians also promised to direct their efforts in Macedonia unless the Serbs fielded more than 120,000 men, in which case they were free to use the bulk of their army in Thrace. Finally, they decided to seek mutually agreeable terms of peace. Greece was now arrayed against the Ottoman Empire.

Both the Serbs and the Bulgarians were also in communications with the Montenegrins in 1911 with the aim of concluding similar diplomatic and military agreements aimed against the Ottoman Empire. Bulgaria was the

first to sign an agreement with Montenegro, in August 1912. Serbia quickly followed by signing a military alliance on September 27, 1912. With Montenegro in league with Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia, the ring of Christian states around Macedonia was complete. The Balkan Pact (or League) was not a synchronized and well-thought out alliance system. It was, in actuality, simply a web of bilateral agreements linking the Christian states together against their ancient enemy, the Turks. Although the agreements were sufficient to generate a war, they were insufficient to end one on mutually satisfactory terms for the victors. The principal reason for going to war in the first place was to eject the Turks from Macedonia and for the victors to annex the former Ottoman Balkan vilayets. To use modern terms associated with the Balkan problem in the year 2000, none of the agreements covered the end state. This was particularly vexing because all four of the Balkan Pact participants had overlapping mutual claims to important portions of Macedonia. The Second Balkan War in 1913 would erupt as a direct result of these competing claims for Balkan territory.

NOTES

1. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), I Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbe Girişi (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 34.
2. Ibid., 39
3. Ibid., 39.
4. Ibid., 40.
5. Stanford J.Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire; Volume 2, Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 282–287.
6. Richard C.Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2000), 13. For a full-text Turkish translation of these agreements, see Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913),* 263–267.
7. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913),* 268–269 (full-text Turkish version of the agreement).
8. Harb Tarihi Arşivi, Cabinet 2, Folder 3, File 29; Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913),* 272–273 (full-text Turkish version of the agreement).

3
Nexus of Disaster, 1911–1912

THE OTTOMAN ARMY IN 1911–1912

The year 1911 found the Ottoman Army in the midst of a massive reorganization effort as a result of the new army, corps, and divisional architecture instituted in 1910. Compounding the organizational changes previously described, the Ottoman General Staff decided to change the levels of manning in the army's infantry and artillery regiments. Prior to 1911, Ottoman infantry regiments were organized into four battalions per regiment, but beginning in 1911, the army moved to a three-battalion regimental system. This process was incomplete on the eve of the Balkan War. The infantry regiments were also tasked with integrating the new machine-gun detachments into their organizations, a process that was also incomplete in 1912. The Ottoman artillery regiments, on the other hand, increased their strength from two to three field artillery battalions per regiment. In the new triangular divisional structure, the artillery regiment could place one battalion in direct support of each infantry regiment. Thus, while infantry regiments decreased their strength by 25 percent (although adding machine guns), the artillery regiments of the Ottoman army increased their strength by 33 percent.

In peacetime, all infantry battalions were maintained in a cadre status *(kadrolar)* of reduced manning levels designed to be augmented by the Ihtiyat reservists in wartime. This allowed the Ottoman Army to field a higher number of divisions in peacetime. The 1911 regular (Nizamiye) infantry battalion had assigned wartime strength of 23 officers, 1,048 infantrymen, and 63 other soldiers; however, most regular Ottoman

infantry battalions had a peacetime strength of about 350 trained soldiers (although numbers as low as 273 men were sometimes encountered). There were usually an additional 150 newly drafted untrained men on hand in most battalions as well, bringing total battalion strength up to about 450 men (or about half the number required for war). Reserve *(redif)* infantry battalions were authorized 29 officers, 800 infantrymen, and 63 other men for a total strength of 892 men. There was also the ever-present problem of officers and men who were performing other missions away from their assigned units. Table 3.1 illustrates this problem. By 1912 the major formations of the army were reorganized and in place at their assigned garrison locations. Table 3.2 shows the disposition of the Ottoman Army in 1912 (Appendix B lists the complete Ottoman Army order of battle and the location of all major units in 1911). In peacetime the field army headquarters were

established as inspectorates, which would transition to their wartime function upon mobilization. Each regular inspectorate had an associated reserve inspectorate (Redif Müfettişliği) under its command for the maintenance and training of the Redif formations located within the army's operational area. The First Army Inspectorate commanded the First Redif Inspectorate, the Third Army Inspectorate commanded the Third Redif Inspectorate, and the Fourth Army Inspectorate commanded the Fourth Redif Inspectorate. The unique Second Army, linked to Palestine and Syria, commanded both the Second Redif Inspectorate in the Balkans and the Fifth Redif Inspectorate in Damascus. There was a separate, independent Sixth Redif Inspectorate in Smyrna for the control of the reserve formations located in western Anatolia.

The artillery arm probably had a more difficult time undergoing the reorganization. Prior to 1910 all field artillery was concentrated in massive artillery divisions containing up to twelve artillery battalions. These artillery divisions were directly under the control of the army

TABLE 3.1 Ottoman Army Strength, 1912

	Officers	*Men*	*Total*	*Animals*	*Artillery*	*Machine Guns*
Present	11,095	282,211	293,206			
Assigned Elsewhere	920	42,607	43,536			
Total Assigned	12,024	324,718	336,742	47,960	2,318	388

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913) 1 Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbi Girişi (Inkinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 100.

TABLE 3.2 Disposition of Ottoman Forces, 1912

BALKANS
Second Army Inspectorate
V Corps: 13, 14, 15 Inf. Div., Cav. Bde.
VI Corps: 16, 17, 18 Inf. Div., 7 Cav. Bde.
VII Corps: 19, 20, 21 Inf. Div., 8 Cav. Bde.
Independent: 22, 23, 24 Inf. Div.
Second Redif Inspectorate
Drama, Serez, Salonika, Istip, Manastir, Uskup, Piristine, Mitrovice, Pizen, Yanya, Elbasan, Naslic, Iskodra Reserve Div.

THRACE
First Army Inspectorate
I Corps: 1, 2, 3 Inf. Div., 1, 2 Cav. Bdes
II Corps: 4, 5, 6 Inf. Div.
III Corps: 7, 8, 9 Inf. Div., 3 Cav. Bde.
IV Corps: 10, 11, 12 Inf. Div., 4 Cav. Bde.
First Redif Inspectorate
Fatih, Selimiye, Izmit, Bursa, Eregli, Kastamonu, Ankara, Yozgat, Babaeski, Adrianople, Gumulcine, Kircaali, Edremit, Canakkale Reserve Div.

CAUCASIA
Third Army Inspectorate
IX Corps: 28, 29 Inf. Div.
X Corps: 30, 31, 32 Inf. Div.
XI Corps: 33, 34 Inf. Div.
Third Redif Inspectorate
Erzurum, Trabzon, Samsun, Amasya, Sivas, Elazig, Van, Diyarbakir Reserve Div.

ANATOLIA
Sixth Redif Inspectorate
Afyonkarahisar, Konya, Kayseri, Smyrna, Aydin, Usak, Denizli, Antalya Reserve Div.

SYRIA
Second Army Inspectorate
VII Corps: 25, 26, 27 Inf. Div., 9 Cav. Bde.
Fifth Redif Inspectorate
Adana, Antep, Aleppo, Damascus, Jerusalem, Akka, Tripoli Reserve Div.

MESOPOTAMIA
Fourth Army Inspectorate
XII Corps: 35, 36 Inf. Div., 13 Cav. Bde.
XIII Corps: 37, 38 Inf. Div., 14 Cav. Bde.
Fourth Redif Inspectorate
Baghdad, Hille, Kerkuk, Mosul Reserve Div.

ARABIA-YEMEN
XIV Corps: 39, 40 Inf. Div.
Independent: 41, 43 Inf. Div.

commander, who would employ them either en masse or parceled out to his subordinate divisions, according to the tactical situation. This structure did not conform to the tactical ideas of von der Goltz, who was an advocate of close-support field artillery directly working with infantry at the tactical level. The reorganization of 1910 meant more than a revised organizational architecture for the field artillerymen of the Ottoman Army—it meant developing a new way of thinking about war and adopting compatible tactical doctrines.

Unfortunately, most of the army's two-battalion artillery regiments maintained their original 1910 strength, which created an asymmetric ratio of two artillery battalions supporting three infantry regiments in many infantry divisions.1 While the levels of tactical proficiency remained relatively constant at the level of the field artillery battery, at higher organizational levels (battalion and regimental), the radical changes in organization must have had a negative effect on tactical proficiency (at least in the I, II, and IV Corps). The artillery inventory was substantial; however, many of

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the pieces were assigned to static fortifications and were of little use to the field army.2 The army possessed 892 field artillery guns, 42 horse artillery guns, 95 howitzers, and 174 mountain guns and howitzers, for a total mobile field artillery inventory of 1,203 pieces. The remaining 1,115 were fixed artillery permanently emplaced in one of the empire's fortified areas. The fortified areas were the Bosporus, the Dardanelles, and the neck of the Gallipoli Peninsula (Bolayir). Additionally, Adrianople, Erzurum, Işkodra, Jannina, Salonika, Karaburun, and Smyrna were fortified with fixed artillery emplacements.
There were substantial changes to the cavalry force as well during the 1910–1912 time period. Previously, like the artillery, cavalry was concentrated into a division at the field army level. After 1910, however, the cavalry divisions were dissolved into independent brigades assigned to each new army corps. Additionally, each of the new infantry divisions was given a cavalry troop (company-sized detachment) for scouting and reconnaissance. The new organizational ideas particularly affected the Hamidiye Tribal Cavalry. The professional staff officers of the Ottoman General Staff had long been unhappy with the state of military discipline in the Hamidiye Tribal Cavalry regiments and been embarrassed by their poor performance during the suppression of various Armenian revolts. On August 17, 1910, the sixty-four regiments of Hamidiye Tribal Cavalry were formally dissolved.3 In their place the Turks formed twenty-nine new Aşiret (Tribal) Light Cavalry regiments (Aşiret Hafif Suvari Alaylari Nizamnamesi) and brought them directly under the administration of the regular army. These regiments were then organized into four Aşiret Light Cavalry Divisions, each of which contained a single regular Ottoman Army cavalry regiment as well. An independent Aşiret Light Cavalry Brigade was also formed. In peacetime, these cavalry divisions were assigned duties screening the Caucasian borders or providing internal security in the eastern Anatolian vilayets. In wartime, the Turks planned to group them together under the command of the Third Army as the Reserve Cavalry Corps.
There existed an additional source of Ottoman land power that must be mentioned: the Jandarma (gendarmarie). This internal and frontier security force had been in existence since the time of the Russo-Turkish War, when it was in the hands of French advisors. In 1903, the Jandarma was converted to a regular paramilitary organization (Jandarma Teşkilat Nizamname), and its formations were standardized along army lines. Furthermore a system of organized Ihtiyat men (reservists) was organized and tied to the regular Jandarma. In peacetime the Jandarma was controlled by the Ministry of the Interior, but in wartime it was transferred to the Ministry of War. Discipline, as well as training for officers and men, was modeled on the military and brought in line with

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army standards. In concept, every Ottoman vilayet fielded a mobile Jandarma regiment, and there were additional independent Jandarma battalions for specialized duties. By 1910 there were thirty Jandarma regiments and five independent Jandarma battalions. Total active Jandarma strength was 2,367 officers, 39,268 noncommissioned officers (NCOs) and men, and 15,395 animals.4

THE OTTOMAN STAFFS

Beginning in 1909, under a new chief of the General Staff (Erkani Harbiye Umumiye Reisi), Ferik Ahmet Izzet Paşa, the Ottoman General Staff (Erkani Harbiye Umumiye Dairesi) was reorganized along modern, functional lines. The chief of staff was authorized a second assistant chief of staff to assist him in the management of the General Staff. There were four principal General Staff divisions, as shown in Table 3.3.
It was immediately apparent that the general staff reorganization was undermanned and ill suited to supporting the ongoing reorganization of the Ottoman Army. By the time of the First Balkan War, the staff had undergone a significant reorganization and expansion. Under the new system, the first three staff divisions remained unchanged. However, the Fourth Division was reorganized to administer peacetime organization and realignment (the ongoing and unfinished organizational changes of 1910). A new, fifth, division was formed to administer the weeding out of elderly officers, soldier's rights issues, and budget questions. A sixth division was formed to administer the promotion of General Staff officers *(kurmay subaylar)* and assign them duties. This division also selected General Staff officers of great promise for assignment to foreign armies. Finally, a new, seventh, division was formed to assume the topographic and mapping functions.
The new army-level staffs of 1911 were manned at very austere levels, reflecting the shortages of trained senior General Staff officers.5 An army inspectorate was authorized thirteen officers, eight junior officers,

TABLE 3.3 Ottoman General Staff Functions, 1911

Staff Division	*Functions*
First Division	Training, maneuvers, military history

Second Division	Foreign armies organization, intelligence, military attaché system
Third Division	army organization, regulations, mobilization, operations, fortresses, force posture, security, Jandarma coordination
Fourth Division	topography and mapping

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncü Cilt, 6ncu Kisim (1908–1920), 1nci Kitap* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1971), 254–255.

and no soldiers. The army staff was authorized a trained General Staff officer as its chief of staff and was given four primary divisions: Operations (First Division), Intelligence (Second Division), Quartermaster (Third Division), and Personnel and Administration (Fourth Division). There were also commissary, telegraph and telephone, and veterinary staff sections. For protection, the headquarters was usually supported by an infantry detachment and a cavalry detachment, and occasionally by field Jandarmes. Army headquarters were responsible for operational planning functions but not for the routine, day-to-day management of the army. In contrast, the new army corps headquarters were robustly manned, reflecting their key role in administration, operations, and logistics. Army corps headquarters were authorized 92 officers, 359 junior officers, and 6 soldiers, organized in parallel with the army headquarters and supervised by a chief of staff. The Ottoman corps headquarters administered and managed the army's operations on a day-to-day basis, providing food, medical, munitions, transportation, paymaster, and communications support, as well as providing operational planning and orders. Infantry division headquarters were authorized 22 officers, 3 junior officers, and 3 soldiers. The infantry division headquarters was a tactical headquarters concerned with planning and fighting battles, and it had very little to manage in the way of support functions. By the time of the First Balkan War, it was evident that army-level staffs were woefully undermanned. In response, the Ottoman Army substantially enhanced the existing staffs of the First and Second Armies by adding medical, judge advocate general, and documents and mapping divisions.

The principal staff officers at the corps level and above were Ottoman General Staff officers who were graduates of the Ottoman War Academy (Harp Akademisi).6 The war academy had been in operation since 1849 and was molded in the German model. Promising young captains and lieutenants under the age of thirty-five years were carefully selected from a pool of applicants who took a competitive entrance examination. By the time of the Balkan Wars, the war academy course was very rigorous and lasted a full three years (consisting of a nine- to ten-month academic year). The Ottoman course was almost an exact duplicate of the German War Academy's three-year curriculum.7 During the first year, students studied tactics, army history, field and fortress fortifications, military law, diplomatic history, French, Russian, and German. In the second year, students studied tactics, Ottoman military history, training and exercises, topography and mapping, organization and campaigns, artillery tactics, diplomatic history, French, Russian, and German. In the final (third) year, students studied tactics, military history, siege warfare, General Staff procedures, naval operations, international law, land distribution (battle-space management), French,

Russian, and German. Generally, the heavy foreign language requirements gave students the most difficulty. All doctrinal concepts, principles, and tactical methods were taught using German manuals. In August of the third year, the students went on their staff ride (as did their German contemporaries), an arduous, practical field exercise requiring them to demonstrate a practical understanding of military skills. At the end of September, the class graduated. The graduates were ranked by order of merit and assigned individual numbers within their class (from highest to lowest). The top ten graduates received a special notation in their records. These numbers later decided precedence and date of rank. The graduates were known as general staff officers *(erkan-i harp subaylar)* and were advanced three years in grade ahead of their contemporaries. Like the Germans, they wore red lapel tabs and had red stripes on their trousers. Most graduated as staff captains *(yüzbaşi)* or as staff majors *(binbaşi).* Although few in numbers the erkan-i harp subaylar of the Ottoman Army were trained to a high standard of a practical understanding of contemporary German doctrinal principles.

THE OTTOMAN HIGH COMMAND

Because of the seriousness of the ongoing rebellion in Yemen, the chief of the Ottoman General Staff, Ahmet Izzet Paşa, was ordered to assume direct command of the war effort there. In late January 1911, he departed the capital on board the cruiser *Hamidiye* to assume duties as the commander of the Yemen General Forces

Command (Yemen Kuvvayi Umumiye Kumandani) and arrived there on March 13, 1911. In his place, Ferik Hadi Paşa, the commander of the Second Army, was assigned as the acting chief of the Ottoman General Staff.8 Ahmet Izzet Paşa would remain in Yemen until late January 1913.

On the eve of the Balkan Wars, the newly reorganized Ottoman General Staff was composed of seven staff divisions. Staff Colonel Pertev (later, Lieutenant General Pertev Demirhan) was director of the First Division and functioned as the chief of operations. Staff Colonel Ali Riza was director of the Second Division and functioned as the chief of intelligence. Staff Colonel Ziya was director of the Third Division and functioned as the chief of plans. Staff Colonel Mehmet Tevfik was director of the Fourth Division and functioned as the chief of the reorganization of the army and logistics. Staff Lieutenant Colonel Fevzi was director of the Fifth Division and functioned as the chief of administration. Brigadier General Ismail Kamil Paşa was director of the Sixth Division and controlled the promotion and assignment of the officers of the General Staff corps. This division also closely coordinated the assignment of exchange officers and attachés with the Second Division,

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for intelligence-gathering purposes. Brigadier General Mehmet Zeki Paşa was director of the Seventh Division and functioned as the chief of mapping and topographic support.9

Mirroring the Germans, all the directors of the Ottoman General Staff were staff officers themselves, and all were war academy graduates. In the German General Staff system, the chief of operations was the first among equals. However, it appears that Colonel Pertev enjoyed no such prestige or power in the Ottoman system. It also appears that Hadi Paşa, the acting chief of staff, was rather weak and unable to resist the dominating presence of strong-willed ministers of war. In the absence of a higher staff at the Ministry of War level, the Ottoman General Staff represented what might be called the Ottoman high command in the Balkan Wars.

OTTOMAN OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND DOCTRINE

The Ottoman Army acquired the most important contemporary German operational and tactical doctrinal publications from the German military mission. These were translated verbatim by Ottoman General Staff officers into Turkish and distributed to the war academy and the army.10 By the time of the Balkan Wars, the Turks were using the following German Army manuals and drill books: *Exerzier-Reglement für die Infantrie* (1906 version; English: *Drill Regulations for the Infantry,* Turkish: *Piyade Talimnamesi*); *Exerzier-Reglement für die Artillerie* (English; *Drill Regulations for the Field Artillery,* Turkish: *Sahra Topçu Talimnamesi*); *Felddienst Ordnung* (1908 version; English: *Field Service Regulations;* Turkish: *Hidemati Seferiye Nizamnamesi*). The Turks were also using the *Instructions for Field Communications (Menzil Hidemati Talimnamesi)*.11 Peacetime training in the Ottoman Army was based on these manuals, as were doctrinal planning templates and tables (such as march tables, offensive and defensive frontages, formations, defensive zone layouts, and mobilization timetables).

Some of the translation of manuals and drill books was done by General Staff officers serving in the field with troops. In Salonika in 1908, Staff Captain Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk) translated and distributed Karl Litzmann's *Instructions for the Conduct of Platoon Combat (Takimin Muharebe Talimi)*.12 In 1909, he translated and distributed a book on military ceremonies, and in 1911 he translated another, on expeditionary force training. Later, in 1912, while in Constantinople as a staff major, he translated and distributed Litzmann's *Instructions for the Conduct of Company Combat (Bölügün Muharebe Talimi).* In all

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cases the drill books were distributed to army units for the training of soldiers.

At the tactical level, such publications committed the army to the offensive (although defensive operations were well covered, also). The tactics stressed gaining fire superiority and assault. The instructions recommended encirclement and envelopment as the best method to annihilate the enemy. Significantly, the German publications were thoroughly imbued with the concept of decentralized command and initiative in the absence of orders. Moreover, the manuals stressed the importance of tactical flexibility.13

At operational and strategic levels, the students of the Ottoman War Academy studied Carl von Clausewitz's books on war and strategy, the essays of Graf Alfred von Schlieffen on the encirclement battle of Can-nae, and Colmar von der Goltz's book on the mobilization of mass armies. Thus, at the highest levels, the future commanders and General Staff officers of the Ottoman Army were thoroughly grounded in modern German military thought. Philosophically, this mirrored the lower-level principles and stressed battles of annihilation achieved through army- and corps-level encirclements. With a practical focus, the Ottoman War Academy, like its German model, stressed the art of operational planning. Ottoman Army operations in the Balkan Wars would reflect, time and again, the intellectual influence of the German Army.

PERSONNEL, LOGISTICS, AND WEAPONS

The Ottoman Empire had a 1912 population of about 24 million people, of whom 1.08 million were men aged twenty to twenty-five years old and another 4 million were men aged twenty-six to forty. However, the Ottoman General Staff believed that the empire could actually only count on 15 million Muslim citizens as reliable assets in wartime. This reduced figure accounted for the large populations of Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbs, Albanians, Armenians, and other minorities within the Ottoman Empire that were unlikely to support a war against the Christian Balkan states. In peacetime the general staff utilized 1.8 percent of its available Muslim manpower (280,000 men) but planned to mobilize an additional 450,000 men in wartime. Altogether the initial military manpower potential of the empire was reckoned at 730,000 men.14

The Ottoman Army was underequipped with rifles for its infantry forces in 1912, with only 713,404 rifles on hand.15 In order to totally equip the mobilized Ottoman Army of forty-three regular and fifty-four reserve infantry divisions, the cavalry brigades, and the Aşiret Light Cavalry divisions, the Turks needed a total of 1,092,448 rifles. The rifles

were distributed throughout the regular and reserve forces, and in the potential war zone; 321,176 rifles were positioned in the First Army area and 235,244 rifles in the Second Army area. Fully mobilized, the First and Second Armies were authorized a total of 706,966 men (Nizamiye, Ihtiyat, and Redif included). Therefore, upon full mobilization, about 20 percent of the mobilized manpower of the two strategically critical Ottoman armies were without weapons. There were about six hundred cartridges available for each rifle, but the Ottoman staff considered that one thousand per rifle were necessary for wartime operations. Many of the cavalry regiments were equipped with infantry rifles because there was a corresponding shortage of carbines (15,879) and, in the vital First and Second Armies, the cavalry regiments were about 50 percent equipped with carbines.

In machine guns the Ottoman Army possessed a total of 388, organized into ninety-seven detachments (as shown in Table 3.4). Each detachment was authorized four machine guns.

Field artillery strength has previously been covered. Field guns were distributed throughout the army, but the I, II, and IV Corps were the only army corps having their full authorizations. Additionally, there were thirty-six French Schneider guns on order for delivery in 1913. The limited number of howitzers were concentrated in the First and Second Armies (the Third Army and VII Corps had no howitzers on hand in 1912). Shell stocks were low, with 620 shells on hand per field gun and 650 shells on hand per mountain howitzer.16

There were all kinds of logistical shortages that plagued the army. In particular, animals, which were required to pull the field artillery cais-

TABLE 3.4 Distribution of Ottoman Army Machine-Gun Detachments, 1912

PEACETIME		*WARTIME—PLANNED*	
Army Area	*Number of Detachments*	*Campaign Plan No. 5*	*Number of Detachments*
First Army	31	Eastern Army	30
Second Army	34	Reserve Army	2
Third Army	17	Western Army	25
Fourth Army	3	*WARTIME—ACTUAL*	
Fourteenth Corps	3	*Oct. 22, 1912*	*Number of Detachments*
Forty-first Infantry Division	2	Adrianople Fortress	6
Forty-second Infantry Division	3	Eastern Army	23
Forty-third Infantry Division	4	Western Army	19

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913) 1 Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbi Girişi (Inkinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 138–139.

sons, were in short supply (a single field artillery regiment required 400 animals to pull its guns and ammunition wagons). Medical detachments were usually only partially manned, and medical supplies were not sufficient. The transportation corps was short wagons and needed 47,834 reserve animals to meet wartime requirements. Engineer, pon-toon bridge, telegraph, wireless, and balloon detachments were similarly short on equipment, trained personnel, and animals. Food stockages were generally adequate although the daily rations were skimpy (perhaps only 80 percent of the caloric intake of a typical villager).

As had been the case since the 1880s, significant parts of the regular army were deployed away from their home garrisons to augment the Ottoman forces engaged in quelling rebellions in 1911 and 1912. From the I Corps, the 1st and 2nd Infantry Divisions each had an infantry regiment deployed to Işkodra. In the II Corps, the 4th Infantry Division had deployed two infantry battalions (one in Işkodra and one in Damascus) and the

6th Infantry Division had an infantry regiment in Yemen (minus one battalion) and an infantry regiment (minus one battalion) on an Aegean island. The II Corps rifle regiment was in Yemen, and the field howitzer battalion was in Damascus. In the III Corps, the 7th Infantry Division had an infantry regiment (minus one battalion) in Yemen, as well as its rifle battalion. The 8th Infantry Division had an infantry regiment in Yemen, as did the 9th Infantry Division (which also sent its rifle battalion). Even the Second Army had a rifle battalion in Yemen. The Third Army sent an infantry regiment and three rifle battalions to Yemen. Altogether, the First Army alone (soon to be engaged in combat with the Bulgarians) had deployed twenty-eight infantry or rifle battalions and a howitzer battalion out of its operational area. The fortunate Second Army actually gained eight infantry or rifle battalions that had deployed into Işkodra. The ongoing rebellions, although seemingly minor, were a running sore for the Ottoman Army that continually drained strength from regular formations in peacetime.

MOBILIZATION AND CAMPAIGN PLANNING

With the advice of German General Von der Goltz, the Ottoman General Staff began to rewrite their campaign plans in 190917 to accommodate the substantial organizational changes caused by the army reorganization of 1910. The Turkish plans integrated, in the German fashion, regular and reserve formations that mobilized and moved to concentration areas to support wartime campaign plans. The mobilization plans *(seferberlik plani)* were distinct from the campaign plans *(sefer plani)* and involved the notification of units for war and the subsequent

mobilization of men, animals, and equipment. Mobilization plans were adjusted twice annually, in the spring and then again in the fall, to account for the seasonal drafts of men entering the army.18 It was thought that reserve infantry battalions could mobilize their men in five to six days and be ready for wartime concentration in ten to fifteen days.19 By 1912 the Ottoman General Staff had prepared a total of twelve campaign plans for war. These were based on a variety of possible threats to the empire from likely enemies and combinations of enemies. Table 3.5 shows these plans.

The mobilization plans were not numbered in priority, although staff work on the first five plans was more advanced and detailed than on the remainder.20 Work on Plan Number 5, against the possible combination of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro, was very advanced and had been transmitted to the armies for lower-level staff planning. Additionally, the Ottoman General Staff assigned two operational areas a high priority: eastern Thrace (the area around Adrianople) and Macedonia and western Greece (around Yanya).21 Accordingly, the staff of the First Army had been detailed to work on Plan Number 1 and the staff of the Second Army had been detailed to work on Plan Number 4, which corresponded to these areas. At the operational level, these plans (1, 4, and 5) tended to overlap. Both active and reserve corps and infantry divisions were listed for deployment to these areas during mobilization. These units were assigned secret concentration areas by

TABLE 3.5 Ottoman Campaign Plans, 1912

Plan Number	*Potential Enemy*
1.	Bulgaria
2.	Bulgaria and Greece
3.	Greece
4.	Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro
5.	Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro
6.	Serbia and Montenegro
7.	Montenegro
8.	Italy or a major power
9.	Austria-Hungary
10.	Russia
11.	Russia and Bulgaria
12.	Russia and a Balkan coalition (excluding Bulgaria)

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 1 Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbi Girişi (Inkinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 185.

the army and corps chiefs of staff. Preparations were also made for the augmentation of the border companies by both active and reserve formations. Secret reconnaissance of forward positions was undertaken, as was identification of staging areas. Later, this information was integrated by the staffs to create

books of march tables. This data was then consolidated and used to develop comprehensive timetables for planning purposes. Detailed coordination discussions were also held between the staffs of the army corps, the inspectorates, the quartermas-ter department, and the Ottoman General Staff to decide on, and to reconcile, fine details.22

In Plan Number 1,23 the Turks planned to deploy five regular and two reserve army corps in the east (Thrace), and three regular and four reserve army corps in the west (Macedonia). The peacetime First and Second Armies would receive forces and transition into the larger wartime Şark (Eastern) and Garp (Western) Armies, respectively. In terms of infantry battalions, this plan resolved itself with 215 battalions in the east and 239 battalions in the west. About a quarter to a third of the force would provide observation of the Bulgarians along the frontier, allowing the arriving units to concentrate. Cavalry divisions would screen the actual border itself. The plan designated Thrace as the priority strategic area and postulated that the Bulgarians would attack toward Constantinople. The strong Turkish presence in Macedonia would either weaken the Bulgarian offensive or, possibly, allow a Turkish counteroffensive into the Bulgarian rear. Plan Number 1 recognized the weaknesses of the Turkish railway system but compensated in its concentration by seaborne movement.

Plan Number 4 pitted the Turks against a “small Balkan coalition” of Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro, which together could mobilize about 488 infantry battalions.24 As in Plan Number 1, geography forced the Turks to split their forces into western and eastern armies. In Thrace, they planned to deploy 308 infantry battalions, with a further 301 battalions sent to Macedonia. Although the Turks enjoyed an apparent margin of numerical superiority, geography forced them to split their forces into smaller groups to oppose their individual enemies. Furthermore, the Turks were forced to maintain strong forces along the Greek border and along their interior Balkan railroad system. The commitment to the Greek border absorbed thirty infantry battalions, and the railroad security mission claimed a further eighteen. Twelve battalions were committed to the maintenance and security of the Thracian rail-roads, as well. These additional sixty battalions were not even counted in the computation of force ratios by the Ottoman General Staff, and they represented a huge drain on resources. The deployments and concentration of forces under this plan were similar to those of Plan Number 1.

Plan Number 5 added further Greek infantry battalions to the potential enemy order of battle. Table 3.6 shows the estimated enemy coalition postulated under this plan.

Plan Number 5 assumed that the Balkan states would launch attacks on the Ottoman Empire aimed at the seizure of territory. The Turks thought that the Bulgarians’ major attack would push toward the capital city of Constantinople and that they would concentrate most of their army to accomplish this.25 The first and second possible Bulgarian operational objectives were thought to be the area around the Tunca River and the cities of Adrianople and Kirklareli. The Ottoman provinces remaining in northeastern Greece were thought to be the third possible Bulgarian operational objective. The Bulgarian Army was thought to be the most dangerous potential opponent and was deemed capable of rapid mobilization and concentration. The three smaller Balkan partners were thought likely to launch their attacks into Macedonia, with possible objectives of Uşkup and Manastir. Based on these assumptions, Plan Number 5 deployed 385 Ottoman infantry battalions into Thrace and 273 such battalions into Macedonia.

All of the plans were essentially defensive and assumed that increasing tensions would lead to a state of war. The Ottoman General Staff had no offensive war plans and intended to stand on the strategic defensive in all cases.26 Plans Number 1, 4, and 5 postulated a major strategic attack by the highly regarded Bulgarian Army, which would have to be defeated in order to maintain the territorial integrity of the empire. Turkish planners and staff officers were unsure whether the Bulgarians would initially move east or west, forcing them to guard both threatened areas. They were less concerned about the other Balkan armies. In adopting this mind-set, the Turks gave up the strategic initiative to their enemies and relied upon powerful defensive armies and fortress systems that would break their opponents’ will to victory. At the operational level (army- and corps-level operations), however,

TABLE 3.6 Estimated Balkan Coalition Forces, Campaign Plan 5

Country	*Infantry Battalions*	*Artillery Batteries*
Bulgaria	288	153
Serbia	140	124
Montenegro	56	19
Greece	72	51
Total	556	357

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913) 1 Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbi Girişi (Inkinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 215.

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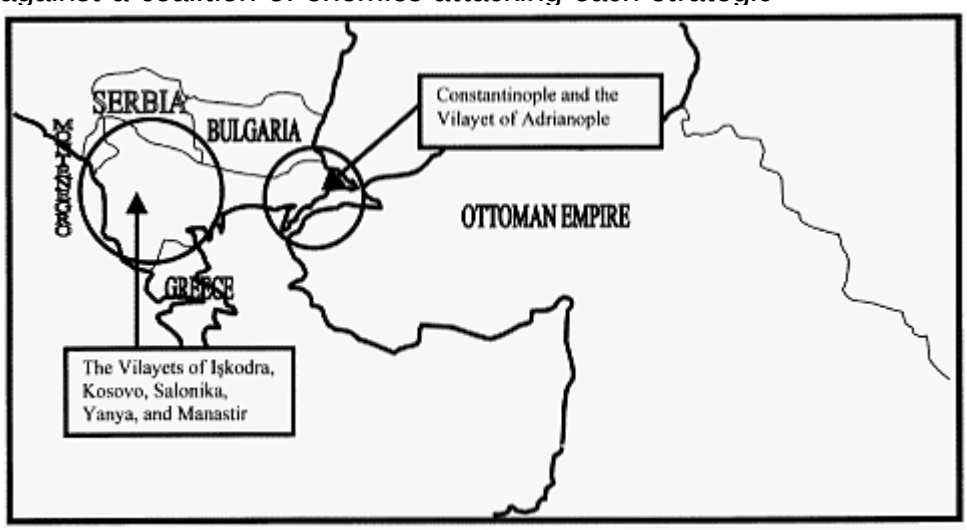
the Turks were ardent disciples of their German teachers and thus were committed to the idea of the operational offensive. The Eastern and Western Army commanders were allowed wide latitude and expected to seize the operational and tactical initiative when conditions appeared favorable. In summary, the Turks envisioned fighting offensively at the operational level within the overall framework of the strategic defensive.
The Ottoman Turks had two strategic centers of gravity in the north-western portion of their vast empire, both of which were geographic in nature. The first, and most important, strategic center of gravity was Constantinople and the adjoining vilayet of Adrianople, on the peninsula of eastern Thrace. Constantinople, located on the Bosporus, was the intellectual, cultural, commercial, and governmental center of the Ottoman Empire, and its immediate environs were the empire's most economically productive areas. The second, and almost equally important, strategic center of gravity consisted of the remaining Turkish vilayets in the Balkans: Yanya, Manastir, Kosovo, Salonika, and Işkodra. These Balkan provinces were not only an important population and economic resource for the empire but, moreover, were also critically important for prestige and diplomatic reasons. Therefore, the Ottoman General Staff's principal campaign plans were dedicated to the retention of these strategic areas, which are shown on Map 3.1.
Unfortunately, the existence of two distinct, and widely separated, strategic centers of gravity placed the Ottoman General Staff in a difficult position. Against a single enemy, the strategic problem was solvable, but, against a coalition of enemies attacking each strategic



Map 3.1 Ottoman Strategic Centers of Gravity, 1912

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center of gravity simultaneously, the strategic problem was unmanage-able. Germany faced a similar two-front strategic problem and chose to solve it with the famous Schlieffen Plan to knock out quickly the most powerful opponent and then turn on the weaker one. Germany's immense, and militarily planned and subsidized, railway system supported this plan and was built from frontier to frontier to accommodate it. The Ottoman Empire, however, had no such strategic communications system. Moreover, Balkan geography denied the Turks the advantage of the interior position, further penalizing them strategically. Therefore, the Turks based their campaign strategies in Plans 1, 4, and 5 on the deployment of two powerful, but separate and unsupporting, armies. Both of these armies received stated defensive missions, pinning them to a series of permanent fortresses and tasking them to defend, at all costs, key terrain and important cities. Ironically, German operational doctrines saddled them with the implied mission to seize the operational initiative and conduct offensives when feasible. The best strategic outcome that the Turks could hope for using such a defensive-offensive strategy was that the shattering of the enemy armies would demoralize the enemy coalition and cause it to collapse.
Mobilization and campaign planning were made more difficult by the ongoing limited war with Italy in Libya. Although war with Italy was a possibility that was planned for in Plan Number 8, the Italian attack on Tripoli caught the Turks unready for a limited war on a frontier far from the heartland of their empire. Unwilling to undergo the loss of economic productivity associated with full wartime mobilization, the Ottoman General Staff chose not to promulgate Plan Number 8, even though the empire was in a state of war with Italy. However, the war pulled units of the regular Ottoman Army away from their home stations in response to the Italian

threat.27 The 2nd, 8th, and 9th Infantry Divisions sent infantry battalions to Smyrna, the Dardanelles, and Yemen. Growing tensions from minorities in the Balkans, particularly in Albania, forced additional deployments as well. An additional five to seven infantry battalions began to rotate into the region from First and Second Army infantry divisions.28 Most of the premier 1st Infantry Division was dispersed in small groups from Constantinople to Thessaly. This unforeseen deployment caused problems for the army corps sending the battalions, as these departing units had to be fleshed out with personnel, equipment, and animals. In Anatolia, shortages of draft animals needed for pulling wagons and caissons was a particularly severe problem. Naturally, this caused deficiencies in the units left behind in the home garrisons, resulting in lower levels of readiness. It was a problem that would continue until the outbreak of the First Balkan War and that had a particularly negative effect on the concentration of the First Army in Thrace.

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The Ottoman General Staff mobilization plan for 1912–1913 was current as of September 1912 and had been updated in the spring and fall to accommodate the uncertain numbers of draftees, who were called up twice annually. The general staff thought that the army's reservists were capable of reporting to their mobilization stations in five or six days and planned on that time frame accordingly. The Ihtiyat men who augmented the active infantry divisions and regiments (Nizamiye) were also expected to report in a similar time period. After forming and equipping the men, the Turks planned to mobilize their Redif formations for war in ten to fifteen days. In concept, the Turks planned on the active army corps and infantry divisions to be on a war footing in less than a week. By the end of the second week, the Redif corps and infantry divisions were expected to be on a war footing as well. Once in this condition, the mobilized formations were ready for deployment to an operational theater of war. To accomplish this, the Ottoman General Staff had a separate concentration plan that moved the army to the various wartime assignments embedded in the twelve campaign plans. The concentration plan orchestrated a combination of rail and sea movements to deploy army formations from their mobilization stations to staging areas in the wartime theaters of operations. From these staging areas, the troops marched on foot to their tactical assembly areas. The entire process was expected to take twenty-five days.

The timing of the call-up and its associated planning parameters was the subject of a meeting of the Supreme Military Council on June 25, 1912.29 The council discussed the planning window of twenty-five days and found it to be extremely optimistic and unrealistic. After reviewing the plans, the council estimated that the army needed forty-five to fifty days to complete its concentration and put this estimate in a formal letter to the Ministry of War. In fact, the council's estimate would prove later to be deadly accurate.

THE BULGARIAN ARMY

The Bulgarian Army was the largest army of the Christian Balkan states. It was a tough and well-trained force that had strong ties to the Russian Army.30 With its population of about 4,300,000 Bulgaria was the largest of the Christian states arrayed against the Turks. By 1912, it had a well-developed Continental military system that linked the regular army with its reserves. The Bulgarians had a General Staff and, as events confirmed, a highly effective and aggressive high command. Although it had not been bloodied recently in the arena of modern war, the largely peasant Bulgarian Army was apparently eager for combat with the Turks.

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The basis of the army was manpower conscripted for a period of two years in the infantry and three years in other branches. This provided the Bulgarian Army with a total peacetime strength in 1912 of 61,967 men, of which there were 2,891 officers, 4,204 junior NCOs, and 54,872 men. Of this total, 46,445 soldiers were considered trained men.31 The heart of the army was, however, its huge pool of trained reservists between the ages of twenty-two and forty years old, of which there were 343,343 men. There were two further groups of men, who were organized as age-based cohorts of territorials, called Bans. The First Ban was composed of men forty-one to forty-three years old, and the Second Ban was composed of men forty-four to forty-six years old. There were 52,752 men in the First Ban and 17,270 men in the Second Ban. Altogether, the Bulgarians could field 459,810 men in their army.

In peacetime, the Bulgarian Army was organized along similar lines to the Ottoman Army and divided into three inspectorates. The inspectorates were centered on populated cities, with the first in Sofia, the second in Philippopolis, and the third in Rustchuk. In wartime, the inspectorates transitioned and formed the headquarters of field armies to assume control of the mobilized army. The inspectorates organized the reservists, maintained troop depots, and supervised the training of soldiers. Each inspectorate controlled three infantry divisions and assorted battalions of supporting arms. There was a separate cavalry inspectorate that controlled three cavalry brigades and a guards cavalry brigade. Directly under the control of the General Staff were engineer battalions and communications battalions. Full mobilization of all reservists added two

additional infantry divisions to the peacetime nine, which gave the Bulgarian Army a wartime total of eleven infantry divisions. During the First Balkan war, Bulgaria mobilized the highest percentage of its military age population (79.5 percent) of any of the Christian allies.32

Until 1905, the Bulgarian Army tended to copy the Russian Army's methods. However, after that year, Bulgarian Army infantry and cavalry doctrine followed the French (the Russians having been decisively beaten in the Far East by the Japanese). However, at the division level the Bulgarian Army was unique among the armies of Europe. While the Turks moved their army toward smaller infantry divisions in 1910, the Bulgarians clung to the idea of large infantry divisions. However, the Bulgarians went far beyond the European standard square infantry division (of sixteen infantry battalions). The Bulgarian Army employed a unique infantry division comprised of three brigades, each of two infantry regiments, with each regiment containing four infantry battalions. This configuration gave full-strength Bulgarian infantry divisions a grand total of twenty-four infantry battalions. Additionally these divisions contained two artillery regiments, a cavalry regiment, and an

engineer battalion. At full strength, Bulgarian infantry divisions could contain as many as thirty thousand soldiers, making them nearly the equivalent of a single new 1910 Turkish army corps.

For equipment, the Bulgarians employed a mixed variety of European weapons: Mannlicher rifles for the infantry, Schneider guns for the artillery, and Maxims for the machine-gun detachments. Of particular importance, the Bulgarians maintained a siege train of artillery, containing about eighty 120mm and 150mm howitzers for use against modern enemy fortifications.

THE SERBIAN AND MONTENEGRIN ARMIES

Second to Bulgaria the Serbs had the largest and most robust army facing the Turks. Like the Bulgarians, the Serbs enjoyed a reputation in Europe for toughness and endurance.33 The Serbs also employed a Continental conscription system of integrated manpower. With a population of 3 million people, Serbia maintained a proportionally higher level of manning in their active army and employed 3,700 officers and 165,000 men in their peacetime forces. The active and first reserve force was known as the First Celp, and was composed of men aged twenty-one to thirty-one. The Second Celp was composed of men aged thirty-two to thirty-eight and numbered 1,950 officers and 86,000 men. The Third Celp was composed of men aged thirty-nine to forty-five and numbered 1,480 officers and 46,000 men. There was also a militia composed of men aged seventeen to twenty and men aged forty-six to fifty.

The Serbian Army was composed of five square infantry divisions (two brigades of two regiments each), which were headquartered at Nish, Valjevo, Belgrade, Kragujevac, and Zaitchar. Mobilization expanded the Serbian Army to fifteen infantry divisions, with the Second and Third Celps providing five each. The Serbs had a mixed bag of weapons, similar to the Bulgarians, including twenty-four 150mm howitzers. The Serbs also had a small cavalry force, which was organized into a single cavalry division.

Although independent, the Montenegrin Army acted almost like an arm of the Serbian Army. The Montenegrins maintained a small, but tough, army of four infantry divisions (the total Montenegrin population was only 250,000 people). The overall strength of the Montenegrin Army in 1912 was 44,500 men, armed with about 36,000 rifles, 44 machine guns, and 118 pieces of artillery. The infantry divisions nominally contained three brigades of four infantry battalions each, giving Montenegrin infantry divisions a strength of about 14,000 men. It was the most primitive of the four Christian Balkan armies in 1912, although its enthusiasm and morale partially compensated for material weakness.34

THE GREEK ARMY AND NAVY

The Greek Army likewise maintained its forces using a Continental system of conscription and was organized into four peacetime infantry divisions (men served for two years in the active forces, ten years in the first reserve, nine years in the second reserve, seven years in the National Guard, and, finally, seven years in the reserve of the National Guard).35 Greece contained a population of about 2.666 million people, and altogether the Greeks could field about 125,000 men, while maintaining about 80,000 in the National Guard and a further 60,000 in the National Guard reserve. In 1912, under the supervision of a French military mission, the Greeks reorganized their army along the lines of the Ottoman Army by moving organizationally to the triangular infantry division. As in the Ottoman Army, this created a surplus of regiments, which, in late summer 1912, remained unorganized into infantry divisions. Upon mobilization, the Greek General Staff formed additional infantry divisions from the surplus regiments for a mobilized total of seven infantry divisions.

Alone among the Balkan powers the seafaring Greeks maintained an important maritime and naval capability

(although the Romanians and the Bulgarians did maintain miniscule navies) that challenged the Ottoman Navy. The Greeks had a small, but very modern, navy, the heart of which was the fast armored cruiser *Georgios Averov,* built in Italy in 1910. The *Averov* displaced 10,118 tons and carried four 9-inch guns and eight 4-inch guns; however, it was the cruiser's relative speed that enabled it to dominate tactically naval engagements with the Ottoman fleet. The Greeks also had eight new destroyers, built in 1912, and eight more built in 1906. Although the Greeks had a number of older vessels, it was the possession of these well-manned new ships that ensured maritime supremacy in the Aegean Sea.

WAR PLANS OF THE BALKAN PACT

The general staffs of the partners of the Balkan Pact had been actively planning for operations against the Ottoman Empire for many years.36 Bulgaria's plans, in particular, were well advanced and are today probably the most well known. Serbia's plans were less well developed, perhaps because of its ongoing preoccupation with Austria-Hungary. Greece and Montenegro had the least developed war plans, reflecting the lack of modernity and training of their staffs.

In 1903, Staff Captain Ivan Fichev (as a major general, Fichev later served as chief of the Bulgarian General Staff, in 1912) of the Operations Division of the Bulgarian General Staff wrote the campaign plan for operations against the Ottoman Empire. Written after the Turco-Greek

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War and assuming that Bulgaria would have no allies, Fichev's plan put Bulgaria on the strategic defensive, with two army corps facing Macedonia and three army corps facing Ottoman Thrace. Fichev, however, felt that because Bulgaria enjoyed interior lines of communications, its army could conduct offensive operations at the operational level. He envisioned a major Ottoman attack along the Meric River, upstream from Adrianople, and even considered the possibility of Ottoman amphibious operations in the Black Sea. In 1904, the plan was amended by the creation of the Rodope Detachment to guard the southern frontier. However, by 1908, the Bulgarians significantly changed their plan from that of a strategic defense, which dated as far back as 1885, to a strategic offensive based on speed and initiative. The new 1908 A Plan envisioned the new Second and Third Armies driving across the Tunca River into Turkish Thrace. Furthermore, a newly formed detachment would drive south to the Aegean Sea. The Bulgarian Western Army would pin the Ottoman forces in Macedonia to that theater.

In 1911, Fichev, now a general, altered the war plans again by massing all three Bulgarian field armies in Thrace. He hoped to achieve a decisive superiority over the Turks, and he set Constantinople and Rodosto (modern Tekirdağ) und on the Sea of Marmara) as his objectives. He established phase lines for operational control and planned to bypass and isolate Adrianople. The 1912 military convention with Serbia altered this idea somewhat, and Fichev was forced to add weight to the Rodope Detachment by assigning it an additional infantry division to honor the commitment made to Serbia. Fichev was known for sending Bulgarian general staff officers in mufti into Ottoman territory to conduct route and area reconnaissance, draw maps, and gather information about the enemy. It was a standing joke in the Balkans that the best maps of the Ottoman vilayets were Bulgarian.

The plans of the Serbian Army were recast in August 1912 based on information provided to the Serbs by General Fichev. Initially, Fichev tried to get the chief of the Serbian General Staff, General Putnik, to agree to send a three-division corps to assist the Bulgarians in besieging Adrianople. The remainder of the Serb Army would execute operations as decided previously in their military convention. Fichev also suggested that the Bulgarian corps-sized Rodope Detachment act as the Serb left wing. The Serbian General Staff was largely unhappy with this thinking and evolved their own plan. On September 14, 1912, Serbian General Staff officers unveiled the Serb war plan in Sofia. The Serb First Army, of five infantry divisions, and the Third Serb Army, of three infantry divisions, would drive on Pristine and Kumanovo and split Macedonia in half. A unique joint Serb Combined Second Army, of one Serb and one Bulgarian infantry division, would operate on the right

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flank of the Bulgarian Rodope Detachment. Fichev agreed to this plan with the understanding that when the Serbs had decisively beaten the Ottomans in Macedonia, they would send troops to assist the Bulgarians in the reduction of Adrianople.

The Montenegrins' campaign plan was very straightforward; it involved a direct attack on the Ottoman fortress of Işkodra (Scutari) and the seizure of northern Albania. The entire Montenegrin Army was committed to this endeavor.

The Greeks were the most unready for war and had no clearly artic-ulated war or campaign plans. To meet their treaty obligations with the Bulgarians, the Greek General Staff simply planned to mass about 100,000 troops in Thessaly and then attack toward Salonika. A further 20,000 troops would gather in Epirus and

advance on Jannina. Given the ongoing organizational changes evolving in the Greek Army in 1912, this was perhaps all that could be hoped for.
The Bulgarians were the best organized of the Christian states in terms of mobilization procedures and were blessed with well-devel-oped interior lines of communications. They were confident that they could call up their reserves and mobilize their army in ten days' time. The Serbs planned on mobilizing their First and Second Celps in eleven days' time, but the best infantry regiments and the cavalry could be ready for war in about five days. Tiny Montenegro planned to be on a war footing in eight days. The Greeks thought that they could mobilize their first four infantry divisions in six days and the remaining three in eight days.

THE TRIPOLITANIAN WAR

Italy emerged as a European power in the late nineteenth century and quickly joined in the hunt for colonies. Badly defeated in Ethiopia in 1897, the Italians were eagerly looking to acquire possessions around the Mediterranean littoral at Ottoman expense. The Italians were also eager to be treated as a Great Power and joined in a Triple Alliance with Austria-Hungary and Germany on June 28, 1902, in a treaty that was mainly operative against France. However, the Italians had more significant grievances with the Austrians (over the South Tyrol, Venetia, and Fiume) than with the French. During the Bosnian Crisis of 1908, the Italians began to mistrust the Austrians, who were proving to be very aggressive alliance partners. Recognizing a chink in the armor of the Triple Alliance, the estranged Russians negotiated the bilateral Racconiji Agreement with Italy in October 1909, which recognized Russian rights for its warships to transit the Turkish Straits and Italian claims to Tripoli. By 1911, as France solidified its claims on Morocco,

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the Italian government decided to act by invading Ottoman Tripoli. Neither the Triple Alliance, which did not want to alienate Italy, nor the Entente, which wanted to woo Italy away from its Austro-German partners, were prepared to intervene to prevent the invasion. The Italians complained about the mistreatment of Italian merchants and citizens in Tripoli, and this became the casus belli of the Tripolitanian War (or the Italo-Turkish War) of 1911.
On September 29, 1911, the Italians declared war on the Ottoman Empire; they placed Tripoli under naval blockade on the following day. The Ottoman Empire called Tripoli (modern Libya) the vilayet of Trablusgarp, which included the şanjack of Bengazi. Since the 1880s when the British occupied Egypt, Trablusgarp was isolated from the remainder of the Ottoman Empire and depended upon sea communications to link it to the empire. In 1911, the Ottoman Army garrison of Trablusgarp was composed of the independent 42nd Infantry Division, an old-style division of four infantry regiments: the 124th, the 125th, the 126th, and the 127th. The 42nd Infantry Division also had the 42nd Rifle Battalion, the 38th Cavalry Regiment, and a field artillery battalion assigned on its rolls. There were also some fixed coast defense guns emplaced to defend the ports and some unattached detachments of engineers and signal troops. Altogether, the Ottoman Army had about fifteen thousand men in Tripoli. On October 4, 1911, an Italian expeditionary force landed at Tobruk, and on November 4, Italy announced the formal annexation of Tripoli.
The Italian blockade was not airtight, and the Ottomans were able to run in some steamers with limited reinforcements. However, the Turks did decide to send in some energetic, young, and politically acceptable army officers to energize the defense. These men were general staff officers *(kurmay subaylar):* Enver Bey, Mustafa Kemal Bey, and Fethi Bey, who were supposed to command Bengazi, Tripoli, and Derna, respectively. However, before they could arrive, the Italians overran the coastal towns. Upon landing, the Turkish officers took their men into the interior to continue the fight. Mustafa Kemal linked up with a tribal chief named Şerif Bey and fought the Italians at Tobruk on January 9, 1912. After unsuccessfully contesting control of the coastal ports, the Turks retreated into the interior of the vilayet and waged a guerrilla war with the Senusi tribesmen against the Italians. The war dragged on for months, with the Italians in control of only a thin strip of land along the coast.
The war expanded further as Italy began to arm rebels and to stir up trouble in Albania. The Italians also took the opportunity to seize the Dodecanese Islands (the islands of Rhodes, Cos, Leros, and several others), adjacent to the Anatolian mainland. In geographic terms, the Italians appeared to have won the war; however, the serious guerrilla

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war being waged by the Turks and the Senusi was proving increasingly expensive and embarrassing. By mid-1912 both Italy and the Ottoman Empire were anxious to conclude a peace treaty ending the war. Finally on October 15, 1912, in Lucerne, Switzerland, the states reached an agreement. The Ottomans agreed to withdraw their forces from Trablusgarp, and the Italians agreed to withdraw from the Dodecanese Islands. There were several other clauses, dealing mainly with the religious rights of the Ottoman sultan over his

Muslim subjects. Justi-fying their actions on the pretext of the Balkan War, the Italians reneged on their promise to return the islands and thus, ironically, were stuck with the rebellious Senusi tribesmen for the next thirty years. The war cost the Turks next to nothing except a near worthless province and prestige; however, it was unquestionably a serious diplomatic and military distraction that the Ottoman government was forced to address in 1912.

NEXUS OF DISASTER

Cumulatively a series of destabilizing forces converged on the Ottoman Empire in 1912 that created a nexus of disaster. The Ottoman government was in the hands of new leadership, which was committed to modernization and the creation of a culturally Turkish state. The Ottoman Army was in the throes of an unprecedented physical, intellectual, and structural reorganization of its forces. There were ongoing rebellions in distant corners of the empire, which consumed military resources and diverted troops from their home garrisons. The Great Powers, concerned with their own interests and problems, backed away from the pressures of the Balkan Peninsula, which added to regional instability. Active nationalism provided a ready torch to unify dissident minorities in the Balkans and galvanized the minor Balkan powers to plan for war. Italy declared war on the empire and encouraged the Albanians to revolt, adding a new dimension of tension to an already uncertain diplomatic situation. Not surprisingly, in October 1912, the Balkans erupted into a general war between the Christian countries of the Balkan Pact and the Ottoman Empire.

NOTES

1. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncü Cilt, 6ncü Kisim (1908–1920), Inci Kitap* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1971), Charts 7/A–D, 8/A–C. Only the divisional field artillery regiments of the I, III, and IV Army Corps were organized into three-battalion regiments. Shortages of artillery pieces forced the remaining Ottoman army corps to continue using the two-battalion 1910 regimental organization. The divisions of the army corps in Mesopotamia contained only a single field artillery battalion instead of their authorized regiment.

2. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 1 Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbi Girişi* (Inkinci Baski) (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 99–100.
3. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi,* 130.
4. Ibid., 133–136.
5. Ibid. Document 4. The material for the following paragraph comes from Document 4 and from pages 262–263.
6. Ibid. Information about the war academy course and subjects is found on pages 431–432.
7. Spenser Wilkinson, *The Brain of an Army* (Westminster, U.K.: Archibald Constable and Company, 1895), 52. Wilkinson shows a chart that lists the subjects taught by year at the German War Academy.
8. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi,* 253.
9. Ibid., 255.
10. Ibid., 295–300.
11. Ibid., 294–307.
12. Ibid., 294. Also see Alfred Becker, *General der Infantrie Karl Litzmann* (Donauworth, Germany: Verlagsanstalt Eduard Mager, n.d.). The title of Litzmann's book on tactics was *Beifrage zur Taktischen Ausbildung Unseres Offiziere* (An Inquiry into the Tactical Instruction of Our Officers).
13. Excellent descriptions of the German Army's field regulations and training instructions may be found in Martin Samuels, *Command or Control? Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888–1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1995). For an excellent summary of German strategic thought during this period, see Jehuda L.Wallach, *The Dogma of the Battle of Annihilation: The Theories of Clausewitz and Schlieffen and Their Impact on the German Conduct of Two World Wars* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986).
14. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913),* 74–75. This Turkish source states that the French utilized 1.63 percent of their manpower in peacetime and employed a total of 4.50 percent of their manpower when fully mobilized, making the point that the Muslims shouldered the military burdens of the empire.
15. Ibid. The material for this section comes primarily from pages 130–153.
16. Comparable data for shell stocks in 1914 are: the Russian Army, 1,000 shells per gun; the French Army, 1,400 to 2,000 shells per gun; and the German Army, 3,000 shells per gun.
17. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi,* 220–221.
18. Ibid., 227.
19. Ibid., 228.
20. Ibid., 191–192.

21. Ibid., 192.
22. Ibid., 186–188.
23. Ibid., 207–208.
24. Ibid., 209.
25. Ibid., 216–217.
26. Ibid., 209–226.
27. Ibid., 228.
28. Ibid., 229.
29. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913),* 53–55.
30. The material for this section comes from ibid.; Richard C.Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913* (London: Routledge, 2000); and Reginald Rankin, *The Inner History of the Balkan War* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., n.d.).

31. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913),* 168. The Bulgarians counted as trained men who had completed four months of individual and section training; two months of company, regimental, and brigade training; and a fifteen-day field maneuver training exercise.
32. Petar Stoilov, "The Bulgarian Army in the Balkan Wars," in Bela K.Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, eds., *East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 34–59. This article contains an excellent summary of the organization and training of the Bulgarian Army.
33. The material for this section comes from Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913);* Hall, *The Balkan Wars;* and Rankin, *The Inner History of the Balkan War.*
34. Novica Rakočević, "The Organization and Character of the Montenegrin Army in the First Balkan War," in Bela K.Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, eds., *East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 113–125. This article contains an excellent summary of the organization and training of the Montenegrin Army.
35. The material for this section comes from Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913);* Hall, *The Balkan Wars;* and Rankin, *The Inner History of the Balkan War.*
36. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913),* 230–249.

4
The Thracian Campaigns, 1912

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Under Campaign Plans Number 1, 2, 4, and 5, the Ottoman General Staff planned to form the Eastern Army (Şark Ordusu) in Thrace. The First Army Inspectorate provided the nucleus of the army staff and transferred all its regular army formations to the new army. Additionally the formations of the First Redif Inspectorate and the Sixth Redif Inspectorate were assigned to the new army. Finally, some regular and reserve infantry divisions from the Third Army were also earmarked for service with the Eastern Army. Altogether the Eastern Army would field four regular army corps (I, II, III, IV Corps), three provisional *(mürettep)* army corps (XV, XVI, XVII Corps), a provisional independent cavalry division, and an independent cavalry brigade.1 When task-organized for combat, Ottoman forces in Thrace were broken into three separate commands: the Eastern Army, the Adrianople Fortified Area, and the Kircaali Detachment (Kircaali Müfrezesi). Behind the Eastern Army in Constantinople, a Reserve Army was also to be formed, comprising three more provisional corps (XVIII, XXIII, and XXIV Corps).

All plans postulated that the Bulgarians would possess the strategic initiative and would launch dual offensives aimed at seizing Adrianople, Çatalca, Constantinople, and Dedeğaç, on the Aegean Sea. The Turks thought that the Bulgarians would be ready to launch their attacks thirty days after the declaration of mobilization. This placed the Turks on the strategic defensive, but they planned to create conditions that would allow them to launch army- and corps-level offensives. The Ottoman Campaign Plan for the defense of Thrace had three subplans,

reflecting the task organization: the Eastern Army Operations Plan, the Adrianople Fortified Area Operations Plan, and the Kircaali Detachment Operations Plan.

The Eastern Army Plan2 was written initially in 1910 under the direction of Ferik Ahmet Izzet Paşa and postulated that there would be two main Bulgarian attacks: down the Meriç River toward Dimetoka and east

along the Tunca River toward Kirkkilise (Kirklareli). A smaller force would attack between the rivers. Altogether the Bulgarians would probably outnumber them, but the Turks had the advantage of interior lines of communication. As updated in 1912, the Turks proposed to lure the Bulgarians into pockets on the east and west sides of Adrianople by using the IV Corps and the formations of the fortified area in an economy-of-force mission. Thus, Adrianople would appear as a rock splitting the torrent of the advancing Bulgarian Army. At the decisive moment, the Turks planned to launch an offensive using five army corps massed either near Vize in the east or near Dimetoka in the west to encircle and destroy the Bulgarian forces. Two of the corps would launch supplementary attacks to fix the enemy in the pockets and prevent withdrawal. This plan reflected contemporary German strategic and operational thinking about encirclement battles of annihilation. The Adrianople fortress and the Kircaali Detachment were expected to conduct supporting attacks if possible. The Ottoman General Staff's Concentration Plan was expected to deliver the Eastern Army's compo-nent formations to an assembly area between Pinarhisar and Luleburgaz.

The Kircaali detachment was an army corps-sized force composed of the Kircaali Redif Infantry Division and the Kircaali Müstahfiz Infantry Division. A regular army infantry regiment (the 36th) was also assigned to the detachment, from the 12th Infantry Division. The detachment's wartime mission was to defend the Constantinople-Salonika railroad and to ensure that Ottoman Macedonia was not cut off from Ottoman Thrace. The detachment established defensive positions north of the Arda River to await the Bulgarians, who were expected to conduct an offensive south, to the Aegean Sea. The Operations Plan3 of the detachment broke up the detachment into two main groups defending the avenues of approach south from the Bulgarian frontier.

The Adrianople Fortified Area was maintained in peacetime as a fortress, but with relatively low levels of manning. In wartime, it would receive the 10th Infantry Division, the 4th Rifle Regiment, and the 12th Cavalry Regiment from the IV Corps as well as three Redif infantry divisions (the Babaeski, the Adrianople, and the Gümülcine). The fortress's Operations Plan4 divided the area into quadrants, and the three reserve infantry divisions were assigned defensive missions in the western, northern, and eastern zones. The southern zone was held

initially with fortress troops. The regular troops provided observation of the frontier and would provide a counterattack capability when pushed into the fortress perimeter.

These three plans had a negative impact on the IV Corps, which was forced to give up the 10th Infantry Division, the 4th Rifle Regiment, and the 12th Cavalry Regiment to the fortress and the 36th Infantry Regiment to the Kircaali Detachment. Furthermore, most of the IV Corps staff went to Adrianople to form the nucleus of the Fortified Area staff. Therefore, under these operations plans, the IV Corps was designated a provisional corps and operated at a reduced combat capability. Table 4.1 shows the forces that were to be available for the defense of Thrace under these operations plans (comparisons may be made with Appendix B and Table 3.2).

Many of these formations were available locally in Thrace; however, most of the Redif infantry divisions earmarked for the Eastern Army were stationed in western Anatolia. Counting the time required for mobilization and concentration, the Ottoman General Staff planned that these forces could be in place and combat ready in thirty days' time. The fortresses, especially the heavy artillery regiments at the

TABLE 4.1 Operational Plans, 1912—Projected Ottoman Order of Battle for Thrace

EASTERN ARMY

I Corps	*II Corps*	*III Corps*	*IV Provisional Corps*	*XV Provisional Corps*
1, 2, 3 Infantry Divisions	4, 5, 6 Infantry Divisions	7, 8(-), 9 Infantry Divisions	11(-), 12(-) Infantry Divisions Izmit, Bursa Redif Divisions	Canakkale, Edremit Redif Divisions 32nd Infantry Regiment

XVI Provisional Corps	*XVII Provisional Corps*	*Cavalry*
Konya, Karahisar, Ankara Redif Divisions 24th Infantry Regiment	Samsun, Ergli, Kastamonu Redif Divisions	Independent Cavalry Division Independentt Light Calvary Brigade

ADRIANOPLE FORTIFIED AREA	*KIRCAALI DETACHMENT*
Fortress Division and Fortress Artillery 10th Infantry Division Adrianople, Babaeski, Gümülcine Redif Divisions 4th Rifle Regiment 12th Cavalry Regiment	Kircaali Redif Division Kircaali Müstahfiz Division (provisional) 36th Infantry Regiment

Note: (-) Indicates a formation at less than full strength.
Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt 3ncü Kisim, Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), Kurulu (Chart), 4, 5, 11.

Dardanelles and Bosporus, were expected to be on a war footing within a four- to five-day period. As it was generally accepted that Bulgaria and Serbia were able to mobilize rapidly, these time lines made the decision to mobilize very important.
The Ottoman General Staff was acutely aware of the coalition forming against the empire (despite the treaty clauses pledging secrecy) and began limited mobilization.5 On September 23, 1912, the General Staff issued orders for the Adrianople Fortress commander to begin mobilization, and the Elbasan Redif Division in the Second Army area was also ordered to begin to mobilize. Two days later, five more Second Army Redif divisions were ordered to mobilize. The members of the Balkan Pact declared general mobilization on September 30, 1912, and in response, on the following day, the Ottoman General Staff ordered full-scale general mobilization. The commander of the Adrianople Fortress, Brigadier General Ismail Paşa, reported on October 2 that his strong points were manned and his troops were ready for war; the next day, he began to ship the civilian population of the city eastward to Constantinople. Also on October 2, the Eastern Army and Western Army headquarters were activated.
The Redif infantry divisions quickly reported their readiness for deployment to their assembly areas. The Yozgat Redif Division began to head for Vize in Thrace on October 5. On October 6, 1912, the Ottoman General Staff ordered that the reserve and territorial formations that were mobilized begin to move to their concentration areas. Anticipating the arrival of the Redif divisions, the General Staff activated the Reserve Army on October 7. Commanded by Hurşit Paşa, it was composed of the XVIII, XXIII, and the XXIV Provisional Corps. On October 8, the VIII Provisional Corps and the Yanya Provisional Corps in the Western Army area reported that they were operational. In the Eastern Army area, the II Corps reported that it, too, was operational. The following day, Mehmet Şükrü Paşa assumed control of the newly established Adrianople Fortified Area.
Also on October 8, 1912, a special Military Council meeting was held to discuss plans for war.6 Attending the meeting were Mahmut Şevket Paşa, Hadi Paşa, Hurşit Paşa, and Pertev Paşa, as well as the First Army commander, Abdullah Paşa, and his chief of staff, Cevat Bey. Acting chief of staff Hadi Paşa delivered a report on the wide deployment and condition of the army. He ended by stating that the Ottoman Army could not attack and that even an effective defense would be most difficult. The issue of the planning window estimate of June 25 (forty-five to fifty days) came up, and the council again reconfirmed this estimate. If the war broke out within the twenty-five-day planning window, the army would only have 400,000 men in position to fight. The council ended with the note that hostilities must be delayed until

the army had its full wartime strength of 750,000 men in position. Shortly thereafter, Nazim Paşa requested that the foreign ministry do all in its power to delay the onset of hostilities. Unfortunately for the army, events were now moving too rapidly, and the empire was on a collision course with war.

INITIAL BORDER OPERATIONS

Correctly anticipating the outbreak of hostilities, the Ottoman General Staff activated the independent Cavalry Division on September 29, 1912, and assigned seven cavalry regiments to it. The division organized two cavalry brigades (the 1st Brigade of the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 7th Cavalry Regiments; and the 2nd Brigade of the 8th, 9th, and 10th Regiments). The division commander also assumed control of the 9th Infantry Regiment. By the evening of October 3, 1912, this force was screening the border. The independent 5th Cavalry Brigade was activated on September 30 from some guards cavalry detachments and from the 3rd and the 6th Cavalry Regiments.
The army's border detachments took up positions along the frontier on September 30, 1912, and were reinforced by infantry detachments from the 3rd and the 8th Infantry Divisions. This thin screen was sufficient to keep Bulgarian cavalry and patrols from penetrating the frontier. As the 10th Infantry Division filled out its ranks with reservists, it made preparations to move forward to the border to provide a true covering force behind which the Eastern Army could concentrate. On October 17, 1912, the 10th Infantry Division was at war authorization and had a total of 240 officers, 12,337 men, and 1,565 animals assigned on its rolls. That evening, the division moved to its forward positions along a one hundred kilometer stretch of the Turco-Bulgarian border. The division established a system of battalion strong points along the Arda, Meriç, and Tunca River avenues of approach. The division headquarters and the division artillery regiment established

their field headquarters at Saray Akpinar (about twelve kilometers northeast of Adrianople). The border itself remained under observation by the border detachments. Moving the 10th Infantry Division forward allowed the cavalry division to shift to the northwest and cover the frontier north of Kirklareli. This accomplished, the detachments of the 3rd and 8th Infantry Divisions that had been temporarily assigned border duties returned to their respective divisions.

OPERATIONAL PLANNING

The Eastern Army slowly began to move to its concentration area northwest of Vize, but by mid-October 1912, it was apparent that the

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Bulgarians would invade sooner than the thirty days that it would take for the Ottoman Army to form. Problems with the railroad particularly plagued the Ottoman concentration as the overworked fleet of locomotive engines began to break down in increasing numbers. Much of the periodic maintenance and repair on the engines and rolling stock had been done by foreign workers, many of whom had departed the combat theaters as war clouds gathered. The army tried to compensate for this loss by assigning inexperienced army officers in an attempt to keep the fleet moving. By the twentieth day of mobilization, the Eastern Army was supposed to have received 247 trainloads of troops.7 In actual fact, they had received only 132 trainloads, of which 87 contained units and 45 contained individual replacements. In particular, it was apparent that the Redif divisions of the XVI Provisional Corps, coming from garrison locations in central Anatolia, would never reach the operational area in time for the opening engagements. Therefore, the Ottoman General Staff inactivated the new corps before it ever had any divisions physically present. The incoming divisions would be assigned to other corps as they arrived, according to the situation. It was also apparent that the carefully crafted Campaign Plan Number 5 had not accounted for the shifting balance of naval power in the Aegean, and the Ottoman General Staff was very concerned about the vulnerability of the Gallipoli Peninsula to a Greek amphibious assault. On October 15, 1912, the staff gave the XV Corps a revised mission to defend the Gallipoli Peninsula against such an attack, and the corps began to concentrate at the peninsula. These revisions took two provisional corps out of the Eastern Army order of battle. There were serious repercussions as the army staff scrambled to salvage the operations plan.8 The loss of the XV Corps created an immediate vacuum between Adrianople and Dimetoka. To fill this gap, the Eastern Army staff ordered the IV Corps's 11th Infantry Division to detach itself from the corps's main body and to report to the commander of the Adrianople Fortress. On October 15, the division crossed the Ergene River to establish defensive positions around, and to the north of, Dimetoka.

There were other pressing questions surfacing in the concentration plan as well, particularly with problems in the formations designated for assignment to the Eastern Army. Because of the Italian naval threat to Smyrna and the southeastern Anatolian coast, the 6th Infantry Division was ordered to remain at its island and mainland garrisons there. Most of the 1st Infantry Division was deployed in Macedonia to hunt down rebels, as was a part of the 2nd Infantry Division. Indeed, the 4th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 12th Infantry Divisions all had at least an entire infantry regiment on detached duties in Yemen or Albania. Cumulatively, this meant that the Eastern Army was going to war at about half of its anticipated strength in infantry.

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Nevertheless staff planning for a major battle of encirclement continued. In order to make up the huge shortfalls in the combat power of its army corps, the Eastern Army reassigned either a Redif infantry division or a provisional infantry division to the rolls of the I, II, and III Corps. This partnering of active and reserve infantry divisions had been tested during the October 1910 maneuvers in Thrace. With these addi-tions, on paper (at least), these corps were now up to their wartime authorizations of infantrymen. While this created asymmetric combat capabilities within the three corps, it was probably the best all-around solution immediately available to the Ottoman staffs in late October 1912. The revised Eastern Army order of battle on October 17 is shown in Table 4.2.

The actual Ottoman campaign plan for the defense of Thrace has been widely misunderstood in the historiography of the Balkan Wars. This began with the early published accounts of European observers who interpreted the Ottoman attacks at Kirkkilise in late October 1912 as evidence of an offensive strategic plan. Modern historians have continued this idea by maintaining that the Turks abandoned their defensive lines to unwisely attack the advancing Bulgarian armies.9 In actuality, the Ottoman General Staff held to the preconceived strategic concept of seizing the operational initiative within the larger framework of the

TABLE 4.2 Actual Ottoman Order of Battle for Thrace, October 17, 1912

EASTERN ARMY

I Corps	*II Corps*	*III Corps*	*IV Provisional Corps*

2(-), 3 Infantry Divisions	4(-), 5 Infantry Divisions	7(-), 8(-), 9(-) Infantry Divisions	12(-) Infantry Division
1 Provisional Division	Uşak Redif Division	Afyon Karahisar Redif Division	Izmit, Bursa Redif Divisions

XVII Provisional Corps
Samsun, Ergli, Izmir Redif Divisions

Cavalry
Independent Cavalry Division
5th Light Cavalry Brigade

ADRIANOPLE FORTIFIED AREA
10th Infantry Division
11th Infantry Division
Adrianople, Babaeski, Gümülcine Redif Divisions
4th Rifle Regiment
12th Cavalry Regiment
Fortress Division and Fortress Artillery

KIRCAALI DETACHMENT
Kircaali Redif Division
Kircaali Müstahfiz Division (provisional)
36th Infantry Regiment

Note: (-) indicates a formation at less than full strength.
Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt 3ncü Kisim, Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 67–70.

strategic defensive. Reflecting their forty-year staff college experience under the tutelage of German Army General Staff officers, the idea for an encirclement battle of annihilation materialized in Ottoman operational planning.
The Ottoman staff estimates and war games experience indicated that the Bulgarians would advance rapidly but would likely bypass the fortress of Adrianople. The heavy terrain along the Black Sea coast would further narrow the front of the advancing Bulgarians, in effect funneling them between the fortress and the fortified town of Kirkkilise. The Ottoman General Staff envisioned geographically compressing the numerically superior Bulgarians in a salient (projection) moving southeast toward Luleburgaz and Çorlu. At the right moment, the Ottomans would launch powerful concentric flanking attacks from the Adrianople fortress and from the area north of Kirkkilise. These powerful attacks would converge in the rear of the Bulgarians, creating a pocket from which they could not escape.10 To accommodate this physically, the Turks began the construction of strong, permanent field fortifications along the east-west road from Iskenderkoy to Kirkkilise. Anchoring the right flank, the town of Kirkkilise itself was turned into a mini-fortress. To Western observers and the Bulgarian officers mas-querading as tourists, this defensive line appeared to be what might be today called the main line of resistance. In fact it was not; rather, it was a trip wire against which the Bulgarian Army would place itself in a position of acute vulnerability.
Historians have suggested that the chief of the Ottoman General Staff, Nizam Paşa, pressured Ferik Abdullah Paşa, the commander of the Eastern Army, to prematurely attack the advancing Bulgarians.11 In fact, Nazim merely countersigned an order written by Pertev Paşa, the chief of operations, on October 16, recommending that both the Eastern and the Western Armies begin attacks to prevent the concentration of the Christian armies.12 On October 17, the Adrianople fortress notified the Ottoman General Staff that it had the 10th Infantry Division and the Gümülcine and Adrianople Redif Divisions in position and ready for operations. The following day Ferik Abdullah notified the Ottoman General Staff that his army was likewise ready for offensive operations and that all units would be in position by the evening of October 20. He did note that of his four active army corps, the IV Corps (broken apart by the unanticipated loss of the 11th Infantry Division) would require ten days to fully bring its three divisions together and to consolidate them into an effective corps.13 The crippling shortages of trained active army infantrymen aside, the Eastern Army had other deficiencies as well. There were not enough trained General Staff officers to fill all requirements on the army and corps staffs. Medical, veterinary, and field hospital units were not up to

strength. The army-level artillery regiments were short 600 draft animals. At the division level, the animal shortage immobilized most of the field ambulances. The cavalry regiments were short 300 horses and had instead impressed 250 farm animals. Finally, and most important, all four active corps of the Eastern Army reported that about 60 percent of their infantrymen were poorly trained and unfamiliar with their rifles. In spite of these deficiencies, the army continued planning and moved its formations forward to occupy and to fortify the defensive line between Bostanli, Yenice, and Kirkkilise. From east to west, the Eastern Army deployed the cavalry division, the IV Corps, the I Corps, the II Corps, and the III Corps. In terms of combat power, this placed the strongest corps of the Eastern Army on the army's right wing. On October 21, 1912, the headquarters of the Eastern Army located itself in Kavakli, just to the south of Kirkkilise, and centered on

the proposed axis of advance. The staff of the Eastern Army finalized the campaign plan at Kavakli, and at 4 P.M. that day, Ferik Abdullah issued his operations order to his army (Table 4.3).

Ferik Abdullah's operations order followed the five-paragraph field order format commonly in use in most of the world's armies today, which was pioneered by the German Army. In essence, he communicated the enemy situation, his intent, his concept of operations, coordination measures to control the attack, and command and signal information. It was a very ambitious plan (the graphics of the Eastern Army Plan are shown on Map 4.1) in two phases. In phase one (to be accomplished by 11 A.M.) the I, II, and IV Corps would fix the Bulgarians in place with an attack. Simultaneously, the III Corps, on the right wing, would rapidly advance northwest to Çeşme Koy, while a corps-sized attack would advance northeast from the Adrianople fortress, both of which were to be completed by 11 A.M. In the second phase, the III Corps would pivot 90 degrees and attack west to complete the encirclement by linking up with the troops from Adrianople. The most important mission, the right-wing envelopment operation of the III Corps, involved marching in excess of thirty miles.

One of the most important aspects of the Eastern Army's operations order concerned the estimate of enemy strength facing the Turks. Abdullah Paşa expected to meet three Bulgarian infantry divisions, accompanied by cavalry, east of Adrianople. This was a gross underestimation of Bulgarian strength and was a result of the Turks' revised intelligence estimate. The German ambassador, Hans Baron von Wagenheim, reported to Berlin on October 21 that the Turks believed that the bulk of the Bulgarian Army would deploy in Macedonia with the Serbs.14 This was a major shift in Ottoman thinking about Bulgarian intentions. Unfortunately, this point is not explained in the available Turkish documentation, but possibly it resulted from their analysis of the objec-

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TABLE 4.3 Eastern Army Operations Order (Summary), October 21, 1912

1. Three enemy divisions accompanied by cavalry have advanced to Süloğlu Çiftliği-Kayapa. Enemy infantry has been observed near Devletliağaç. Enemy forces have also been observed on the east and west sides of the Tunca River.
2. In Allah's name, the army will attack tomorrow (October 22, 1912).
3. The III Corps is the army's right wing *(sağ kanadini)* and will envelop the enemy's left flank.
4. The II Corps will attack to fix the enemy in place.
5. The I Corps will attack to fix the enemy in place.
6. The IV Corps will attack to fix the enemy in place.
7. The cavalry division will screen the left flank of the IV Corps.
8. Şukru Paşa and the Adrianople Fortress will execute a violent flanking attack using all available regular (Nizam) and Redif formations, including the 11th Infantry Division, and will link up with the right wing north of the Tunca River.
9. Coordination measures: The III Corps, II Corps, I Corps, and IV Corps must be on a line running west of Çeşme Koy to Demirhanli not later than 11 A.M. to regulate (coordinate) the attack (in modern doctrinal terminology, this would be called a Phase Line).
10. Tomorrow the army headquarters will remain in Kavakli until 9 A.M. but then will move forward to Venice and then move forward to Gerdelli.

Note: Paragraphs 3–7 contained specific geographic objectives to be seized along a designated axis of advance (Map 4.1 shows these axes of advance).

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt 3ncü Kisim, Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 121.

tives of the Balkan Pact, which threw a ring around Macedonia. In any event, this misappraisal of Bulgarian strength had deadly consequences for the Ottoman First Army.

THE BATTLE OF KIRKKILISE

The world was generally caught by surprise when the Bulgarian Army appeared to completely shatter the Ottoman Army in a general engagement in the field at Kirkkilise (known today as Kirklareli in modern Turkish and Lozengrad in Bulgarian) in late October 1912. Contemporary observers of all nationalities, including U.S. Army Major Clyde Sinclair, German Major G.von Hochwaechter, French Staff Major

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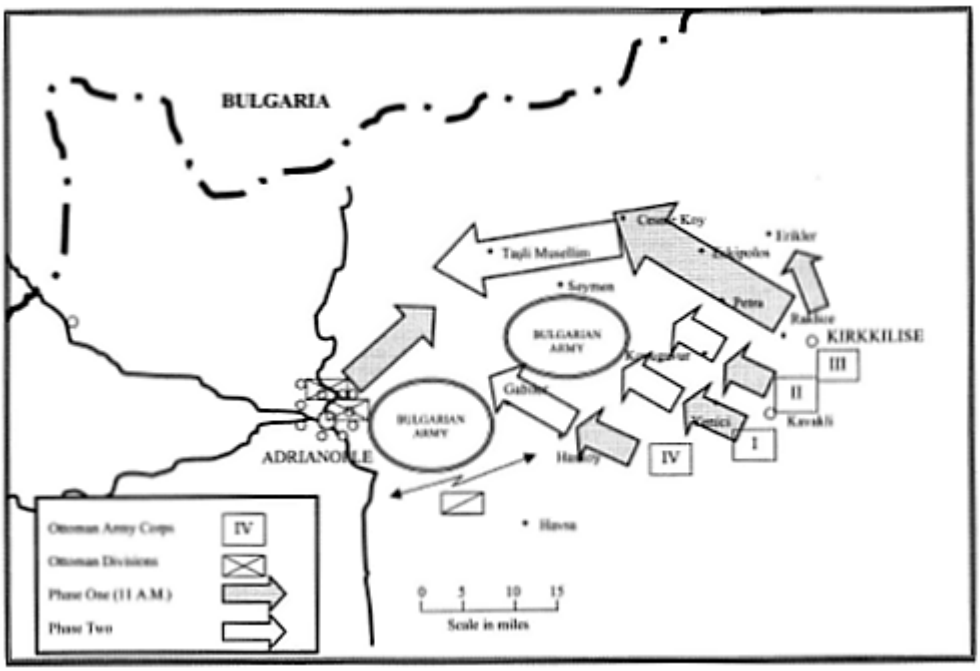

Map 4.1 Eastern Army Operational Plan, Based on Orders Issued October 21, 1912, 4 P.M.

Alain de Penennrun, and British Lieutenant Colonel Reginald Rankin, wrote accounts of the actions in 1913, as did the primary Ottoman commander, Brigadier Mahmut Muhtar Paşa. The Western observers generally thought that the solid Bulgarian Army, with better morale and training, soundly thrashed the ill-trained Ottomans, who suffered from poor morale. There is some truth to this argument at the tactical level, but it disguises the larger truth at the strategic and operational level.

The most critical element of the Ottoman plan was the movement of the III Corps to its phase one objective of Çeşme Koy and then its subsequent phase two movement to Taşli Musellim. Failure to maintain the tempo of the attack to seize these objectives would result in the numerically inferior Eastern Army becoming locked in combat with the Bulgarians in an open field battle in which the Ottomans forfeited the advantage of the defense. Therefore, any disruption of the III Corps envelopment would fatally disable the Ottoman plan.

The III Corps itself was the only corps in the Eastern Army that had all of its regular army divisions available (see Table 4.2), and furthermore was fighting on its home ground (its peacetime home garrisons included Kirkkilise, Lüleburgaz, and Çorlu). Its commander, General Mahmut Muhtar, was young, aggressive, and highly regarded within the Ottoman Army. Unquestionably, the III Corps was the best choice

of the available four army corps to make the envelopment. Mahmut Muhtar issued his first orders at 7 P.M. on the evening of October 21, 1912.15 In order to give his subordinates the maximum planning time possible, Mahmut Muhtar initially sent out a verbal warning order covering only the minimum essential information. In the interim (8 P.M. until midnight), the III Corps commander and his staff prepared detailed written operations orders for the divisions.16 The corps order identified the geographic objectives assigned by the Eastern Army (Rakliça-Petra-Eskipolos-Çeşme Koy-Taşli Musellim) and noted that the corps had to travel over forty kilometers. Because of this, the 9th Infantry Division and the Afyon Karahisar Redif Division (hereafter, Afyon Redif Division) were ordered to begin movement at 1:30 A.M. that night (October 22). The 9th Infantry Division was ordered to march through Raklica, seize Petra, and move northwest on the flank of the 8th Infantry Division. The newly assigned Afyon Redif Division, which had arrived under the command of the III Corps on October 20, was assigned to the left flank of corps. The Afyon Redif Division was also assigned the mission to move into Rakliça not later than 2 A.M. The divisions were directed to mix field artillery into the heads of their columns with their infantry and were also directed to maintain communications with the corps headquarters. They were also ordered to bring their reserve artillery ammunition trains forward as well. On the corps right flank, the 7th Infantry Division was ordered to seize Erikler by 9:30 A.M. and then to move on to Devletliağaç. Three batteries of howitzers also reinforced the 7th Infantry Division. The 8th Infantry Division was ordered to march north of Raklica and seize Eskipolos. Mahmut Muhtar also directed his telegraph detachment to be operational by 8 A.M., and he planned to move his own headquarters forward to Petra by 8:30 A.M. and to Eskipolos by 10:30 A.M. Absent strong opposition by the Bulgarians, this scheme might have worked.

Darkness and early morning mist created serious difficulties for the concentration of troops, and consequently,

forward movement was delayed for most formations until between 6 and 7 A.M. on October 22.17 Mahmut Muhtar noted in his memoirs that some formations did not receive their orders until dawn. Furthermore, at the tactical level, the infantry battalions were dispersed from their supporting artillery. Consequently, parts of the Afyon Redif Division were able to begin movement at 2:30 A.M., but without its artillery, and parts of the 7th Infantry Division were able to move at about the same time. The remainder of the corps did not begin its movement until 6 to 7 A.M. on October 22, 1912. Finally, rainy weather had produced heavy mud, making off-road movement difficult on this inauspicious Tuesday morning.

However, these were not the only problems facing the Turks. Inade-quate intelligence gathering had failed to assess correctly the strength of the opposition facing the III Corps. Instead of facing very weak left-flank units of the Bulgarian Army, the full-strength and battle-ready Bulgarian 4th Breslav Infantry Division lay astride the Petra-Eskipolos-Çeşme Koy road. The Bulgarian 4th Infantry Division was a unit of the Bulgarian Third Army. It was composed of three brigades of two regiments each, and its left wing was positioned just to the west of Petra. Furthermore, the Bulgarian Third Army's 5th Tuna Infantry Division (also a three-brigade infantry division) was abreast of the 4th and lay midway between Erikler and Kadikoy. The Ottoman III Corps was about to enter a hornet's nest of resistance.

The Afyon Redif Division, commanded by Colonel Şükrü, was the first Ottoman formation to make contact with the Bulgarians at about 11:30 A.M.18 The terrain around Petra was broken with small hills approximately fifty to one hundred meters in height and bisected by stream valleys. Although he had received a report from the adjacent 9th Infantry Division that the enemy was reported around Eskipolos, Colonel Şükrü maintained his approach march. On the road several kilometers west of Petra, the Afyon Redif Division began to take heavy rifle and artillery fire, causing it to deploy from a march column into a line formation.

The 9th Infantry Division, commanded by Brigadier Hassan Izzet, also marched past Petra and met the Bulgarians about 11:30 A.M. on the road to Eskipolos. Reports of these engagements reached the corps headquarters at 12:30.19 The III Corps commander sent a report to the Eastern Army at 1:30 P.M. noting that the 7th Infantry Division was in contact with twelve battalions of Bulgarians. At 2 P.M., Mahmut Muhtar went forward to observe the battle raging between Petra and Eskipolos. The Turks had attempted several unsuccessful frontal assaults on the enemy positions. They had been heavily blasted by Bulgarian artillery fire, and casualties were beginning to mount.

On the right flank of the III Corps, the 7th Infantry Division, commanded by Colonel Mustafa Hilmi, began movement at 2:30 A.M. By 8 A.M. the division was past its line of departure and marching west toward Erikler. The 8th Infantry Division, commanded by Colonel Fuat Ziya, departed at about the same time. It was marching generally northwest on the Kirkkilise-Erikler road and was trying to maintain contact with the adjacent 7th and 9th Infantry Divisions. About 4 kilometers west of Erikler, near noon, these divisions came in contact with the enemy. Again the Bulgarian artillery fire was particularly heavy and effective. The 7th Infantry Division met with temporary success as the Bulgarians retreated slightly. However, by mid-afternoon, after several Turkish attacks, forward progress had

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bogged down. Thus, when the III Corps should have already been well past Çeşme Koy, it was heavily engaged at Petra, Eskipolos, and Erikler. Mahmut Muhtar, with his reduced III Corps of twenty-three battalions of Turkish infantry, had marched into, and attacked, two of the gigantic Bulgarian infantry divisions with a combined total of forty-eight infantry battalions. Furthermore, the entire III Corps was deployed on line, and the corps commander had no centrally positioned reserves left with which to affect the battle. Uncertain as to exactly the size of the enemy force that he had run into, Mahmut Muhtar sent dispatches to the Eastern Army headquarters and also requested situation reports from his subordinate commanders. Arriving on the field at Eskipolos, Mahmut Muhtar immediately encountered the retreating troops of the Afyon Redif Division. He was able to halt the disorganized retreat and form a temporary line of defense. However, after a detailed look at the oncoming enemy forces, Mahmut Muhtar ordered the division to continue its retreat.20 Meanwhile, the 9th Infantry Division arrived in force and consolidated the Ottoman defense. Although Bulgarian sharpshooters continued to harass the Turks, the enemy did not press the attack. Instead of being able to command his corps, Mahmut Muhtar found himself involved in trying to energize the troops at the tactical level. As late afternoon approached, the III Corps commander felt it was clear that further Ottoman offensive operations were impossible. Mahmut Muhtar then directed his subordinate commanders to take up the defensive, but to push reconnaissance elements out as far forward as possible and to gain contact with the enemy. He belatedly formed a corps reserve from a 9th Infantry Division regiment and artillery near Petra. As dusk fell, the III Corps had seven infantry battalions (out of twenty-three) and seven

artillery batteries (out of thirteen) in contact with the Bulgarians; the remainder were in reserve. Later that evening the 7th Infantry Division reported that it had identified sixteen enemy battalions to its front. Thus, by the end of the first day of battle, the all-important enveloping right wing of the Eastern Army lay battered in the mud, confronted by a greatly superior and aggressive enemy force and thirty kilometers short of its assigned objective.

To the west, the counterpart left wing of Abdullah's planned envelopment operation also had ground to a halt. This effort emerged out of the Adrianople Fortified Area (hereafter, Adrianople fortress), which was commanded by Ferik Mehmet Şükrü Paşa and composed of the Adrianople Provisional Corps (formed previously on October 17 to accommodate the growing number of regular infantry divisions assigned to the control of the fortress). The four preplanned defensive zones of the fortress were redivided into three defensive zones: The Babaeski Redif Division occupied the Eastern Zone, the Gümülcine

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Redif Division occupied the Southern Zone, and the Adrianople Redif Division occupied the Western Zone. The 10th Infantry Division and the 12th Cavalry Regiment guarded the Tunca River approaches, and the 4th Rifle Regiment screened the approaches to the Eastern Zone. The 11th Infantry Division, originally diverted to replace the XV Corps near Dimetoka, lay resting within the fortress's southern perimeter at Karaağac.

The Eastern Army's offensive operations order arrived at the fortress at 5 P.M. on October 21, and paragraph eight of the order assigned Mehmet Şükrü Paşa very specific tactical guidance and objectives. He was to concentrate "all available" Nizamiye (regular) troops for a violent attack against the Bulgarians. By 7 P.M., the fortress staff began to send out warning orders to its subordinate formations. Mehmet Şükrü Paşa's plan was to mass both regular infantry divisions and a newly formed 1st Provisional Division shoulder to shoulder to attack northeast out of the fortress on the following day.21 In concept, the 1st Provisional Division, composed of the 4th Rifle Regiment (regular troops) and the Kirklareli and Dedeağaç Redif Infantry Regiments, would attack as the right column; the 10th Infantry Division, composed of the 28th, 29th, and the 30th Infantry Regiments, would attack as the left column; and the 11th Infantry Division, composed of the 32nd and 33rd Infantry Regiments and the Bursa Redif Infantry Regiment, would attack as the center column. The newly formed Adrianople Provisional Corps would exercise tactical command over all three infantry divisions. In fact, Mehmet Şükrü Paşa did mass every regular formation available within the fortress for the attack.

The formations began preparations for movement as the fortress staff finalized the written operations orders. Finally at 2 A.M. on October 22, 1912, the fortress commander personally handed his written operations order (Table 4.4) to his subordinate divisional commanders.

Several points immediately jump out at the reader from this operations order. First, the Turks badly misjudged the strength of the Bulgarian offensive. Instead of three of the extremely powerful Bulgarian infantry divisions lying in between Adrianople and Kirkkilise, there were actually six enemy infantry divisions present in the operational area of the encirclement. Additionally, there were two more Bulgarian infantry divisions sweeping toward Adrianople from the northwest. The Turks also expected very weak opposition along the Tunca River. This failure by the Ottoman intelligence services mirrors the Eastern Army's view of the opposing Bulgarian force and proved fatal to the Ottoman campaign plan. However, the solid and detailed planning of Mehmet Şükrü Paşa's staff is showcased in the careful details of logistics, fire support, battle space (land) management, and command and

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TABLE 4.4 Adrianople Fortress Operations Order (Summary), October 22, 1912

1. A force of three enemy infantry divisions lies between Kayapa-Seymen Marabesi-Eskipolos.
2. A weak enemy force is found along the Tunca River near Değrmen and Yenikoy.
3. In Allah's name, the Eastern Army will attack on Tuesday. The Eastern Army's attack will follow the line Eskipolos-Seymen-Süloğlü-Demirhanli.
4. The Adrianople Provisional Corps will concentrate and will be prepared to attack the enemy at 10 A.M. on October 22. The 1st Provisional Division will concentrate to the southwest of 212 Rakimli Tepe (Hill 212) along three routes. The 11th Infantry Division will concentrate three kilometers southwest of Hiziraga, and the 10th Infantry Division will concentrate at Karaca Koy by way of the Hanliyenice road.
5. Divisions will carry four days' supply of rations and ammunition.
6. Divisions will be prepared to bring forward their provisions and ammunition depots. Orders to this effect will be given at a point west of 148 Rakimli Tepe (Hill 148).
7. The headquarters will be located at the Ayvazbaba Battery. Every division and the 12th Cavalry Regiment will send a liaison officer there to receive orders at 10 A.M.
8. Selected fortress ammunition depots (Arnavutkoy and Kücük Taoşcağı) will open to provide additional

artillery and infantry ammunition for the attack.
9. At the same time as the main attack, troops in the Maras region will conduct a demonstration attack to confuse the enemy. The Gümülcine Redif Division will conduct this diversionary operation.
10. Additional supporting artillery fires will be provided by the fortress troops. Three batteries of quick firing guns will support the right wing and the howitzer battery from the Gümülcine Regiment will support the left wing.

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913). II Cilt, 3ncü Kisim, Edirne Kales Etrafindaki Muharebele (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1933), 122–124.

control. Mehmet Şükrü Paşa also planned to conduct diversionary operations on the western side of the fortress (opposite from the real attack) to confuse the enemy. The operations order of the Adrianople fortress is a model of its type and reflects the German-style training that all Ottoman General Staff officers received at the War Academy.

The 10th Infantry Division arrived in an orderly fashion in its tactical assembly area at 8 A.M. on the morning of October 22 under the com-

mand of Staff Colonel Hüsamettin.22 Hüsamettin broke his division into two columns and began immediately to move out toward his first assigned objective of the village of Büyük Döllük. The 12th Cavalry Regiment screened the division's left flank. By 10 A.M. the advance elements of Hüsamettin's division entered the village, whereupon the villagers informed him that enemy forces, including infantry, machine guns, and artillery, were positioned in the vicinity of Tavşan Korucu Köyüne. He sent back word to the corps headquarters, which coordinated supporting artillery fires on Tavşan Korucu Köyüne from the 120mm Taşocağı Battery of the fortress. Hüsamettin also issued orders for his troops to move into assault formations.

The 11th Infantry Division cleared its rest area at 6:30 A.M. and a half hour later had made its way to Adrianople. By 8 A.M. forward elements of the division, commanded by Mirliva Ibrahim Paşa, reached the tactical assembly area. The division formed into march columns and proceeded toward the village of Küçük Döllük. By 11 A.M. the division was north of Hiziraga Köy, and within the hour it received reports from the corps to expect enemy contact. At noon, the divisions received orders that their final objective was the village of Pravadi (Sinan Köy).

The newly formed 1st Provisional Division, under the command of Staff Lieutenant Colonel Celal, moved into its tactical assembly area about 8 A.M. but did not begin forward movement until 9:30 A.M. The provisional division moved very slowly and rapidly fell behind the advancing Nizamiye divisions. By noon, Celal's division had only advanced two kilometers.

As the 10th and 11th Infantry Divisions executed their movement to contact, both began to receive enemy artillery and rifle fire from the village of Sofular, around 1 P.M. By 2:30 P.M. both divisions were in contact and were advancing into a line of trenches constructed by elements of the 2nd and 3rd Brigades of the Bulgarian 3rd Infantry Division. Turkish soldiers on the right could be heard shouting, "May the Sultan live a long life!" as they advanced. By 4 P.M. both divisions reported to the corps commander that the Bulgarians were in full retreat. Mehmet Şükrü Paşa sent word a half hour later to the 1st Provisional Infantry Division, which had halted due to the tired condition of some of its troops, to immediately advance. He also sent word to the Eastern Army encouraging the IV Corps and the cavalry to link up with the 1st Provisional Division.

The Turks continued their advance, but it began to get dark about 5:35 P.M. About 10:30 P.M. the 10th Infantry Division's 29th and 30th Infantry Regiments and the 11th Infantry Division's 32nd and 33rd Infantry Regiments approached the village of Tavşan Korucu Köyüne, where the Bulgarians had established a defensive line. The 11th Infantry Division

committed its reserve regiment in an attempt to break the Bulgarian line. Unexpectedly, at 11:30 P.M., the Bulgarian reserve executed a violent night counterattack, dead center along the Turk's divisional boundary. This attack appears today as a function of the placement of the Bulgarian reserves rather than a deliberate attempt to split the Turkish divisions. In any event, the Turks were caught in the open and suffered heavy casualties.

Faced with unexpected and heavy opposition, both divisions began to pull back. During the night the Turks fell back almost two kilometers. Altogether, the Adrianople Provisional Corps had advanced about eight kilometers, or about two thirds of the way to its final objective of Pravadi, but the night retreat put the total advance at six kilometers. In combat operations on October 22, the 11th Infantry Division lost four officers

and 135 men killed, five officers and 335 men wounded, and two officers and 168 men were missing, for a grand total of 647 casualties. Although unreported in the Turkish histories, the 10th Infantry Division probably suffered similar casualties.

On the western flank of the fortress, the diversionary attack began at noon. The Turks threw the entire Gümülcine Regiment, two additional Redif infantry battalions, and the regular 10th Rifle Battalion into the attack. This force advanced six kilometers and attacked the Bulgarian 8th Infantry Division at 2:15 P.M. The Mithat Paşa Battalion broke through the defenses of the Bulgarian 51st Infantry Regiment and advanced almost two thousand meters, until a determined counterattack at 3:30 P.M. from the Bulgarian reserve (the 52nd Infantry Regiment) restored the Bulgarian lines. The Turks then pulled back to the fortress. Casualties were light: two officers and twenty men were killed and eighty troops were wounded. However, the Mithat battalion lost 380 men captured in this confusing melee.

At the Eastern Army headquarters, Ferik Abdullah Paşa was having difficulties with command and control. Disturbing reports of heavy enemy contact on his all-important enveloping right and left wings continued to arrive. He sent orders to his subordinates about midnight that expressed his unhappiness with the progress of the I and II Corps. He noted that the III Corps was heavily engaged and, furthermore, he noted that within the IV Corps, the enemy had savagely handled the Izmit Redif Division. Finally, Ferik Abdullah mentioned that the supplementary left-wing attack from Adrianople had met with some success but had been driven back by superior forces.23 Later that night he received the additional bad news that the I and II Corps attacks had also been unsuccessful. Furthermore, the 2nd and 3rd Infantry Divisions were subjected to Bulgarian night attacks that disorganized and demoralized the Ottoman troops. Large numbers of officers were killed or wounded, contributing to the problems. Consequently, they retreated

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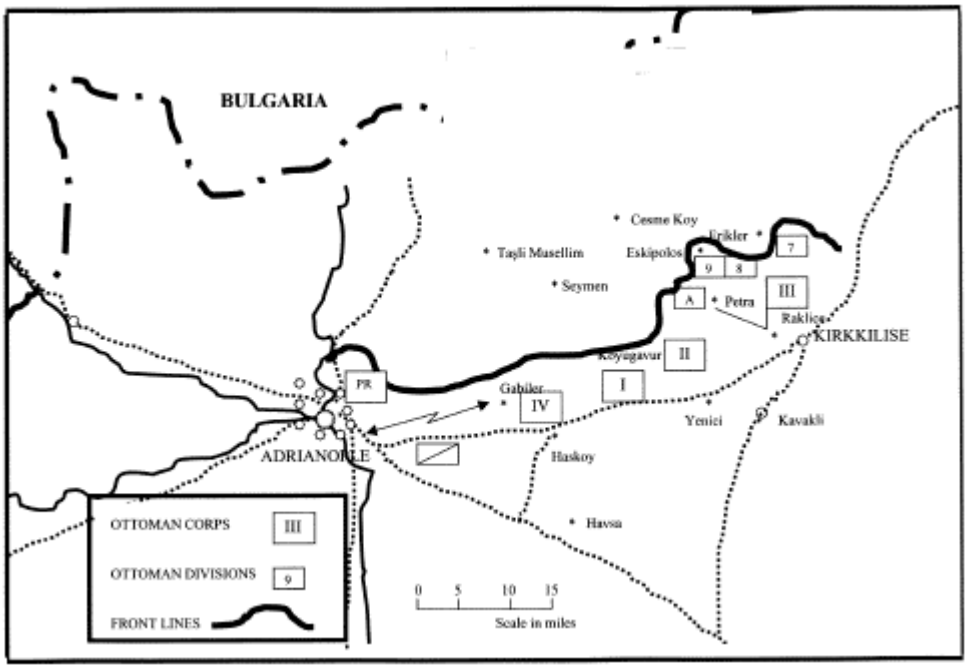
in the dark, losing several batteries of field artillery to the enemy. By the middle of the night, the 3rd Infantry Division was in a state of panic. Liaison officers sent out from the Eastern Army headquarters to determine the true state of the battle could not find subordinate headquarters in the dark. Unable to determine accurately what was happening to his army, Ferik Abdullah Paşa decided to order a limited retreat, which went out orally to all subordinate headquarters at 3 A.M. on the morning of October 23. Map 4.2 shows the disposition of the Eastern Army as dawn broke that morning. The formal, written order was published at 10 A.M. and ordered the following actions: The III Corps was to retreat to the old fortifications around Kirkkilise, the I Corps was to remain and defend the vicinity of Venice and to fortify its front, the II Corps was to engage the enemy in the Kozahizir vicinity, and the IV Corps was to defend and secure the left flank of the army.

The Bulgarians had not been inactive through the night. The 4th Breslav Infantry Division was preparing for a three-regiment attack on Petra. The Bulgarian 5th and 6th Infantry Divisions were preparing for assaults, as were the Bulgarian 3rd and 10th Infantry Divisions. In actual fact, the Bulgarians had three field armies now in Ottoman territory: the Bulgarian First (1st, 3rd, 10th Infantry Divisions, three cavalry brigades) and the Third (4th, 5th, and 6th Infantry Divisions) Armies, which were now facing the Eastern Army, and the Bulgarian



Map 4.2 Operational Situation, October 23, 1912.

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Second Army (8th and 9th Infantry Divisions), which was closing fast on the northern and western approaches to the Adrianople fortress. Altogether, the Bulgarians had 168 infantry battalions within the operational area defined by the Meriç River and Kirkkilise. Opposing this force, the Turks fielded 130 infantry battalions, of which 43 were assigned to the Adrianople fortress.24 Furthermore, the bulk of the Ottoman field forces had left their prepared trenches and were exposed in the open, and the Bulgarians now had the initiative.

At 5:30 A.M., October 23, 1912, Bulgarian infantry regiments began their advance on Eskipolos, where, during the night, the Turks had begun to dig trenches. About 7:30 A.M., the Bulgarians hit the Afyon Redif Division hard. By using Turkish-speaking soldiers to deceive the Ottoman troops, the Bulgarians were able to advance extremely close (to within two hundred meters) of the Turkish trenches before being fired upon. Bulgarian observation aircraft overflew the Turkish trenches, adding to the confusion. The Bulgarians then threw several regiments at the Turks, in a fierce bayonet attack. The Afyons' will to fight quickly collapsed, and several battalions panicked in the face of the Bulgarian onslaught. Mahmut Muhtar, attempting to ride forward to Colonel Şükrü's headquarters, found himself surrounded by retreating Ottoman Redif soldiers (reservists). At 7:55 A.M. the senior Bulgarian officer sent a report to the rear stating that amid cries of "Hurra," the 19th Infantry Regiment had seized Eskipolos.25 The III Corps's advanced position began to crumple. The 7th and 9th Infantry Divisions experienced similar Bulgarian bayonet attacks, well supported by splendidly handled field artillery, and also began to retreat. Fortunately for the Turks, the Bulgarians were unable to exploit their success.

Mahmut Muhtar had managed to stop the flight, often by using the flat of his saber, and had reenergized the defense. He now attempted to consolidate a new defense on the hills approximately five hundred meters northwest of the village of Petra.26 In his memoirs, Mahmut Muhtar noted that the Bulgarian artillery had had an especially severe effect on his inexperienced troops. He also noted that his own field artillery seemed largely ineffective. Again the III Corps commander had to take a personal hand in saving the tactical situation. Nevertheless, by 11 A.M., the III Corps had seemingly reestablished a solid defensive line and had its artillery in action again. Then, once again, the Turkish line broke under heavy Bulgarian artillery fire. At 1:30 P.M., panic again set in among the troops of the Afyon Redif Division and Mahmut Muhtar's left flank began to fold. The 9th Infantry Division continued to hold its position, however.

Unable to salvage the desperate situation and worried about the now exposed flank of the 9th Infantry Division, the III Corps commander decided to retreat. Mahmut Muhtar ordered Hassan Izzet to form a rear

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guard from his 9th Infantry Division in order to cover the retreat to Kirkkilise. By 2 P.M., the III Corps had begun its retreat. The III Corps commander also placed the 8th Rifle Battalion and a machine-gun company

on the Erikler road to cover the withdrawal of the 7th Infantry Division, and at 5:30 P.M., Mahmut Muhtar was back in Kirkkilise. The cost to the Bulgarians for this important victory was about one thousand men killed, wounded, or missing.

On the northern shoulder of the III Corps, the Bulgarian 5th and 6th Infantry Divisions also launched attacks early in the morning from Erikler down the road leading to Rakliça. These attacks were similar to those inflicted at Petra and were likewise very well supported by Bulgarian field artillery. However, the 7th Infantry Division held the line. Nonetheless, Husrev Bey, the chief of staff of the 7th Infantry Division, was forced to dispatch a report at 1 P.M. stating that the Bulgarians had achieved artillery fire superiority. By 2 P.M., the 7th Infantry Division was in retreat. As evening closed on the battered III Corps, the Bulgarians closed on the defenses of Kirkkilise, and the Bulgarian Third Army staff began to make plans to seize the town with its three infantry divisions. However, the Bulgarians were as worn out by the day's operations as the Turks, so quiet settled over the battlefield.

To the southwest, the Eastern Army's other three corps experienced a day of ceaseless Bulgarian attacks as well.27 In the I Corps area, the 2nd Infantry Division was stung badly by a Bulgarian bayonet attack about 2:45 P.M., and heavy rifle and artillery fire pounded both the 2nd and the 3rd Infantry Divisions for the remainder of the day. In the IV Corps area, the Izmit Redif Division and the 12th Infantry Division were again badly pounded. Nevertheless, the Izmit division attempted a counterattack at 4 P.M., which pushed back the 1st Brigade of the Bulgarian 1st Sofia Infantry Division. Although probed by Bulgarian columns, the II Corps experienced no major Bulgarian attacks throughout the day but could hear the violent battles raging on its flanks. Finally the II Corps commander recognized that his corps was confronted by a thin cavalry screen (which, unknown to the Turks, maintained contact between the Bulgarian First and Third Armies), and he immediately ordered a full-scale counterattack by his 4th and 5th Infantry Divisions. Turkish regimental columns that included field artillery began to advance by mid-afternoon, and the Turks surged toward the village of Geredeli in a two-kilometer advance. At 8:40 P.M., the II Corps commander sent word to the Eastern Army that he intended to continue the advance to Kiremitli.

As evening fell, the 2nd Infantry Division gave way and began to retreat in the I Corps sector, and the IV Corps reported that it was badly battered. Although the II Corps appeared to be enjoying success, the III Corps situation appeared critical (the reports of panic in Mahmut

Muhtar's III Corps deeply disturbed the Eastern Army General Staff). Again the Eastern Army commander took stock of his situation and decided to conduct a full-scale operational retreat.28

To the west, on the morning of October 23, 1912, the Adrianople Provisional Corps intended to continue its attack; however, the Eastern Army's failures of the previous day made this action problematic. At 7:30 A.M., the 11th Infantry Division launched a six-battalion attack on the Bulgarian 3rd Infantry Brigade, which failed in the face of heavy artillery and rifle fire.29 The division began to pull back, and by 9:30 A.M., was occupying positions about fifteen hundred meters to the rear, at Küçük Döllük. The 10th Infantry Division stood fast in its hasty trenches. In the meanwhile, the 1st Provisional Infantry Division was ordered to forward at 10 A.M. to shield the open flank of the 11th Infantry Division. This prudent action was executed just in the nick of time to thwart a flanking attack by the Bulgarian 20th Infantry Regiment. By 5 P.M., the 1st Provisional Division was occupying battle positions adjacent to the 11th Infantry Division. The tactical situation appeared calm as darkness dropped over the Adrianople Provisional Corps. However, as a result of the Eastern Army's imminent operational retreat, the Turks decided to conduct a deliberate withdrawal of the Provisional Corps the following day.30 Beginning at 5 A.M. on October 24, 1912, the battalions and the regiments of the Adrianople Provisional Corps began to leapfrog back toward the safety of the fortress. By 9:10 P.M., the 10th Infantry Division and, soon after at 9:30 P.M., the 1st Provisional Division were both safely inside the fortress perimeter. The 11th Infantry Division remained outside, but adjacent to, the fortress perimeter near the Cevizlik Battery.

October 24 promised further misfortunes for the overextended Eastern Army. Petra fell at 11 A.M., and the III Corps was in danger of losing control of Kirkkilise itself. The other corps came under attack as well. The only good news for the Turks was that six infantry battalions and nine field artillery batteries from the XVI Provisional Corps had come forward to Venice. Planning for a general operational retreat continued, and at 1:30 P.M., Ferik Abdullah issued his operations order. His orders outlined the basic concept to retreat and to re-form the army along the Pinarhisar-Lüleburgaz-Karaağaç line (a withdrawal of over thirty kilometers).31 The III Corps was ordered to the vicinity of Pinarhisar, and the II Corps was ordered to Karaağaç. The I Corps was ordered to Türkbey, the IV Corps was ordered to retreat beyond Lüleburgaz, and the cavalry was ordered to screen the left flank to the south of the Ergene River. All formations were ordered to maintain large rear-guard detachments to cover the withdrawal. Ferik Abdullah intended to be in Babaeski himself on October 25 and in Lüleburgaz on

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October 26. His headquarters began movement to Babaeski immediately after the operations order was issued at 2 P.M.
The four Eastern Army corps began immediately to attempt to break contact with the Bulgarians, which proved surprisingly easy. Despite their successes, the Bulgarian Army was exhausted from two days of hard fighting as well as from the long approach march into Ottoman territory, and it evinced little interest in holding the Turks in place. The Ottoman retreat has been characterized as disorderly and ill disciplined by historians and participants alike.32 There were instances of abandoned artillery; the III Corps alone lost fifty-five cannons in the retreat, and over two thousand soldiers disappeared as well. The I Corps was forced to leave 140 seriously wounded men, attended by a doctor, in Venice. Baggage, munitions of all kinds, wagons, and even aircraft were abandoned as the Eastern Army withdrew to the east. Despite the muddy conditions hampering trafficability and the chronic shortage of transport animals, the Eastern Army withdrew the bulk of its forces intact from the battlefields around Kirkkilise. Fortunately, the Bulgarians did not pursue the battered Turks nor even harass them with their cavalry. Content with their well-earned victory, the Bulgarians decided to rest their army for a three-day period.
The Kirkkilise campaign was over. The Turks were badly beaten and thrown out of the most strategically viable defensive position on the peninsula. It was a terrible disaster for Ottoman arms. What could be said about Ottoman performance and effectiveness? First, the basic plan to envelop the enemy was based on a larger and better-balanced Eastern Army. The rapidly mobilized and fast-moving Bulgarians caught the Turks only partially mobilized, with inadequate forces in the operational area. The unanticipated requirement to garrison the Gallipoli Peninsula further disturbed the Ottoman force buildup. Furthermore, the plan was initiated by the enemy moving into a designated geographic area, which forced the Ottoman General Staff into a premature execution of the plan.
Second, the Turks had a badly flawed intelligence picture of the Bulgarian forces invading the empire. Evidently, they believed that a three-division army was caught in the encirclement pocket when, in fact, there were two full-strength Bulgarian armies. The most powerful Bulgarian army, the Third, lay directly astride the route of Mahmut Muhtar's enveloping right-wing III Corps. The result was that the Turks attacked into the superior strength of the Bulgarians with inferior forces. Presaging World War I, this proved disastrous for the attackers.
Third, the Turks failed to weight the critical right wing. The operational envelopment using a single corps out of the four that were available defies explanation. The failure of the Ottoman Eastern Army

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General Staff to assign adequate troops to the task was a terrible error, which ultimately doomed the enterprise to defeat. A two- or three-corps envelopment might have succeeded. Of course, this involved considerable strategic risk as a single corps would have been tasked to deal with the remaining Bulgarian forces. The full effect of the slow Ottoman mobilization is fully apparent here, whereas the addition of two additional Ottoman Provisional Corps (the XVI and XVII Corps) might have enabled the Eastern Army to weight heavily the right wing.
Fourth, the planning windows gave little time for the Ottoman corps and divisions to prepare for the coming battle. Numerous Eastern Army formations failed to move on time in the early morning of October 22. The only bright spot in this regard was the magnificent performance of the Adrianople Provisional Corps.
Finally, the Ottoman Army reorganization probably had a negative effect on the operational and tactical capability of the armies. The new corps-level headquarters were totally untested, as was the new triangular infantry division. Perhaps the short planning time that Ferik Abdullah gave the Eastern Army on the evening of October 21 can best be explained in terms of the organizational structure of 1908, in which armies communicated directly with divisions. At corps level, the forcing together of Nizamiye (regular) and Redif (reserve) infantry divisions went poorly and provided asymmetric combat capabilities.33 The savaging of the Afyon Redif Division all but paralyzed Mahmut Muhtar at key points in the III Corps's battles at Eskipolos and Petra. At the divisional and regimental levels, the Turks seemed to suffer greatly from a lack of well-coordinated artillery support (perhaps this was a result of the amalgamation of the artillery and infantry divisions in 1911). Commanders at all levels were unfamiliar with their organizations and the organizations' capabilities (which may explain the repeated failure by Ottoman commanders to assign adequate troops to task). Given a period of years for training, full-scale field exercises, and the development of doctrine, the Ottoman Army reorganization might have proven superior to the old-fashioned Bulgarian Army. Instead, however, it provided an unsteady military foundation from which to engage in an all-out war.
At the operational and tactical levels, the battle was essentially a meeting engagement during which both

sides sought to seize the initiative with frontal assaults and employed hasty field fortifications. It appeared to both the victors and to foreign observers that determined infantry assaults well supported by field artillery fires could, as they had in Manchuria in 1904 and 1905, still carry the day on the modern battlefield. The Bulgarians emerged from the encounter extremely confident in their tactical ability to execute the successful bayonet charge.

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RETREAT AND REORGANIZATION

Geographically, the Lüleburgaz-Pinarhisar (sometimes called Bunarhisar) position offered the most immediately available defensive ground for the retreating Eastern Army. The main road and railroad from Adrianople to Constantinople ran through Lüleburgaz. The road from Kirkkilise to Vize (and thence to Constantinople) ran through Pinarhisar. To the south of Lüleburgaz ran the Ergene River, and to the north of Pinarhisar lay rough highlands. The still active Ottoman fortress of Adrianople provided a threat against a Bulgarian flanking attack south of the Ergene River.

Thus, the terrain itself and the trafficability of the road network, crucially important in muddy conditions, funneled the Bulgarians into Lüleburgaz and Pinarhisar. Furthermore, a tributary of the Ergene River (Karaağaç Dere) ran northward toward Pinarhisar, and the high ground on its eastern bank offered the Eastern Army tactically defensible positions. Almost as important as the geography, the Turks were falling back on the provisional army corps of the Reserve Army, which were finally coming forward.

Bloody but unbowed, the Ottoman Eastern Army began its retreat in miserable and muddy conditions. The Turks had been clearly beaten in the opening battle, and everyone from the army commander to the lowest ranks knew it. However, Ferik Abdullah declined to relinquish the initiative and set his staff again to planning an offensive battle.

On October 25, the Ottoman Minister of War Nazim Paşa moved forward into the field with his personal staff to Çerkes Köy and established the headquarters of the commander in chief.34 By October 28, 1912, the battered and disorganized formations of the Eastern Army began to sort themselves out. The chief of staff of the XVIII Provisional Corps was in contact via telegraph with the III Corps, and coordination for combined operations began. Also on this date, Abdullah Paşa sent out a warning order to his subordinate corps that he intended to reorganize his forces into two separate field armies. The imminent arrival of the two provisional corps would swell the ranks of the Eastern Army to six army corps plus cavalry forces. The actual order restructuring the army was sent out on the night of October 28 but was received by most units on October 29, 1912.35 Abdullah Paşa formed the First Eastern Army under the command of Ahmet Abuk Paşa (commander of the IV Provisional Corps), which consisted of the I and II Corps and the IV Provisional Corps. He formed a Second Eastern Army from the III Corps, and the XVII and XVIII Provisional Corps and placed Ferik Hamdi Paşa (commander of the XVIII Corps) in command. Abdullah Paşa retained direct control of the cavalry.

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It does not appear in any source that Abdullah Paşa restructured his staffs in any way to accommodate the separation of his forces. Neither Ahmet Abuk Paşa nor Hamdi Paşa received any staff augmentation for their new responsibilities as army commanders. Functionally, this meant that their own corps staffs (the IV and the XVIII Provisional Corps) not only had to control their own corps operations but also had to attempt to coordinate multicorps, army-level operations. It is also very likely that neither of these staffs contained as many prewar Ottoman General Staff officers as the regular I, II, and III Corps staffs. Although this new command arrangement greatly simplified operational planning for Abdullah Paşa, it created organizationally unman-ageable command and control problems for the new First and Second Eastern Armies. The newly reorganized Ottoman field armies in Thrace are depicted in Table 4.5.

These revised command arrangements greatly concerned Hamdi Paşa, who had not participated in the great battle at Kirkkilise and who had only the XVIII Corps staff at his immediate disposal. Therefore, he assigned command of twelve of his infantry battalions to Mahmut Muhtar Paşa and his III Corps. This greatly reduced his tactical concerns and theoretically enabled him to act as an army commander. In the First Eastern Army, Ahmet Abuk Paşa retained direct command over his IV Corps and attempted to command the First Eastern Army as well. Abdullah Paşa remained with the headquarters of the former Eastern Army, which he now renamed the First Army.

LÜLEBURGAZ-PINARHISAR

The intertwined battles of Lüleburgaz and Pinarhisar were fought from October 29, 1912, through November 2, 1912, and brought the full weight of the combined Bulgarian First and Third Armies against the reinforced Ottoman field army, consisting now of the First and Second Eastern Armies. At the start of the battle, the

Turks had 126,000 riflemen, 96 machine guns, and 342 artillery pieces. Additionally, there were about 3,500 “swords,” or cavalrymen. Opposing this mass of fighting strength were 107,386 riflemen, 116 machine guns, and 360 artillery pieces in the two Bulgarian armies.36 In terms of the forces engaged, Lüleburgaz-Pinarhisar would be the largest battle fought in Europe between the end of the Franco-Prussian War and the beginning of World War I.

There had been some restructuring of the Bulgarian armies as well. The Bulgarian First Army was greatly reduced by the detachment of the 3rd Infantry Division to screen the Bulgarian lines of communications from Ottoman sorties by the troops of the Adrianople fortress. The First

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TABLE 4.5 Ottoman Order of Battle, First and Second Eastern Armies, October 29, 1912

FIRST EASTERN ARMY		
I Corps	*II Corps*	*IV Provisional Corps*
2(-), 3 Infantry Divisions	4(-), 5 Infantry Divisions	12(-) Infantry Division
1 Provisional Division	Kastamonu Redif Division	Izmit, Çanakkale Redif Divisions
Usak Redif Division		
	Under army control	
	Independent Cavalry Division	
SECOND EASTERN ARMY		
III Corps	*XVII Provisional Corps*	*XVIII Provisional Corps*
7(-), 8(-), 9(-) Infantry Divisions	Samsun, Ergli, Trabzon Redif Divisions	Yozgat, Ankara, Aydin Redif Divisions
Konya, Amasya Redif Divisions		
	Under army control	
	5th Light Cavalry Brigade	

Note: (-) indicates a formation at less than full strength.

Source: Turkish General Staff, Murat Tunca, trans. *1912–1913 Balkan Harbinde, Turk-Bulgar Harbi, III Cilt, Lüleburgaz-Pinarhisar Muharebesi* (Istanbul: Askeri Matbaa, 1943), 127–129.

Army now consisted of the 1st Sofia Infantry Division, the 10th Provisional Infantry Division, and the 10th Cavalry Regiment. The more powerful Bulgarian Third Army consisted of the 4th Breslav Infantry Division, the 5th Tuna Infantry Division, the 6th Bdin Infantry Division, the 8th Cavalry Regiment, and three artillery battalions. Moreover, exaggerating the absence of the 3rd Infantry Division was the fact that the infantry divisions of the First Army had reduced establishments (having only sixteen battalions, opposed to the normal twenty-four). Thus, the force ratio greatly favored the Third Army, which had sev-enty-two infantry battalions to the thirty-two of the First Army. It was important that the Bulgarian army staffs had successfully fought a major battle and had enjoyed several days of respite to plan and coordinate continued operations. The Bulgarian plan for the forthcoming battle was for the more powerful Third Army to execute a frontal assault and the smaller First Army to execute an envelopment.37 Unusually, the

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Bulgarian cavalry was kept in the center behind the infantry divisions instead of being assigned a screening or reconnaissance mission.

On October 27, the Bulgarian armies began to move eastward. Urged on by an aggressive commander, General Radko Dimitriev, the Third Army outpaced its sibling First Army, brushing aside scattered Ottoman resistance. The First Army, under General Vasil Kutinchev, was delayed considerably by rain and mud. On October 29, 1912, the Third Army made contact with elements of the Ottoman Army near the small village of Karaağaç Köyü.

The arrival of the Bulgarians on the field caught the Ottoman First Army in the middle of a major reorganization of its existing command arrangements. It caught the Turks in the middle of a major reconfigura-tion of its forces on the ground as well. However, Abdullah Paşa was well aware of the Bulgarian advance and had, as a precautionary measure, ordered regimental outposts to the west of the main positions. As the enemy advanced, these outposts inflicted casualties, gauged the Bulgarian strength, and withdrew behind the main Turkish defensive lines. The First Eastern Army was dug in along the low hills immediately to the east of Karaağaç Dere and had its left flank solidly anchored on the banks of the Ergene River. Its divisions were aligned and positioned to a point about several kilometers north of Karaağaç itself, and there the Turkish line ended. The right flank of the First Eastern Army simply hung in the air and was unprotected. To the north, the Ottoman III Corps of the Second Eastern Army lay just to the west of Vize. It had been ordered to occupy the high ground astride the Pinarhisar-Vize road just to the west of the eastern branch of Karaağaç Dere. A gap of several kilometers would still separate the armies, and the Ottoman XVII Corps had

been ordered forward from positions around Müsinli to fill the gap between them (Map 4.3 shows operations planned for October 29, 1912).
At approximately 6:30 A.M. the Bulgarian 5th Infantry Division began forward movement from its positions in and around the village of Pinarhisar. The advance was led by the 2nd Brigade, which had orders to reach Çongra.38 The brigade immediately began to encounter elements of the oncoming Ottoman III Corps, and by 7:30 A.M. the division reported heavy rifle fire. The Bulgarians responded with effective artillery fire an hour later and began to probe the Turkish line. It was apparent to the Bulgarians that a major Ottoman force lay on their flank, which threatened forward movement to Çongra. Determined to attack, the 5th Infantry Division brought elements of its 1st and 3rd Brigades forward, and at 3 P.M., a four-regiment Bulgarian attack fell on the III Corps. The Turks were caught without having an opportunity to dig trenches, and a meeting engagement resulted. The cheering Bulgarians

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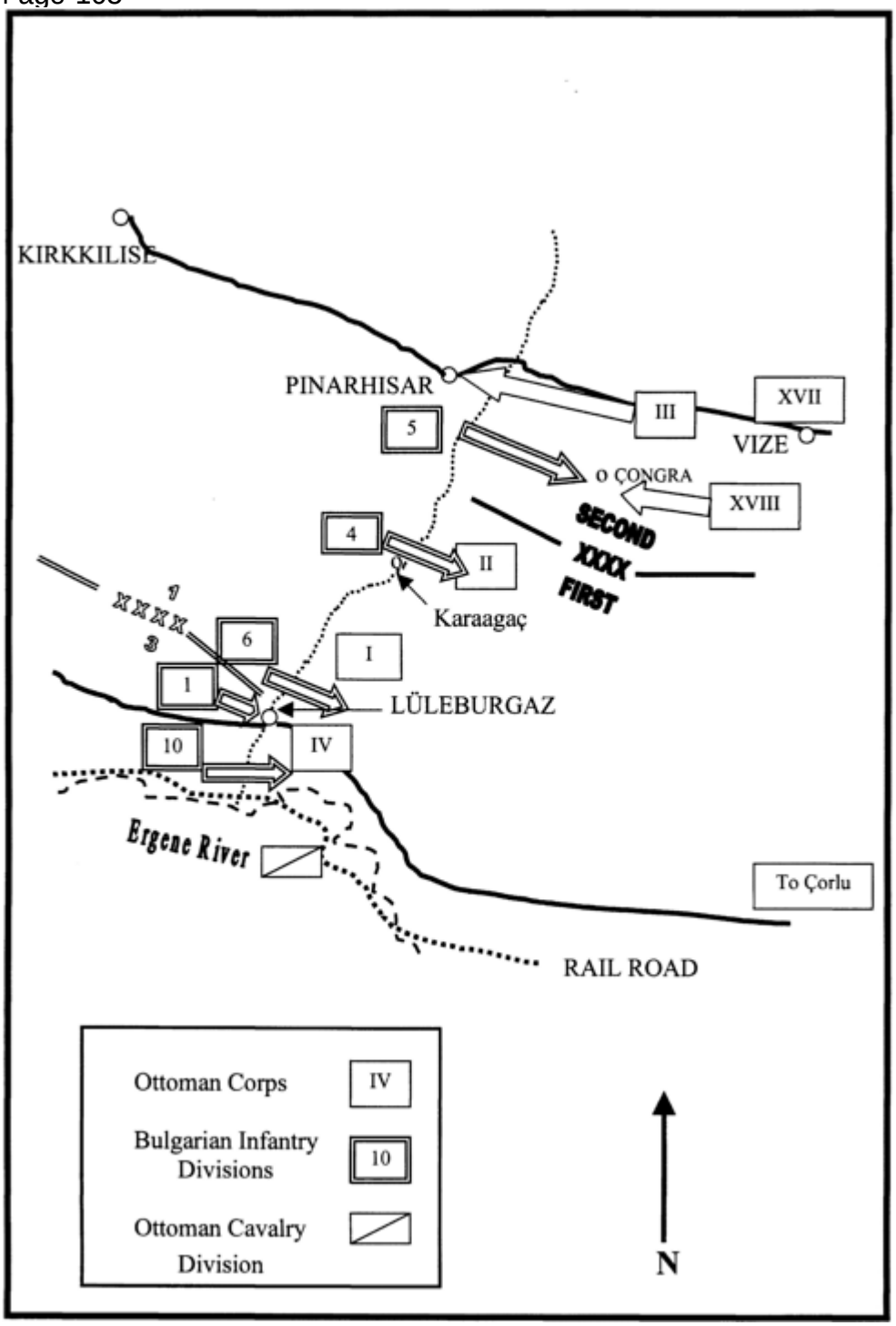

Map 4.3 Lüleburgaz to Pinarhisar, Planned Operations, October 29, 1912.

attacked with bayonets fixed. However, Mahmut Muhtar's troops held firm and were powerfully supported by artillery. As darkness fell, Turkish counterattacks pushed the Bulgarians back to their start lines. As darkness fell on the Second Eastern Army, the Light Cavalry Brigade moved forward to screen the III Corps's left flank. At 11:30 P.M., Mahmut Muhtar reported to the Second Eastern Army that he had suffered about five hundred casualties.39

To the south in the First Eastern Army's sector, the Bulgarians were likewise preparing for offensive operations, and all four remaining infantry divisions began to move forward at 8:30 A.M. In the center, the commander of the 4th "Preslav" Infantry Division planned a massed infantry attack using all three of his infantry brigades. By 10:30 A.M. he had brought his brigades on line on a very narrow front and begun the advance.40 The Bulgarians had massed their entire divisional artillery wheel-to-wheel (nine field artillery batteries and three howitzer batteries) on the high ground, overlooking Karaağaç Dere and simultaneously began to fire. On the high ground on the opposite bank, the Ottoman 4th and 5th Infantry Divisions of the II Corps awaited the enemy in shallow field trenches. In reserve behind these infantry divisions lay the Kastamonu and Çanakkale Redif Divisions, and the I Corps's 3rd Infantry Division. The Ottoman artillery was distributed along the length of the corps's, front, in direct support of the infantry.

By 11:30 A.M. casualties among the Ottoman artillery units were beginning to mount. Especially hard hit were the draft animals and the field guns themselves. The Turkish return fire was ineffective and did not seem to stop the Bulgarian cannonade. About noon, the massive Bulgarian infantry attack began, and by 1:30 P.M. the Ottoman lines were engulfed in fighting. The worried commander of the adjacent I Corps began to move his uncommitted 3rd Infantry Division northeast to guard his flank in case the II Corps front collapsed.41 The fighting raged in the shallow trenches of the Turks and the Bulgarians slowly gained the upper hand, and by 3 P.M. the Turks were in full retreat. Once again a Bulgarian infantry attack with fixed bayonets, well supported by aggressive field artillery, had prevailed against Turkish troops. The fleeing remnants of the Ottoman 4th and 5th Infantry Divisions were reduced to battered groups of dazed survivors. Unknown to the Turks, the Bulgarian cavalry division was poised immediately behind the Preslav Division, waiting for an opportunity to find a breach in the Turkish line.

About a kilometer to the rear of the rapidly dissolving Ottoman II Corps, the Turks were moving their reserve forward. The Kastamonu and Çanakkale Redif Divisions were ordered to advance and restore

the integrity of the Turkish line. Supported by the surviving II Corps artillery, these reserve infantry divisions managed to halt the exultant, but worn-out, Bulgarians. By 5 p.m. the fighting slowed and the Bulgarians were left in a huge salient extending deeply into the front of the First Eastern Army. Bulgarian regiments began the depressing business of counting survivors, and most regiments reported by 9:30 p.m. that casualties had been very heavy.42 While the Bulgarians had not achieved the desired breakthrough, the Ottoman II Corps was, for all practical purposes, destroyed as a fighting formation (Map 4.4 shows the tactical situation on the evening of October 29, 1912).

On October 28, in the southern sector of the Bulgarian front, the Bulgarians made preparations to seize Lüleburgaz on the following day. The 2nd Brigade of the 6th Infantry Division and the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division were tasked to attack the Ottoman line immediately to the north of the village. Along the Ergene River, on the far right flank of the Bulgarian line, the Bulgarian 10th Provisional Infantry Division was assigned the mission of securing the Lüleburgaz train station (immediately to the south of the village). As in the north, the troops began to move forward at about 7:30 A.M. on October 29.43 Once the flanking objectives were taken, the 1st Brigade of the 6th Infantry Division was assigned the mission of seizing the village of Lüleburgaz itself. Opposite the Bulgarians lay the 12th Infantry Division and the Izmit Redif Division of the Ottoman IV Corps.

The combined attack of the 1st and 6th Infantry Divisions advanced twelve hundred meters uphill to the Turkish trenches. Unfortunately for the Bulgarians, the bayonet failed them and the Turks held the line. By 4:30 P.M,. the Bulgarian attack was finished and the battered regiments were pulling back to their morning start lines. Later in the evening, the Bulgarians would pull the 2nd Brigade of the 6th Infantry Division out of the line and move it toward the village of Türkbey to support the right flank of the exhausted 4th Infantry Division. To the south, the massed brigades of the 10th Provisional Infantry Division overran Ottoman troops defending the train station, capturing two locomotives and sixty box cars,44 and pressed relentlessly toward the trenches of the Ottoman 12th Infantry Division. Again the Bulgarians launched massed infantry bayonet attacks, supported by heavy artillery fires, against the Turks in the early afternoon. As in the north, the Bulgarian infantry assault failed, leaving the troops deadlocked in contact at 3 P.M. The Bulgarians would hold

on to these positions throughout the night.
In the center the 1st Brigade of the Bulgarian 6th Infantry Division advanced and occupied Lüleburgaz in the mid-afternoon. Unknown to the Bulgarians, however, the Turks were planning a spoiling attack, and at 3 P.M. a Turkish counterattack hit the Bulgarians, who were consoli-

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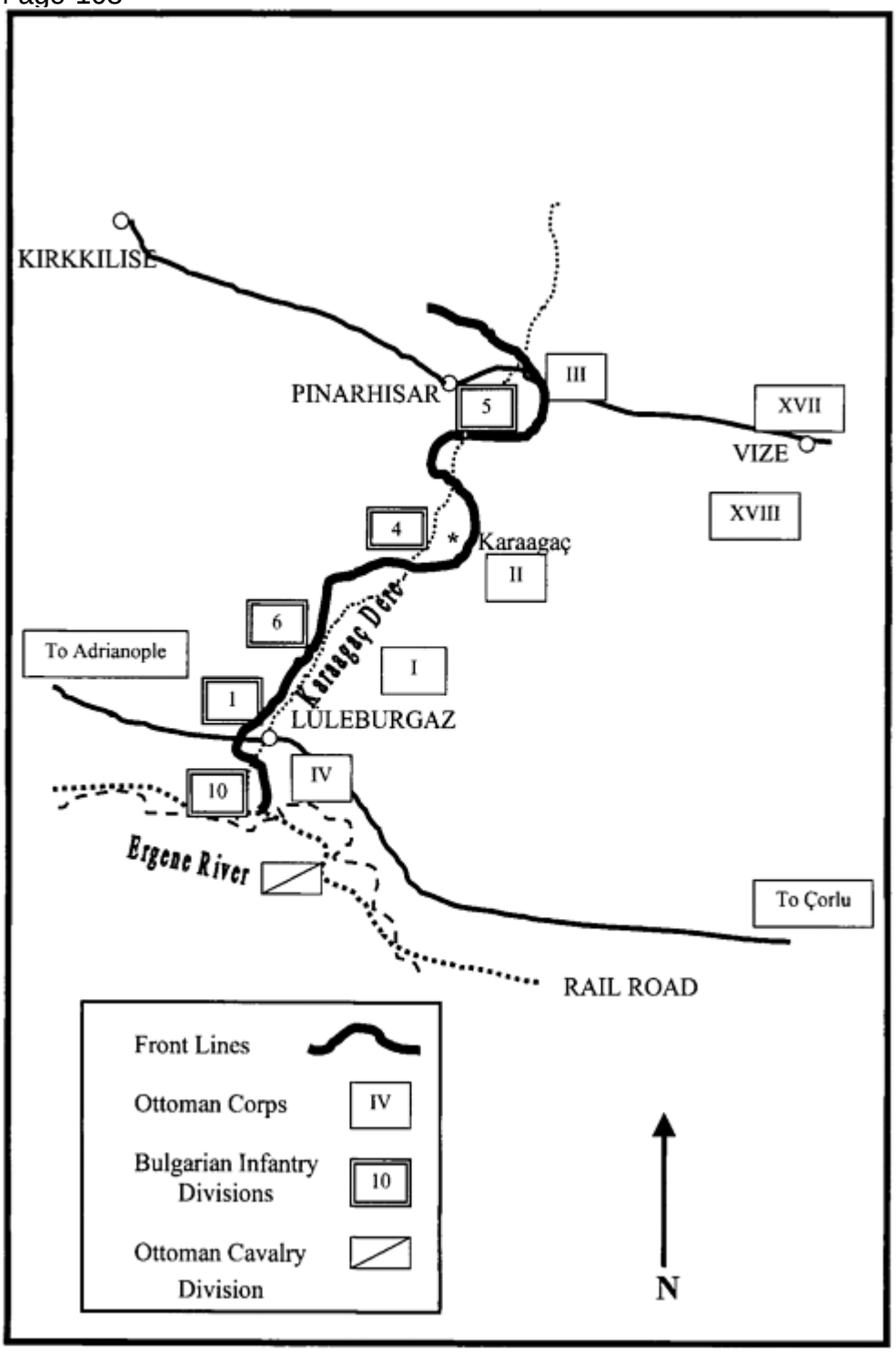

Map 4.4 Lüleburgaz to Pinharhisar, Operational Situation, October 29, 1912.

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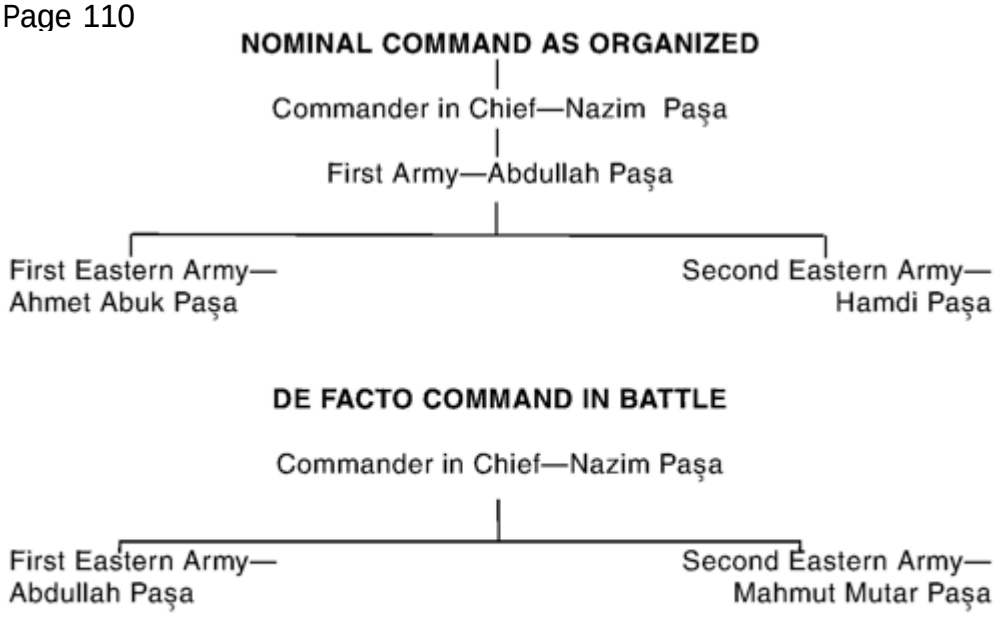
dating their grip on Lüleburgaz. The Turks swept the unprepared enemy out of the village and pushed the Bulgarians back to their start lines.
The day's fighting had been heavy, and results were mixed on both sides. The Bulgarians had shattered two

regular Ottoman Army infantry divisions and were firmly holding a salient in the middle of the First Army's defensive positions. However, the Bulgarian flanking attacks had been largely unsuccessful. The Turkish lines were holding, and reinforcements were rapidly arriving on the Pinarhisar front, in Mahmut Muhtar's III Corps sector. This accentuated a growing problem in command and control in the Ottoman field armies. Since the III Corps commander was in contact and had a grip on the tactical situation, Nizam Paşa came to rely on direct communications between himself and Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, effectively bypassing Hamdi Paşa, the nom-inal First Eastern Army commander.45

The revised organizational architecture of the Ottoman field armies soon proved to be dysfunctional.46 The presence in the field of Nazim Paşa (who became actively engaged in issuing combat orders) over-shadowed Abdullah Paşa, effectively relegating him to command of the First Eastern Army. In the Second Eastern Army, Hamdi Paşa proved ineffectual and was rapidly superseded by the energetic and ambitious Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, who soon assumed tactical control of that army's operations. Figure 4.1 depicts the formal versus the de facto Ottoman command architecture during the battle of Lüleburgaz-Pinarhisar.

During the night of October 29–30, Nazim Paşa attempted to regain the initiative and ordered that the right-wing corps attack the following morning with its entire strength. He also sent word to the Adrianople fortress to execute a supporting attack and directed the Second Eastern Army to restore the integrity of its defensive lines. Finally, Nazim Paşa ordered his subordinate commanders to send staff officers to Satiköyü at first light to receive any subsequent orders.47 The Bulgarian commander was likewise active during the night and ordered the two armies to continue to attack. Worried about the apparent reverse in Lüleburgaz, he ordered the Cavalry Division south across the Ergene River to screen the 10th Infantry Division and his right flank. Abdullah Paşa's staff worked throughout the night to produce combat orders, and at 3 A.M. on October 30, the commander of the 2nd Infantry Division arrived at the headquarters to discuss the apparent retreat of the Bulgarians in his sector. At 7:30 A.M., the final combat orders were given.48 Abdullah Paşa's orders were extremely aggressive. He believed that the enemy verged on retreat and that conditions were ripe for an Ottoman pursuit. He ordered the Right Wing Group (the III, XVII, and XVIII Corps) to advance on two roads toward Pinarhisar, to "butcher the enemy" and then to pursue them. In the center, he ordered



Source: Turkish General Staff, Murat Tunca, trans., *1912–1913 Balkan Harbinde, Turk-Bulgar Harbi, III Cilt, Lüleburgaz-Pinarhisar Muharebesi* (Istanbul: Askeri Matbaa, 1943), 131.

Figure 4.1 Ottoman Command Architecture, October 29-November 2, 1912.

the Uşak Redif Division and the 4th Infantry Division to attack toward Kolibalar and Osmancik. The I, II, and IV Corps were ordered into a general advance as well. On the left flank, he ordered the cavalry division to conduct a supporting demonstration.

Across the Karaağaç Dere, the Bulgarian high command was busy throughout the night trying to sort through the mass of reports and attempting to devise a coherent battle plan. The Bulgarians had sustained heavy casualties during the day's fighting, and it was evident that some of the reports that had been received were wrong.49 After consulting his staff, General Dimitriev decided to continue the attack. This decision was made much easier because he had received word from the Second Army that a brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division

was moving forward to reinforce him. Furthermore, he was also informed that the Serbian Timok Infantry Division was enroute to join the Bulgarian forces investing Adrianople. This would free the Bulgarian 9th Plevne Infantry Division for field operations in Thrace. Encouraged by these developments, Dimitriev began to plan for the reorganization of the First and Third Armies.

At 3:50 A.M. on October 30, the Bulgarian First and Third Armies received orders from General Fitchev.50 The Third Army was ordered to

seize Lüleburgaz and to support First Army operations with its left wing. Both armies were ordered to advance, and the cavalry division was ordered to observe and screen the right flank. This order merely confirmed the operations that General Dimitriev and General Kutinchev had already worked out that night. In the south, the Bulgarians planned to launch the 1st Infantry Division (supported by the 10th Infantry Division) against Lüleburgaz, and in the center, the 4th and 6th Infantry Divisions would attack as well. In the north, the 5th Infantry Division would attempt to force its way between the Ottoman III Corps and IV Corps. This plan left nothing in reserve. (Map 4.5 shows the operations planned for October 30, 1912.)

On the Bulgarian right flank, the 1st Infantry Division commander worked to produce a viable attack order that would be ready by dawn. He envisioned advancing at 7:30 A.M. and attacking the Turks in the vicinity of Lüleburgaz with his 1st and 2nd Brigades. He also informed his troops that they would be supported on both flanks by the 6th and 10th Infantry Divisions and gave further orders to his supporting field artillery. Unfortunately, by 10:15 A.M. the division had not moved. An hour later, the first brigade reports reached the division headquarters, revealing that the two brigades were experiencing difficulties in reorganizing and were thus late in begining the advance. The attack was rescheduled for 3 P.M., and notifications were sent to the adjacent Third Army. In the meantime, the Turks continued to dig their trenches deeper.51

The Bulgarian field artillery began to deliver preparatory fires during the morning, and by 10 A.M., a full-scale artillery duel was in motion between the Bulgarian 1st Division artillery regiments and the regiments of the Ottoman IV Corps artillery. The rescheduled Bulgarian attack orders were revised at 1 P.M., and finally at 2:30 P.M., the Bulgarians began to move forward. By this time the Turkish trenches were noticed to be quite deep. The Bulgarian attack immediately ran into heavy and effective Turkish rifle and artillery fires and had great difficulty in maintaining the advance. Nevertheless, by 3 P.M. the 1st Infantry Division had inserted several infantry detachments into Lüleburgaz. The IV Corps immediately dispatched reinforcements to the threatened sector to assist in counterattacking the Bulgarians.52 Furious Ottoman counterattacks stopped the Bulgarians in their tracks (the official Turkish history called this action the “second punishing of the 1st Infantry Division at Lüleburgaz”).

On the Bulgarian right flank the 10th Infantry Division had likewise started late and had not even received its final attack orders until after 9:30 that morning. This gave the Ottoman IV Corps plenty of time to request reinforcements from Abdullah Paşa, which were promptly released from the I Corps in the form of the 1st Rifle Regiment. Some cavalry detachments from the cavalry division were sent as well. The

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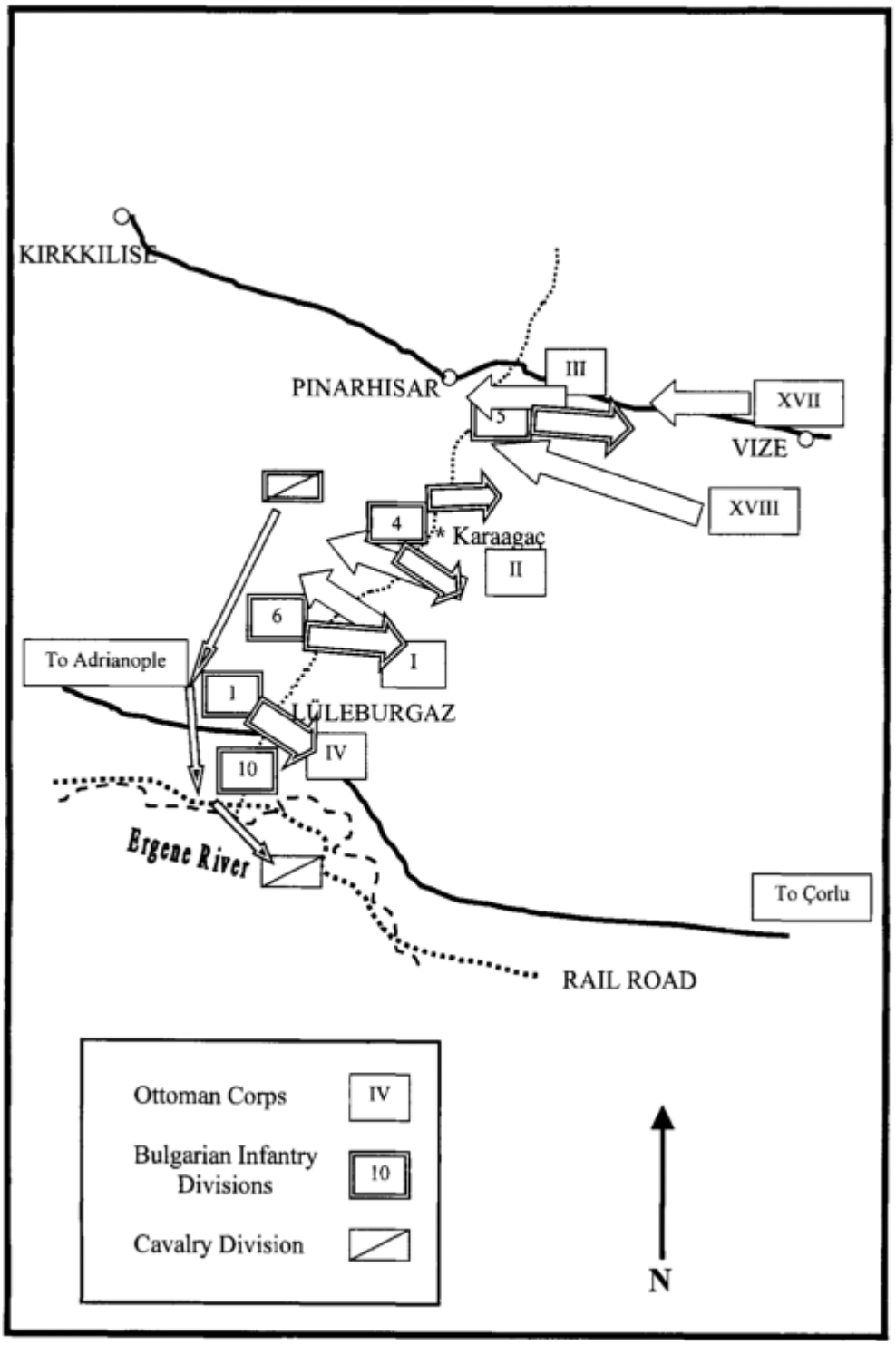

Map 4.5 Lüleburgaz to Pinarhisar, Planned Operations, October 30, 1912.

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cavalry division was also ordered to tighten up its grip on screening the Turks' left flank. By early afternoon, the Bulgarians took up a hesitant advance in the face of heavy Turkish rifle fire. Casualties mounted, including officers, as fighting raged near the Lüleburgaz train station. The Bulgarians were unable to break through the Ottoman trenches, and the front stabilized unchanged from the morning dispositions.

In the meantime, the Bulgarian Cavalry Division began its march toward the army's right flank. By 2:30 P.M., the division commander reported that he was engaging some Ottoman detachments near the village of Müsellim Köy and they were in retreat. The Bulgarian cavalry now faced the Ottoman cavalry south of the Ergene River. Over the next several hours, the Bulgarian cavalry observed the unsuccessful Bulgarian infantry attacks on Lüleburgaz but, because of the intervening river, were unable to assist their fellow soldiers. Determined to take the village, the Bulgarians decided to launch an all-out night attack on Lüleburgaz, and

the Third Army sent orders to both infantry divisions at 4:30 P.M. The 1st Infantry Division launched a two-brigade bayonet attack at 6 P.M., carried out by soldiers screaming the familiar “Hurra” as they advanced.53 The Bulgarians broke into the trenches of the now-reinforced Izmit Redif Division, and discipline immediately began to break down. Many of the Bulgarians panicked and began to stream to the rear. Others were isolated in the trenches and killed, and by 9:30 P.M., the 1st Infantry Division was in full retreat. Coordination between the Bulgarians was badly bungled, and the 10th Infantry Division failed to move forward, despite having received further army orders to do so at 5:30. Although several detachments of the 10th Division’s 1st Brigade made a supporting sortie, the simultaneous two-division attack did not materialize. As a result, the Ottoman IV Corps was able to mount all available reserves into a large counterattack that completely ejected the Bulgarians from Lüleburgaz later that night.

In the center, the overlapping Bulgarian and Ottoman attacks began around Karaağaç at 7:35 A.M., when the Bulgarian 6th “Bdin” Infantry Division began its attack near Türkbey. By 8:00 A.M., both Bulgarian and Ottoman artillery were in action and their infantries were advancing. The Turkish artillery was particularly effective on this day and resulted in numerous casualties, human and animal, among the Bulgarian artillery batteries.54 The troops of the 6th Division’s 2nd Brigade hit the defending Ottoman Uşak Redif Division very hard at 10:00 A.M., forcing the Turks to retreat. The victorious Bulgarians took Türkbey and continued to advance eastward. Unfortunately for the Bulgarians, however, the troops of the 2nd Brigade were stopped cold by the regular Ottoman 2nd Infantry Division. Heavy fires from machine guns and rifles now pounded the soldiers of the 1st Brigade, but the Bulgarian

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advance relentlessly continued. The Ottoman I Corps commander sent reports to the adjacent II Corps and the First Army requesting reinforcements and noted that he was on the verge of being ejected from his trenches.

The triumphant Bulgarians, urged on by the music of their regimental bands, surged up and out of the Karaağaç valley, as usual shouting “Hurra” and carrying fixed bayonets.55 The Turk reserve trenches were rapidly taken, and the now thoroughly routed Uşak Redif Division fled in disarray. This defeat critically endangered the Ottoman position by exposing the left flank of the II Corps to Bulgarian envelopment. Fortunately for the Turks, however, the Bulgarian cavalry, which had, until that morning, been positioned immediately behind the victorious 6th Infantry Division, was now south of the Ergene River.

Just to the north of Karaağaç, nearly simultaneous Ottoman and Bulgarians attacks collided. As dawn broke, Bulgarian and Ottoman artillery and infantry fires began as the troops began to prepare themselves for fresh assaults. At 6:30 A.M., the 3rd Infantry Division and the Kastamonu Redif Division of the Ottoman II Corps began to advance toward the Bulgarian lines, which were a thousand meters distant. The Bulgarian’s fire was devastating, and the Ottoman attack faltered and died. Turkish casualties, especially among company-grade officers, were particularly heavy. Nevertheless, the battered Turks pushed the Bulgarians out of their trenches. Unfortunately, however, they retained no reserves with which to take advantage of this temporary victory.

The Bulgarian 4th Infantry Division had been ordered to execute its own attack that morning as well. Now, as the Turks pushed back its forward elements, the Bulgarian 4th Infantry Division simply executed its planned attack as a counterattack. By 3:00 P.M. a well-conducted, brigade-sized Bulgarian counterattack had ejected the Turks from their newly won ground and restored the Bulgarian lines. Thus, by the end of the day (October 30, 1912), the Turks had suffered their second defeat at Karaağa.56

Finally, that morning in the north, further battles were developing between Mahmut Muhtar’s III Corps and the Bulgarian 5th Tuna Infantry Division. The aggressive Mahmut Muhtar Paşa had concentrated the regular infantry divisions of his III Corps on a very narrow front, facing south toward Çongra along the Pinarhisar-Vize Road. In orders sent at 2 A.M. to his subordinates, he indicated that he expected the battle to resume about 7:00 A.M. and that he intended to force the Bulgarians to retreat out of their positions north of Çongra. Mahmut Muhtar Paşa also coordinated with the Ottoman XVII and XVIII Corps to assist him in exploiting success. Nearly simultaneously, the commander of the Bulgarian 5th Infantry Divison was likewise planning to

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attack his adversaries and was busily coordinating his attack to coincide with the attack of the neighboring 4th Infantry Division.

Again, heavy preparatory artillery fires began early that morning, and as the Bulgarians were reorganizing for their attack, they were struck by the Ottoman III Corps. Mahmut Muhtar Paşa was, typically, in the thick of the fighting, and by 9:30 A.M. the Turks held the initiative. Some of the Bulgarian 5th Infantry Division’s infantry battalions were forced to retreat over five hundred meters, creating a tactically dangerous situation

for them. The Bulgarian division commander was urged to retreat by some regimental commanders and urged to attack by others.57 Typically, he decided to launch bayonet attacks, which were unsuccessful in stemming the Turkish onslaught. The Bulgarians then began a general retreat, during which they were badly mauled by the Turkish artillery. As darkness fell over the northern end of the battlefield, Mahmut Muhtar Paşa had pushed the Bulgarians off from their hard-won positions on the high ground and back down into Karaağaç Dere.

During the day's fighting, mixed reports poured into both the Ottoman and Bulgarian army headquarters. Many of these reports were carried by junior staff officers and appeared confused and contradic-tory. By mid-afternoon, Abdullah Paşa, in particular, saw the developing tactical situation as particularly threatening. Reports from the IV Corps had resulted in him sending his slim reserves to assist in the battles developing around Lüleburgaz. Later, the I Corps found itself in great difficulties and unable to contain the Bulgarian advance at Türkbey. By 4 P.M. Abdullah Paşa was aware that the II Corps's attack (north of Karaağaç) had failed, and moreover, both the I and II Corps's commanders had sent reports indicating that they felt the tactical situation was very dangerous.58 Their Bulgarian opponents had similar reports recording the rout of the 5th Infantry Division and the defeat of the 1st Infantry Division. Although neither side knew it at the time, the Bulgarians verged on winning the second major battle of the war in Thrace.

Throughout the day of October 30, 1912, the Ottoman commander in chief Nazim Paşa had been paying very close attention to the stream of bad news pouring out of Abdullah Paşa's headquarters in Satiköyü. He became very concerned that the left flank of the IV Corps was in particular danger and directed that all incoming reinforcements be sent to the Seyitler train station (the next stop to the east of the Lüleburgaz station). Earlier, the Ayvalik Redif Regiment (two infantry battalions) and the Limnos Battalion had gone into action there, straight off the incoming troop trains. He sent Staff Major Vasif, from his own general staff, to the station to determine the exact status of the situation there.

Several other incoming infantry battalions and a field artillery battery were ordered there as well. Altogether, Nazim Paşa intended to put nine fresh infantry battalions with artillery (a divisional equivalent) into the fight on the army's left flank. As Mahmut Muhtar Paşa appeared to have the right flank well in hand, he directed the Second Eastern Army to release the independent Light Cavalry Brigade and send it south to the First Eastern Army.

During the day, Abdullah Paşa had watched the battles rage from a nearby hilltop; he returned to his headquarters at 5:30 P.M. As evening fell, Abdullah Paşa summoned the I Corps commander to his headquarters to discuss the deteriorating situation caused by the dissolution of the Uşak Redif Division. At 7 P.M., the commanders met. Both were dismayed by the number of men they had observed fleeing with women and children from the local villages and farms.59 Retiring to a small house that served as his field headquarters, Abdullah Paşa received further reports concerning artillery ammunition shortages and the increasing number of wounded who required transport to the rear. Some-time that evening, he came to the conclusion that the enemy right wing was verging on enveloping his left wing and that he must retreat in order to save his army. Moreover, Abdullah Paşa apparently came to this conclusion without discussion or input from Nazim Paşa. That night, he dispatched warning orders to the I, II, and IV Corps informing them of his decision, while his chief of staff finalized the operations orders. The orders were published at 12:40 A.M. on October 31, 1912, and they ordered the corps to remain in position overnight. They specified that the three army corps would begin an orderly and phased retreat toward Çorlu and that the cavalry division would continue to screen the left flank. Abdullah Paşa himself began to move his headquarters to Çorlu that very night.

Meanwhile, the Bulgarians were likewise receiving reports concerning the day's fighting, which were mostly disheartening. However, they were cheered by the news that the powerful 1st Brigade of the 3rd "Balkan" Infantry Division was fast approaching to reinforce them. The Bulgarians again were determined to take Lüleburgaz and sent out appropriate orders to the 1st and 10th Infantry Divisions. Disturbed by the retreat of the 5th Infantry Division, General Dimitriev ordered the formation to hold on to Pinarhisar at all costs, as the incoming 1st Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division was due to reach Kirkkilise by 10 A.M. the next morning (and would thus be able to influence the battle). Clearly, the Bulgarians now held the psychological initiative in the battle.

October 31, 1912, was a day of disaster for the First Eastern Army. As dawn broke, all three Ottoman corps were preparing to conduct an orderly retreat and had sent in their strength reports. Unfortunately, the

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timing of the Turkish withdrawal coincided with the timing of the Bulgarian attacks. The Bulgarian 6th Infantry

Division began preparations at 5 A.M. and launched its attack at 8:30 A.M. This attack hit the unprepared Turks as they were pulling out of their forward positions and shattered the Ottoman I Corps. The withdrawal rapidly turned into a rout as the Bulgarians began to pursue the Turks. By 6:15 that evening the Bulgarians had reached Ahmetbey, and as darkness fell, the shattered I Corps rallied around Tartarlar. Several regiments had simply dissolved in the day's fighting. The Ottoman II Corps suffered a similar experience and was caught withdrawing by the attacking Bulgarian 4th Infantry Division. In short order, a massed Bulgarian infantry attack swept through Karaağaç, routing and pushing the Turks back to Topçukoy. The retreating regiments of both the I and II Corps became hopelessly intermixed during the day.

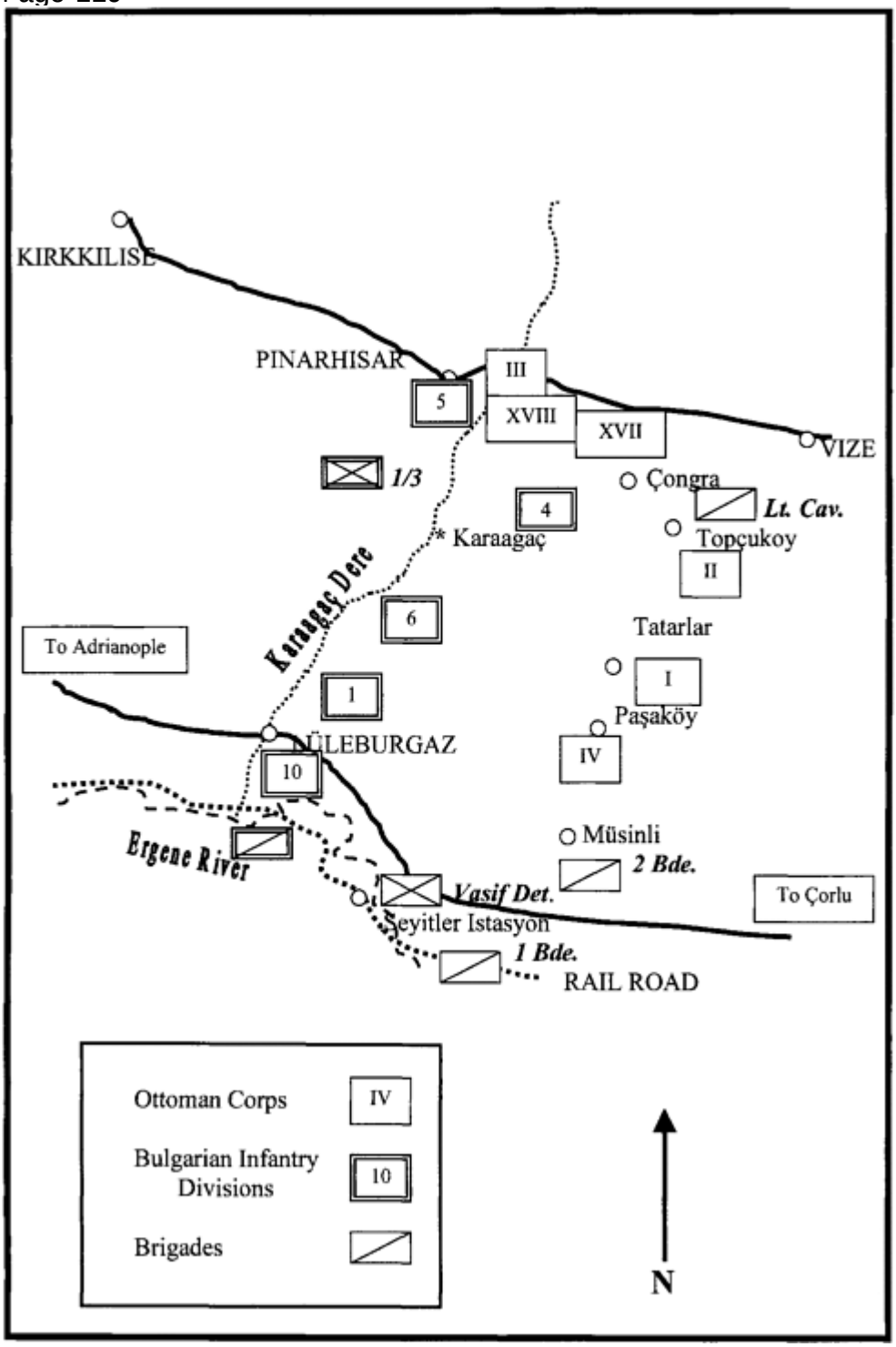
In the IV Corps's sector, the Bulgarian 10th Infantry Division began early morning attacks in the sector of the Ottoman 12th Infantry Division. As the Turks attempted to disengage in order to retreat, the Bulgarian 1st Infantry Division began its attack and the Bulgarian cavalry division attacked north to cut the rail line to Lüleburgaz train station. Faced now with a flanking attack by the Bulgarian cavalry on the left and with the collapse of its neighboring I Corps on its right, resistance in the IV Corps's sector collapsed near midday. By 5:30 P.M., the IV Corps was also routed and was fleeing to the east with the victorious Bulgarians in hot pursuit. As darkness fell, the IV Corps was centered around the village of Pasakoy but had scattered units stretching south to the Lüleburgaz-Çorlu road. To the south at the Seyitler train station, Staff Major Vasif had taken command of the various infantry battalions arriving there and had formed the ad hoc Vasif Detachment (Binbaşi Vasif Müfrezesi). He held the Bulgarians fast.

Thus, by the end of the day, the southern half of the strong Ottoman position that had been anchored on Lüleburgaz and the Ergene River was broken. The First Eastern Army had been routed, pushed back five kilometers, and rendered combat ineffective. However, in contrast to the disaster that overtook the First Eastern Army, the Second Eastern Army enjoyed a day of success.

The energetic Mahmut Muhtar Paşa and his staff had worked throughout the night to put together a plan of attack.60 During the course of the night, he brought up the XVII and the XVIII Corps and positioned them on the left flank of the III Corps. Mahmut Muhtar Paşa now had almost the entire combat strength of the Second Eastern Army in a compact fist, ready to hit the Bulgarian 5th Infantry Division at Pinarhisar. He had also massed his field artillery to support the attack and had consolidated several Redif infantry battalions into his regular

army infantry divisions. Mahmut Muhtar Paşa planned to launch his attack at 2 P.M., October 31, 1912, with the intent of decisively defeating the Bulgarians and taking Pinarhisar. However, Bulgarian spoiling attacks prompted him to launch piecemeal attacks that morning. By midday, the armies were locked in combat, although the front remained largely unchanged when reports of the First Army's disasterous withdrawal began to trickle into the Second Eastern Army's headquarters. The most disturbing reports came from the XVII Corps (his left flank formation), indicating that the adjacent II Corps had collapsed and was fleeing to the east. More ominous reports soon followed, and Mahmut Muhtar Paşa was informed that the Bulgarian 4th Infantry Division was fast approaching his unprotected flank near Çongra. He immediately canceled his planned attack and began to salvage the situation by ordering the independent Light Cavalry Brigade (then enroute to the south) to take up defensive positions near Çongra. He also ordered the XVII Corps to swing itself back and provide flank protection for the army. As the XVII Corps withdrew from its forward positions, the Bulgarian 5th Infantry Division, encouraged by the success of the adjacent Bulgarian 4th Infantry Division, seized the opportunity to advance and pushed forward toward Çongra. By dusk, the tactical situation had stabilized, and the hard-marching Bulgarian 1st Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division had reached the battlefield (Map 4.6 shows the situation on the evening of October 31, 1912).

The priority of Ottoman army-level planning that night focused on the restoration of lateral communications between the remnants of the infantry divisions holding the Topçukoy-Tatarlar-Paşakoy line.61 Of special concern was the greatly reduced strength of many of the First Eastern Army's infantry divisions. For example, the 5th Infantry Division reported two thousand men and two batteries of artillery, the Kastamonu Redif Division and the 3rd Infantry Division each reported a mere thousand men and a single artillery battery. The total effective strength of the badly battered First Eastern Army was somewhere between thirty and thirty-five thousand men,62 the remainder being unaccounted for. Additionally, it appeared to the Ottoman staffs that the Bulgarians might drive a wedge between the two Ottoman field armies. Nevertheless, coherent orders went out overnight to ensure that the Turks could maintain a line of troops from Vize to the Ergene River. Fortunately for the Turks, however, the Bulgarians were beginning to feel exhaustion from three days of combat. General Dimitriev decided to consolidate his gains and to rest his troops on the right flank. Thus, the 1st, 6th, and 10th Infantry Divisions received orders to reorganize in the field positions held by the Turks on the previous day. The cavalry division, as yet uncommitted to hard combat, was ordered to probe the



Map 4.6 Lüleburgaz to Pinarhisar, Operational Situation, October 31, 1912.

Ottoman left flank. Dimitriev ordered the fresh 1st Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division forward to reinforce the 4th Infantry Division in an attack designed to rupture the seam between the Ottoman field armies. He also ordered a full frontal attack by the 5th Infantry Division on the Mahmut Muhtar's III Corps. In fact, General Dimitriev's plan saved the Turks from certain disaster by not pressing the attack on the battered formations of the First Eastern Army.

On November 1, 1912, the First Eastern Army began to issue orders to continue the retreat eastward. The redoubtable Staff Major Vasif reported that he had collected five Redif infantry battalions, parts of three more Redif infantry battalions, and a depot battalion and was continuing to hold the line. Because of the dangerous situation developing in the north, the chief of the Ottoman General Staff, Hadi Paşa, gave orders relieving the

II Corps from its assignment to the First Eastern Army and reassigning it to the Second Eastern Army. The reorganized II Corps now consisted of the 3rd and the 5th Infantry Divisions and the Kastamonu Redif Division, and it was now holding the left flank of the second Eastern Army. The I and IV Corps prepared to continue their retreat. About midday, the impatient commander of the Bulgarian 6th Infantry Division decided to advance on the I Corps's positions at Tatarlar, which the Turks appeared to be abandoning. The 2nd Brigade of the division, supported by field artillery, advanced east through Ahmetbey and encountered the troops of the Uşak Redif Division still holding Tatarlar, whereupon the Bulgarians quit their advance and withdrew to the right flank of the 6th Infantry Division's lines.

In the north, the ever-aggressive Mahmut Muhtar Paşa prepared to attack the Bulgarians with the combined III and XVII Corps. The artillery preparation began at 9 A.M., and the infantry attacks were launched shortly thereafter but immediately failed in the face of the well-dug-in 5th Infantry Division. The Bulgarians followed up by launching counterattacks on the Turkish lines at 2 P.M. with the 3rd Brigade of the 5th Infantry Division and the fresh 1st Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division, but these also failed. The 5th Infantry Division continued its attacks in the dark until 11:30 P.M. These night attacks were very costly, and the units involved lost 75 percent of their officers.63 The main Bulgarian attack, however, was delivered by the three massed brigades of the 4th Infantry Division. This attack was aimed at the II and XVIII Corps' positions at Çongra. The attack began at 8:30 A.M., but despite repeated Bulgarian attempts to break through, the Turks held their lines. Mahmut Muhtar Paşa launched a vicious counterattack with the Samsun Redif Division at 4:30 P.M., and the fighting raged until dark. At 5 P.M., however, the Turkish field artillery had depleted almost all of their ammunition.

Nazim Paşa received a confident telegram from Mahmut Muhtar Paşa indicating the fact that the Second Eastern Army was vigorously holding its northern positions. Despite this success, however, the commander in chief decided that the battered First Eastern Army was in no condition to continue the battle and that the time was ripe to take advantage of the fact that it had broken contact with the Bulgarians. Although Mahmut Muhtar Paşa wanted to continue to attack, Nazim Paşa gave orders for the Second Eastern Army to break contact and to retreat as well.

The next morning, covered by his remaining field artillery, Mahmut Muhtar began to withdraw his forces. The retreat was orderly and well executed, with detachments left in contact to ensure the departure of the main elements. Assisting the Turks was a night of rain and fog, which turned the countryside into a quagmire of mud. This materially assisted the Ottomans, who were retiring along hard roads, and hin-dered the Bulgarians, who lacked the tactical mobility to stop them. By dark on November 2, 1912, the Second Eastern Army had successfully broken contact and was withdrawing along the Vize road to the east. The Turks had lost the battle.

Casualties were severe on both sides. The Bulgarians lost 20,162 men, of whom 2,534 were dead. Most of the losses were in the Third Army's infantry divisions. The Ottoman Army lost perhaps 22,000 men, mostly in the shattered divisions of the First Eastern Army. Some 2,000 men were prisoners of war. Again the Turks lost artillery in the retreat—forty-five pieces in all.64

The reasons for the Ottoman disaster were numerous. However, Abdullah Paşa noted that "three commanders (the commander in chief, the chief of the general staff, and the army commander) in three places at the same time, all trying to control the battle"65 was a major factor in the equation of failure. Certainly, the presence of the Ottoman commander in chief on the field and the impromptu creation of two field armies with inadequate staffs in the midst of an active campaign hin-dered Ottoman performance. The Bulgarians, on the other hand, coordinated the operations of the First and Third Armies with seemingly effortless ability.

Neither side began the battle with particularly well developed battle plans. However, the Bulgarians were able to repeatedly seize the tactical initiative. The Bulgarian soldiery demonstrated superior morale and élan again and again throughout these battles, and once more their bayonet assaults were successful. Nevertheless, it is evident that with strong leadership, the Turks were capable of achieving a level of combat effectiveness adequate to compete with the Bulgarians, and Mahmut Muhtar Paşa's outstanding performance confirms this premise. In particular, the combat effectiveness of the Ottoman III Corps was excellent

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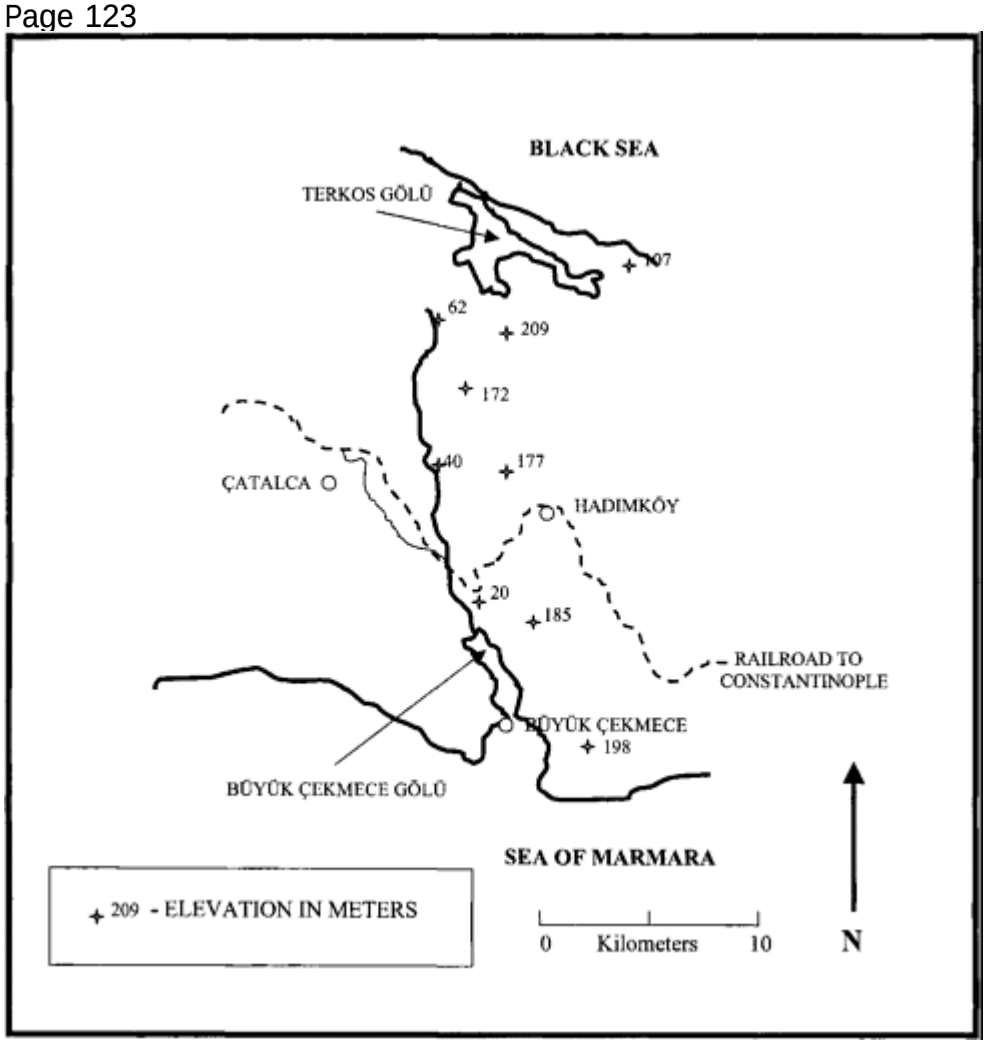
throughout the battle. Furthermore, some of the Turkish reservists (Redif) who found themselves fighting alongside the regular army were proving to be solid troops capable of holding their own in the line of battle.

THE RETREAT TO ÇATALCA

The Turks now began the retreat to their final defensive positions at Çatalca, which had last been invested by the Russians in February 1878. This position took its name from a small village about forty kilometers west of

Constantinople. The tremendous natural strength of the Çatalca position has never been adequately addressed in the history of the Balkan Wars.66 Beginning in the north, the lake of Terkos Gölü forms an eight-kilometer-long water obstacle. Then, traveling south, a high ridge centered on the village of Hadimköy laterally blocks the east-west approaches to Constantinople and, in military terms, represents the dominant terrain on the peninsula. The ridgeline was (and remains today) largely open grassland and offers magnificent observation to the west. Overlooking the Terkos Gölü, the ridge rises to a height of 162 meters above sea level. At Hadimköy, the ridgeline is 180 meters above sea level, and overlooking the coastal town of Büyük Çekmece on the Sea of Marmara, the ridge peaks at 198 meters. On the west side of the ridge, nearly at sea level, are the small tributaries of the Karasu Dere and the Sazli Dere, which empty into the northern end of the Büyük Çekmece Gölü (an arm of the Sea of Marmara). This natural lake extends eight kilometers inland and creates a natural water obstacle mirroring the Terkos Gölü in the north. Because of these coastal lakes, the actual defensible terrain requirement at the Çatalca position is a front of only twenty-five kilometers in length. Assuming that the enemy does not have an amphibious capability, the Çatalca position is one of the finest defensive positions in Europe (see Map 4.7).

In the years between 1878 and 1912, the Turks had considerably strengthened and fortified the “Çatalca Lines,” as the position came to be known. With advice from the German staff officers, the Turks rebuilt or constructed a line of ten forts running north to south at the western base of the Çatalca ridgeline. These were mostly concrete revetments with earthworks facing the enemy, and permanent artillery was installed in some of them. In early November, several more forts would be constructed as well. Centrally located ammunition depots in covered ground on the ridge itself and an underground telephone and telegraph system linking the forts completed the defensive arrangements. Most important, the position was strengthened by the existence of both the railroad and paved roads linking it to the capital. Finally, the proximity



Map 4.7 The Çatalca Position, 1912.

of Constantinople itself, with its hospitals, small arms and munitions factories, docks, and rail yards, was an immense source of logistical support for the Ottoman Army at Çatalca. The position was designated as the

Çatalca Fortified Area (Çatalca Müstahkem Mevki) and commanded by a brigadier general.
In late October 1912, the Ottoman General Staff directed that the Çatalca defensive system be refurbished and made ready for war. Earlier that month it had been stripped of both cannons and troops, which had been sent to the Adrianople fortress. Now, after the disastrous campaigns in Thrace, the Çatalca position assumed a dominant role in the planning of the defense of Constantinople. On November 2, 1912, Nazim Paşa notified the commander of the Çatalca Fortified Area that

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the First and Second Eastern Armies had been defeated and were retreating to the safety of his lines. Furthermore the commander in chief made clear his determination to hold the line there at any cost. It was now clear to the Ottoman General Staff that its opening strategy of the operational offensive within the larger framework of the strategic defensive had failed. News of the Western Army's defeat at Kumonova and the defeats in Thrace were nails in the coffin of Ottoman strategic planning. Furthermore, Adrianople, now encircled, faced siege, and both Yanya in Epirus and Scutari in Albania were thought to be in danger of encirclement as well.67 Thus, after only two weeks of cam-paigning, the Ottoman General Staff recognized failure and aligned their strategic thinking with the realities of defeat. In subsequent messages to his subordinates, Nazim Paşa made it clear that the armies were going over to the defensive and that holding the main cities and fortresses of the empire's Balkan provinces was now the principal strategic aim.68
The battered Ottoman field armies now began the difficult retreat from Lüleburgaz and Pinarhisar. Fortunately, the Bulgarians were too exhausted to pursue them, and they easily slipped away. The Bulgarian advance resumed on November 6, 1912, and the Bulgarian First and Third Armies marched about fifteen kilometers per day over the next six days. Çorlu fell on November 7, Çerkezköy was taken the following day, and the Marmara coastal town of Silivri was occupied on November 11. As they approached the Çatalca position, the Bulgarians advanced more cautiously and took four more full days to bring their armies up to positions just to the east of Sazlik Dere. The Bulgarian cavalry screened their flank on the Sea of Marmara.
The Ottoman Army commanders, as well as Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, were ordered to attend a conference at the commander in chief's field headquarters at Hadimköy on November 5, 1912. Over the next several days, the senior Ottoman commanders put together a revised order of battle and a revised campaign plan for the defense of Çatalca. The first order of business was to restructure the army itself. Apparently unhappy with the results of the creation of two separate field armies, Nazim Paşa now decided to dismantle this architecture. On November 7, he announced his decision to form the new Çatalca Army and, concurrently, to dissolve the First and Second Eastern Armies.69 This configuration was to become effective when the retreating troops were consolidated within the Çatalca lines. The next order of business was to clean up the ad hoc arrangement of subordinate infantry divisions controlled by the various army corps after Lüleburgaz. Nazim Paşa decided to retain the regular Ottoman I, II, and III Corps as the heart of the army, and the unfortunate IV Corps was dissolved. Furthermore, he decided to dissolve both the XVII and XVIII Provisional Corps as well.

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At the divisional level, it appears that four of the battered Redif infantry divisions that had experienced extremely hard fighting were dissolved during this period, also. These divisions were the Izmit, Kastamonu, Konya, and Uşak Redif Infantry Divisions, which disappeared from the Ottoman order of battle in mid-November 1912 (however, several of the surviving Redif infantry regiments were later assigned to the regular divisions of the III Corps). The remaining cavalry forces were likewise reorganized into a single independent cavalry brigade. Finally, Nazim Paşa decided to take personal command of the new Çatalca Army.
Nazim Paşa also had to deal with another problem: what to do with the large numbers of reinforcements that were arriving in the theater of operations. Obviously, the revised order of battle of three army corps headquarters could only command and control a finite number of divisions. Therefore, the commander in chief decided to activate three additional provisional army corps to control these forces. These three new corps were designated the I, II, and III Provisional Reserve Corps (Mürettep Redif Kolordu), and they were to be built around newly arriving reinforcements, which had not participated in the humiliating defeats in Thrace. These reinforcements were substantial and included the regular 29th and the 30th Infantry Divisions from the Third Army in Caucasia and eight more Redif Infantry Divisions from Constantinople and Anatolia. On November 7, 1912, the XVII Provisional Corps was inactivated and the new II Provisional Reserve Corps was activated. The I and III Provisional Reserve Corps were activated on November 10, and on the same day, the three regular corps were reorganized. The two Eastern Armies were dissolved the following day and replaced by the newly activated Çatalca Army.70
The new operational concept for the defense of the Çatalca Lines was extremely simple. From north to south,

the Ottoman III, II, and I Corps, respectively, manned the defensive lines. Directly behind them in covered positions on the Çatalca ridgeline lay the I and II Provisional Reserve Corps, and centered directly behind these forces lay the III Provisional Reserve Corps. The primary task of the reserve corps was to halt and to throw back by vigorous counterattack any Bulgarian penetration of the main lines of resistance (see Map 4.8). Acutely aware that the disasters in Thrace had been partially the result of ineffective field artillery operations, the Ottoman General Staff determined to revise and strengthen the artillery command and control arrangements for the coming battles. A large amount of artillery was now coming available as the field armies retreated into the Çatalca Lines. Reserve divisional artilleries came forward; the Constantinople and the Bosporus fortifications were stripped of guns, which were sent forward; and the demonstration guns of the army service schools were sent forward from Anatolia. The commander of the Çatalca Fortified

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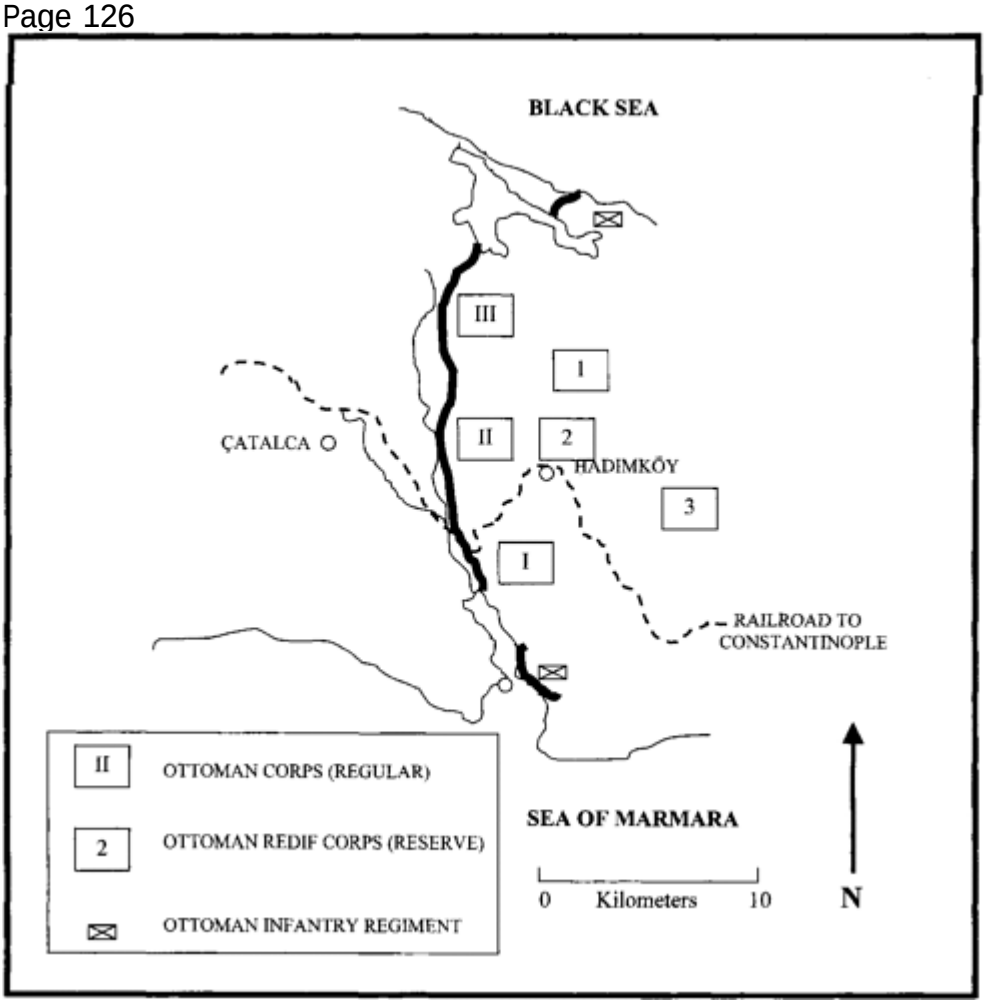

Map 4.8 The Çatalca Lines, November 10, 1912.

Area was placed in overall command of this growing force of army artillery. Tactically, the guns were assigned initially to artillery groups of three to seven batteries each, but the groups would later swell to as many as twenty batteries. The groups were assigned to three artillery area commands that provided direct supporting fires to the army corps in contact. Altogether, these artillery area commands controlled eighty-one batteries of artillery. Belatedly, the Ottoman staffs had brought their artillery together for centralized operations, an organizational im-provement that greatly enhanced effective fire control during combat.71 In the upcoming battles, the Bulgarians would pay dearly for this innovation.

All this organizational activity and change were accomplished in a very short period of time. On November 12, 1912, the Çatalca Fortified

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Area was redesignated as the Çatalca Defensive Position (Çatalca Savunma Mevzi). Overlaid on the organizational frenzy was a gigantic logistical endeavor that simultaneously brought forward huge quantities of shells and munitions, deployed a transportation infrastructure, and created a network of field aid stations, ambulance units, and hospitals in the zone of operations. Civilians from the local villages had to be evacuated

from the tactical zone as well, and the Turks decided (alert to the dangers of spies and agents), as a priority, to evacuate the villages inhabited by Greeks and Bulgarians first.72

Detailed talks aimed at coordinating the activities of the army with the Ottoman fleet were also held with the Naval Staff to ensure that the seaward flanks of the Çatalca Army were well covered. The Ottoman General Staff, in conjunction with the Naval Staff, determined that the Greek fleet constituted a clear danger to the Gallipoli Peninsula and therefore ordered the Çanakkale, Trabzon, and Afyon Karahisrar Redif Infantry Divisions to reinforce the region. These divisions were shortly thereafter diverted from the main battle area to Gallipoli.

Thus, by mid-November 1912, the Turks had dramatically restructured their fighting forces defending Constantinople and effectively utilized the time granted them by the Bulgarian two-week delay in bringing up their army. It could be argued that the Ottoman General Staff displayed a great ability to learn from its mistakes. Nazim Paşa had consolidated his field armies in one of the finest defensive positions in Europe and created an organizational architecture that accommo-dated incoming reinforcements. He centralized his artillery (presaging the centralization of artillery on the Western Front in World War I) under a single commander. However, probably his most important contribution was to reject the doctrine of the offensive and to place the Ottoman field army in Thrace on the operational and tactical defensive. Cumulatively, these changes were instrumental allowing the Ottomans to seize victory from the Bulgarians in the coming days. The order of battle of the new Çatalca Army is shown in Table 4.6.

Nazim Paşa retained his experienced command team for the upcoming defensive battles. Major General Omer Yaver Paşa commanded the I Corps, Major General Hamdi Paşa commanded the II Corps, and Major General Mahmut Muhtar Paşa commanded the III Corps. Major General Abuk Ahmet Paşa, left without a job upon the dissolution of the IV Corps, was given command of the new I Provisional Reserve Corps, Brigadier Çürüksulu Mahmut Paşa commanded the II Provisional Reserve Corps and Major General Izzet Fuat Paşa commanded the III Provisional Reserve Corps. The newly created and vital Çatalca Fortified Area and Artillery Command was left in the able hands of Brigadier Ali Riza Paşa. Within the Çatalca Army headquarters itself, Nazim Paşa handpicked two capable senior General Staff officers to

TABLE 4.6 Ottoman Order of Battle, Çatalca Army, November 17, 1912

I Corps	*II Corps*	*III Corps*
2, 3 Infantry Division	4, 5, 12 Infantry Divisions	7, 8, 9 Infantry Divisions
South Wing Detachment	10 Cavalry Regiment	North Wing Detachment
I Provisional Reserve Corps	*II Provisional Reserve Corps*	*III Provisional Reserve Corps*
29 Infantry Division	30 Infantry Division	Selimiye, Fatih, Afyon Redif Divisions
Ergli, Kayseri Redif Divisions	Amasya, Yozgat, Samsun Redif Divisions	
Çatalca Fortified Area and Artillery Command		
Right Wing Artillery Area Command		
Center Area Artillery Command		
Left Wing Artillery Area Command		
Independent Cavalry Brigade		

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 1nci Kitap, Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 17–28.

serve as his assistant commanders. Supervising administration and logistics as the First Assistant Chief of Staff was Major General Ziya Paşa, and supervising operations and intelligence as the Second Assistant Chief of Staff was Major General Pertev Paşa. None of the General Staff officers of the former Eastern Army were brought into the new Çatalca Army staff, as Nazim Paşa chose his own men for these important General Staff positions. There was one more important assignment that must be mentioned, which involved one of the few German officers to command Ottoman troops during the war. Major Otto von Lossow, a member of the Bavarian General Staff corps, was on assignment at the Ottoman War Academy teaching tactics and other subjects.73 Although officially discouraged from active participation, von Lossow secured a posting on the Eastern Army staff. After Lüleburgaz in early November 1912, Nazim Paşa appointed von Lossow as the commander of the “Northern Wing Detachment.”

Despite their rather lethargic approach to the Çatalca position, the Bulgarians had not been idle. Very important reinforcements, released from the siege of Adrianople, now arrived to strengthen the Bulgarian First and Third Armies. The First Army now included the 1st, 6th, and 10th Infantry Divisions (all two-brigade divisions), the Cavalry Division (of three brigades), and the 10th Cavalry Regiment. The more powerful Third Army included the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Infantry Divisions (all three-brigade divisions), and the 9th Infantry Division (a two-brigade division). Both the 3rd and 9th Infantry Division had joined the Bulgarian Third Army

after Lüleburgaz and were fresh and rested.

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Bringing the armies forward was not easy and was dependent on horse-drawn wagons driven over a weak road network (the Ottoman-held fortress of Adrianople continued to interdict the sole railroad connecting Bulgaria to Turkish Thrace). At Çatalca the Bulgarians were approximately 130 miles from their railheads and sources of supply, which imposed severe logistical difficulties on their armies. Moreover, another deadly enemy was just beginning to make itself felt in the Bulgarian ranks: cholera. During the Ottoman retreat from Thrace, cholera appeared among the tired troops. Although its full effects had yet to be felt, cholera would ultimately kill and disable more Bulgarian soldiers than would Ottoman munitions. Thus, as the Ottoman forces retreated closer to their sources of strength, the Bulgarian advance took them farther away from theirs. The Bulgarian high command, nevertheless, continued the advance and began to make preparations for a full-scale offensive on the Çatalca lines. The Bulgarians were somewhat lulled into a false sense of superiority by their easy victories over their opponents. To be sure, the First and Second Armies had suffered casualties; however, the results appeared to justify the costs. It was significant that, apparently, the Ottoman Army simply could not stand toe-to-toe with the Bulgarians in the line of battle. Moreover, the Ottoman artillery demonstrated great weakness, and the Ottoman infantry appeared very vulnerable to determined Bulgarian bayonet attacks. The totality of the Bulgarian victories at Kirkkilise and Lüleburgaz were unexpected and were not, in a general sense, the product of superior strategy and operational exper-tise. Rather, these victories were the result of tactical superiority and poor Ottoman strategy. Compounding this pervasive sense of superiority was the almost overpowering lure of conquering Constantinople itself.

These factors intersected on November 12, 1912, when the Ottomans formally requested an armistice through the Russian ambassador in Sofia.74 The armistice request was sent out to Czar Ferdinand, who was at the Bulgarian headquarters in Yambol. Ferdinand was “mesmerized by the imperial city lying behind the Chataldzha lines”75 and formally rejected the Ottoman request two days later. Czar Ferdinand, apparently excited by the possibility of becoming the first Christian monarch to rule in Constantinople since 1453, met with the Bulgarian chief of staff, General Ivan Fichev, and his deputy chief of staff, Mihail Savov, for consultations about breaking the Çatalca Lines. While concerned about the feasibility of such an attack, these men were seduced by the easy victories over the Turks. Savov was sent forward on November 15 to consult with General Dimitriev, who had assumed overall command of the combined Bulgarian First and Third Armies. After discussions and a tour of the front lines, Savov overcame his reservations and

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endorsed the aggressive Dimitriev’s offensive planning. Returning to brief the Bulgarian czar on November 16, Savov explained Dimitriev’s forecast that the Bulgarians had an 85 to 90 percent chance of success if allowed to attack quickly.76 The czar, Fichev, and Savov approved the offensive and made public proclamations predicting victory and the fall of Muslim Constantinople. In the meantime, General Dimitriev finalized his plans for the attack on the Çatalca Lines. These plans were blunt, and tactically uninspired, and they involved a general frontal attack by both the First and Third Armies. No attempts at surprise, maneuver, or deception were made, simply a single, massive frontal attack. Dimitriev did introduce a significant change into his tactical thinking and ordered both the First and Third Armies to split their forces into two tactical echelons. The Third Army, in the north, was ordered to attack with the fresh 3rd and 9th Infantry Divisions and to position the 4th and 5th Infantry Divisions behind them in a reserve echelon. The First Army, in the south, was ordered to attack with the 1st and 4th Infantry Divisions and to position the 10th Infantry Division behind in a reserve echelon. Dimitriev also maintained the powerful Cavalry Division in reserve, behind the First Army. This was a fundamental shift in Bulgarian tactical thinking, which at Kirkkilise and Lüleburgaz had put everything into the fight. This plan suggests that Dimitriev had, likewise, learned from previous engagements that immediate reserves were vital for the pursuit and destruction of the enemy army. His operational intent for the battle can, therefore, be summa-rized as a breakthrough and rupture of the enemy lines by the first echelon, followed by a massive exploitation by the second echelon.77 Practically, this plan meant that the Bulgarians attacked initially with only fourteen infantry regiments out of a total of thirty-eight regiments present.

This unsophisticated frontal attack strategy had, at Kirkkilise and Lüleburgaz, brought victory to Bulgarian arms, and Dimitriev believed that it would again break the Ottomans. In short, the Bulgarians thought that somewhere, at some point in the Ottoman line, the Turks would panic and collapse. This would lead, in turn, to the overall demoralization and retreat of the Ottoman army. It was thinking based, not on the principles of war, but on the flawed observations of Ottoman performance in two previous battles. General Dimitriev’s plan was based on assumptions rather than sound operational principles, and proved ultimately to be a recipe for

defeat. The Bulgarians, however, did enjoy not only an apparent marked ascendancy in troop morale but also a substantial superiority of forces. Table 4.7 shows the degree of Bulgarian personnel and material superiority. To these forces must be added the Ottoman Fleet, which, at the time, was composed of four old, predreadnought battleships; two modern

TABLE 4.7 Comparison of Forces at Çatalca, November 17, 1912

	Ottoman Forces	*Bulgarian Forces*		
	Çatalca Army	*First Army*	*Third Army*	*Total*
Officers	2,395	1,104	1,921	3,025
Men	138,176	65,887	107,439	173,326
Animals	22,058	20,877	35,533	56,410
Wagons	1,335	8,274	11,850	20,124
Rifles	103,514	44,549	73,543	118,092
Machine Guns	62	60	86	146
Artillery	316	156	306	462
Aircraft	5–8			20

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 1nci Kitap, Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 36–37.

cruisers; eight destroyers; three corvettes; and ten gunboats. The heart of the fleet consisted of two ex-German battleships (the *Barbaros Hayreddin* and the *Turgut Reis*), the British-built cruiser *Hamidiye,* and the American-built cruiser *Mecidiye.* Although semiactive during the Turkish-Italian War of 1911–1912, in October 1912, the Ottoman Navy was in a sad state of disrepair. In particular, the battleship force was in an extremely unseaworthy condition and had significant shortcomings in gunnery. The Naval Staff, nevertheless, ordered the fleet to sea to conduct gunnery exercises and to convoy troops from Asia to Europe. Whereas the Greek fleet dominated the Aegean Sea, the Ottoman fleet dominated the inland Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea. This maritime superiority enabled the Ottoman Navy to come close inshore and to carry out shore bombardments in support of the Çatalca Army. Furthermore, the Ottoman Navy commandeered thirty-three freighters, thirty-eight tugboats, and some sailing vessels for military and naval use on October 16, 1912, in Constantinople.78 These ships proved to be invalu-able assets in the transportation of the Ottoman Army between Asia, Europe, and the Gallipoli Peninsula. The public appearance of the Ottoman Navy in direct support of the Ottoman Army during the First Battle of Çatalca would materially affect Turkish morale during the course of the battle.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF ÇATALCA

The stage was now set for the First Battle of Çatalca, which was fought on November 17–18, 1912. Over the course of the preceding several days, the Bulgarian infantry had moved up to attack positions closer to the Ottoman lines. No attempts at tactical deception were made; indeed, none were probably even remotely possible because of the superb

commanding observation from the Ottoman artillery positions on the Çatalca ridgeline. The Turks were alert and more prepared for action, both physically and mentally, than they had been in previous engagements. Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, in particular, had been energetically prowling among his III Corps troops and encouraging them for the coming battle. The Bulgarians began their attack with an artillery bombardment of over four hundred guns at 5 A.M. on November 17, 1912, and shortly thereafter launched their attacks under localized brigade command. The weather was foggy, making Bulgarian coordination difficult and adding to the Ottoman geographical advantage. The fourteen attacking Bulgarian infantry regiments were opposed by fifteen Ottoman infantry regiments and two independent Ottoman infantry battalions, giving the well-dug-in Turks a slight numerical advantage.79 Furthermore the new Ottoman centralized artillery structure was alert and ready to fire (these groupings are shown in Table 4.8).

As the Bulgarians struggled to cross what would later become known as “No Man’s Land.” the telling weight of Turkish rifle and machine-gun fire began immediately. More important, well-directed Ottoman artillery fire began to savage both the attacking infantry and the Bulgarian artillery batteries themselves. Although the Turkish guns were outnumbered, the centralized Ottoman artillery command and control organization quickly established fire superiority, thus denying the Bulgarians one of their premier combat advantages (most of the literature concerning the battle speaks of the reduced effectiveness of the hitherto dominant Bulgarian artillery). Swept by fires and pounded by artillery shrapnel, all Bulgarian attacks failed, and by 9 A.M., the

attacking regiments were pinned to the ground. Jubilant reports poured into the Ottoman infantry division headquarters, and equally pessimistic reports arrived at the Bulgarian brigade headquarters. As the mists

TABLE 4.8 Çatalca Army Artillery Area Commands, November 17, 1912

Çatalca Fortified Area and Artillery Command

Artillery Area Command	*Number of Batteries*	*Supported Maneuver Units*
Right-Wing Artillery Area		
1st Group	13 batteries	8th and 9th Infantry Divisions
2nd Group	20 batteries	7th Infantry Division
Center Artillery Area		
1st Group	17 batteries	4th Infantry Division
2nd Group	12 batteries	5th Infantry Division
Left-Wing Artillery Area	19 batteries	1st and 2nd Infantry Divisions and the South Wing Detachment

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 1nci Kitap, Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), Map 6.

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cleared, the entire Ottoman command structure, generals and staff officers alike, flocked to the ridgeline to observe the Bulgarian reverses below.80 Nazim Paşa observed the battles from the Sanjaktepe, a hill overlooking Büyük Çekmece. The one-sided battle favored the Turks, who suffered very few casualties, and nowhere were the Ottoman lines penetrated. At 1:30 P.M. the Ottoman Navy joined in the bombardments. In the north, the battleship *Turgut Reis* lent its fires to the III Corps. In the south, the battleships *Barbaras* and *Mesudiye* and five smaller vessels fired in support of the I Corps. These fires were probably not particularly effective; however, the awesome spectacle of naval gunfire helped to encourage the Turks and quenched the Bulgarian will to victory. By 5 p.m., most of the Bulgarian infantry were back in their initial attack positions. The day ended with total failure for the Bulgarians. There was one final attempt to seize the initiative when the Bulgarians executed a daring night bayonet attack with their 29th Infantry Regiment (of the 3rd Infantry Division) and managed to surprise and overrun the Ottoman *Ileri* Fort. The attack penetrated the Ottoman lines to a depth of about five hundred meters (see Map 4.9). Before the Bulgarians could exploit their success, however, prompt Turkish counterattacks by battalions of the 25th and 26th Infantry Regiments ejected the intruders and restored the integrity of the Ottoman lines.

Although an Ottoman success, the battle for the *Ileri* Fort had an unfortunate consequence for the Ottoman Army. In his typical lead-from-the-front leadership style, Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, the III Corps commander, had personally gone to the *Ileri* Fort to participate in the counterattack, and in the night battle, was seriously wounded by Bulgarian fire. He was immediately evacuated to the 9th Infantry Division's field hospital. When this news was relayed to Nazim Paşa, he ordered Ahmet Abuk Paşa, commander of the I Provisional Reserve Corps, to come forward and assume command of the III Corps. Ahmet Abuk Paşa went immediately to the 9th Division field hospital and was told about the situation and mission by the wounded Mahmut Muhtar. The Turks were so concerned about the health and survival of Mahmut Muhtar (who survived his wounds) that he was sent on a special train shortly thereafter to Constantinople. By the time Ahmet Abuk arrived at the corps headquarters, the crisis was over and the corps had the situation well in hand.

General Dimitriev was undeterred by the day's reverses and in the gathering darkness of November 17 ordered a renewal of the attack the following morning. Inexplicably, Dimitriev ordered the same first echelon regiments to repeat the same attacks instead of committing the fresh second echelon regiments that had been held in reserve. Again on the morning of November 18, the men of the fourteen infantry regiments went forward, only this time they were not so quick off the mark.

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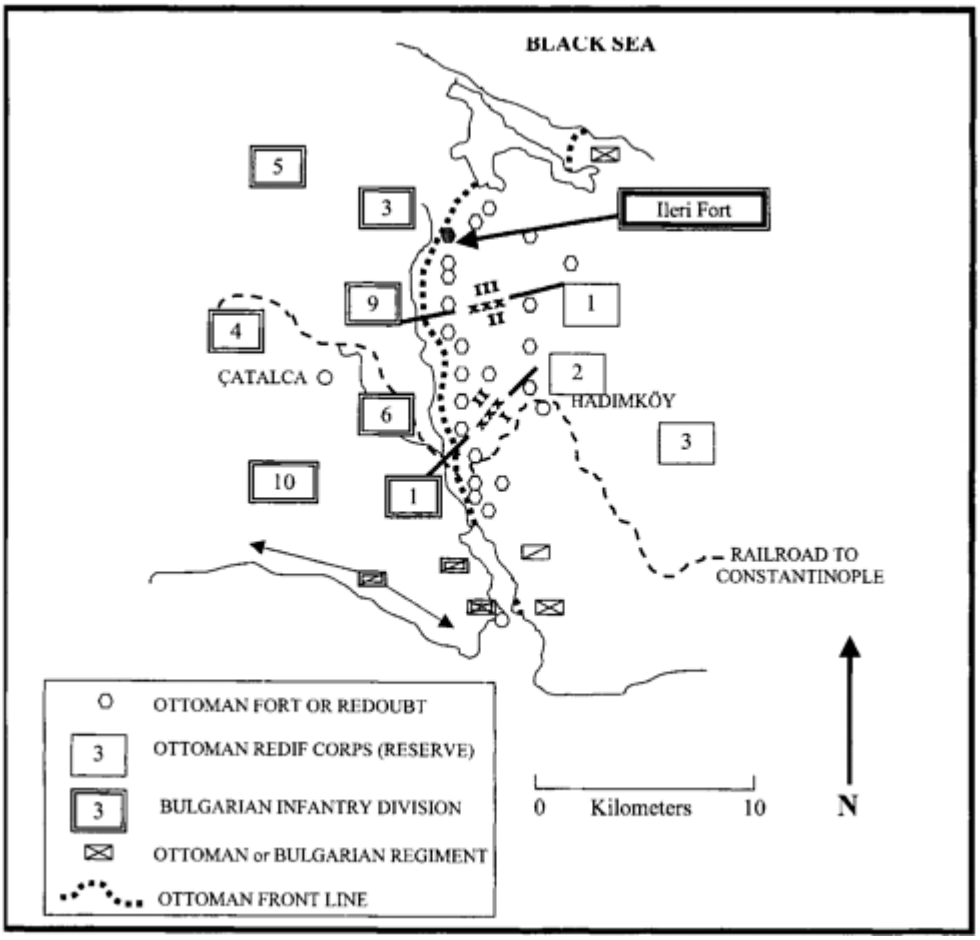

Map 4.9 The First Battle of Çatalca, November 17, 1912.

The artillery began to fire in the morning fog at 5 A.M., and the regiments of the Bulgarian 3rd Infantry Division attacked at 6 A.M. To their south, the battle did not commence until well after 7 A.M., illustrating the effects of the previous day's defeat in timing and coordination (probably due to high losses of company-grade officers). By 10 A.M., general fighting was raging across the entire peninsula. The results were the same as the previous day's fighting: the Ottomans quickly established fire superiority and decimated the Bulgarian infantry. General Dimitriev personally observed the battle at 2:30 P.M., by which time it was effectively over, and a little after 4 P.M., he sent a cable to General Fichev announcing his failure.81 Bulgarian casualties were heavy. The First Army lost four officers killed and fifty-two wounded, and 277 men killed, 2,691 men wounded, and 529 men missing. The more heavily engaged Third Army bore the brunt of the casualties. It lost sixty-five officers killed, ninety-three wounded, and one officer missing, plus

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1,160 men were killed, 6,291 men were wounded, and 861 men miss-ing.82 It must be remembered, however, that most of these 12,024 casualties were concentrated in the fourteen first-echelon attack regiments (containing roughly thirty-five thousand men) that General Dimitriev committed to the two-day offensive. For those fourteen regiments, the battle's losses were catastrophic. Later on the night of November 18, 1912, the Bulgarian high command called off further attacks.

Ottoman casualties have been estimated at about ten thousand officers and men in total, or somewhat lower than the Bulgarians.83 However, actual Ottoman casualties were very likely far lower. On November 17, the 7th Infantry Division suffered one officer killed and two wounded, plus 19 men killed and 50 wounded. On the same day the 8th Infantry Division lost one officer killed and two wounded, plus 68 men killed and 82 wounded. The 5th Infantry Division lost one officer wounded, plus 4 men killed and 32 wounded. The 3rd Infantry Division lost a similar amount.84 For the entire two-day battle, the more heavily engaged 9th Infantry Division lost twenty-one officers killed and thirty-two wounded, plus 317 men killed and 434 men wounded. Although no total of Ottoman casualties appears in the modern Turkish official history of the battle, these few snapshots of infantry division casualties suggest that the actual Ottoman total casualties were in the neighborhood of fewer than five thousand officers and men.

As a battle fought, First Çatalca is not particularly interesting. However, as a representation of how armies adapt and learn, it is illuminat-ing. The Ottomans, who had lost the first two major battles of the war in

Thrace, reversed their battlefield failures through determined staff work and solid planning. Belatedly, they recognized the inherent weakness of ill-conceived offensives and premature attacks and shifted their strategy to the defensive. Moreover, they recognized the critical weakness in their artillery arm and managed to solve the problem through the organizational grouping of artillery under centralized command. On the other hand, the Bulgarians drew flawed lessons from their successes and attributed their victories to better training, élan, and bayonet attacks. Their principal weakness, it seemed, was the absence of nearby reserves with which to exploit battlefield success. In keeping over half of his infantry in reserve and out of the two-day battle, General Dimitriev generated failure by squandering his numerical superiority a the breakthrough that never happened.

There was plenty of blame to go around, as commanders and observers sought to explain how the victorious Bulgarians were beaten by the seemingly disorganized and routed Turks. The Bulgarian General Staff attributed the defeat to a lack of “modern tactical knowledge”85 and the ineffectiveness of their artillery. Other reasons included the tiredness of the Bulgarian troops, the failure of the Bulgarians to rapidly follow up

their victory at Lüleburgaz, and even the effects of naval gunfire. In the end, though, it was Nazim Paşa’s defense in depth (backed by the formation of centralized artillery) that defeated General Dimitriev’s two-echelon, fourteen-regiment frontal attack.

AFTER ÇATALCA

There were further complications for the Bulgarian high command in the wake of the defeat at Çatalca; the worst was the surging cholera epidemic in the First and Third Armies. Cholera is an acute infection of the small intestine caused mainly by drinking polluted water. The disease is transmitted very easily, especially among masses of people living in cramped and unsanitary conditions. Victims generally suffer vomiting, diarrhea, and collapse from water loss. During the two days of battle, in the Bulgarian First and Third Armies, 4,602 men reported sick with cholera. During the same two-day period, 603 men died of the disease.86 In the same period, the Ottoman casualty system was receiving similar numbers of men infected with cholera. The Turks reported 3,280 men in the hospital and, over the two-day period, a further 2,897 were admitted. Of these, 597 men died and 1,907 returned to duty. A further 373 died while being transported to the hospitals.87 When these totals of men are added to the combat casualties for November 17 and 18, 1912, it becomes apparent that both the Ottoman and Bulgarian medical systems must have been overwhelmingly saturated with casualties. The cholera epidemic would worsen and would badly affect troop morale on both sides.

Further complicating the Bulgarian strategic position was the wide open southern flank stretching down to the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Turks had already diverted over fifteen thousand reinforcements there, and the possibility of an enemy offensive into the rear of the Bulgarian armies at Çatalca worried the high command. The Bulgarian high command therefore ordered that the 7th “Rila” Infantry Division, then at Salonika, be brought to Thrace by sea as reinforcement. The First and Third Armies were also directed to send units to guard their vulnerable open southern flank. Because of the battlefield reverses, cholera, and the diversion of forces south, the Bulgarians now went over to the defensive in Thrace.

Greatly encouraged by their victory, the Ottoman Army conducted a small local offensive with the Right Wing Detachment to push the Bulgarians back along the north shore of the Terkos Gölü but pulled back to its original positions on November 19. Over the next two weeks, the Turks and the Bulgarians generally dug in and improved their positions, although occasionally, artillery duels would break the monot-

ony. Interestingly, the antique Ottoman Volunteer System (Gönüllü Systemi) now produced detachments of patriotic volunteers who enlisted to fight together as a unit. In the III Corps sector, the 185-men Dağistanli Volunteer Detachment (Dağistanli Gönüllü Müfrezesi) went into the line on November 26, 1912. A similar volunteer detachment of 132 men appeared in the I Corps sector.88 The Volunteer System was an ancient Ottoman tradition superseded by conscription in the empire itself, but it was still in effect in the twentieth century to allow non-Ottoman Muslims to serve in the army. These two detachments contained Muslims from the Russian provinces of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the Caucasus.

On November 27, 1912, the first elements of the Bulgarian 7th Infantry Division arrived via Greek steamers at the newly captured Ottoman port of Dedeağac from Salonika. On the same day, the Ottoman Afyon Redif Infantry Division debarked at Eceabat on the Gallipoli peninsula. The Turks received other reinforcements as well: three thousand men arrived from Anatolia and were sent, on December 1, to the Edremit Redif Infantry Division. By this time, eighteen to twenty thousand Ottoman soldiers in the Çatalca Army were sick with cholera. Neither side was particularly inclined to resume hard fighting as it had become widely known that

the Turks were seeking an armistice and had opened negotiations to that effect on November 21. Fortunately for both armies, a general armistice went into effect at 7 P.M. on December 3, 1912, temporarily ending the fighting.

The provisions of the armistice were made known to the Ottoman troops on the following day. Under the agreement, fighting (including artillery firing) would cease. However, the armies were allowed to continue to improve and fortify their works and to conduct training exercises. The Ottoman General Staff intended to use the armistice to its advantage and began an immediate program to restore the efficiency of the army.89 Instrumental in orchestrating this program was the chief of staff, Ahmet Izzet Paşa, who had returned finally from Yemen, on November 20. The staff directed that the physical rehabilitation of the army's cavalry, artillery, and draft animals would be a priority and also specified that the III Provisional Reserve Corps would begin large-unit training exercises immediately. The staff also directed the immediate establishment of tent cantonments in the corps areas for the billeting of troops in winter conditions. The artillery was directed to begin a program of periodic maintenance for its guns and ammunition. On December 5, 1912, the army headquarters staff was put on trains to Constantinople, where it could work in improved conditions in buildings. The Ottoman General Staff also directed the Adrianople fortress to form a team of delegates to meet with their Bulgarian counterparts

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to hammer out a workable armistice agreement and to resolve any residual problems with its implementation. The chief Ottoman delegate was Lieutenant Colonel Celal, who had as his assistants Staff Major Kazim, Staff Captain Remzi, and Captain Ismail Hakki.90 Over the course of the next several days, Celal's delegates met several times with the Bulgarians (under Lieutenant Colonel Popoff) to determine the exact frontline trace and to delineate which side controlled what ground. The agreed-upon terms of the Adrianople armistice went into effect at the Çatalca Lines as well, on December 9, 1912. Some minor corrections to the front were made as the gathering winter closed on the exhausted and cholera-stricken armies.

THE ENCIRCLEMENT OF ADRIANOPLE

In the wake of the disaster at Kirkkilise it was apparent that the fortress city of Adrianople might become encircled. The fortress commander, Ferik Mehmet Şükrü Paşa, began to consider this threat as a distinct possibility, and indeed, the city had been concentrically fortified for just such a contingency. Adrianople was an important strategic asset for the defense of Thrace. However, it was important to the Ottoman Empire for historical and cultural reasons, as well. The young Osmanli dynasty had moved its capital there from Bursa, and in 1402 Adrianople became the Turks' first capital in Europe. After the fall of Constantinople, the city was home to a significant portion of the Janissary Corps and was also the site of many famous mosques and buildings designed and constructed by the Ottoman architect Mirmar Sinan. Originally a Greco-Roman city, by 1912 Adrianople had a population of about 87,000 people, of which 47,000 were Turks, 20,000 were Greeks, 4,000 were Armenians, and 2,000 were Bulgars. The city was also home to a significant Jewish population of 15,000 and was the vilayet capital.

The Emperor Hadrian (Adrianos) constructed the first fortress there in A.D. 117 on the banks of the Tunca River. Numerous battles were fought there over the next eighteen hundred years, and British historian John Keegan noted that Adrianople has the "curious distinction as the most frequently contested spot on the globe."91 In 1828–1829, the Russian Army besieged the city with a force of twelve thousand men. The city's population declined from 140,000 to 100,000, mostly due to evac-uations of civilians. In the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, a Russian Army again besieged the city. The Russians conquered Adrianople after a brief siege, during which ten thousand residents sickened and perished. After the war, the Berlin treaty of 1878 established a strong Bulgarian state immediately on the strategic doorstep of Adrianople, with the new frontier a mere twenty-four kilometers from the city's center.

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As Bulgaria became stronger and its army more capable, the Turks became more concerned with the security of Adrianople's antiquated fortifications. With German assistance, the Ottoman General Staff began planning a significant upgrade in the defenses. In concept, the new fortifications were to be based on an interlocking series of strong points (small, self-contained forts) located concentrically three to four kilometers out from the city center.92 Nine strong points were planned, each containing an infantry detachment, six machine guns, and either four field artillery pieces or three howitzers. The strong points were built mostly of brick or stone, and the gun positions had embrasures providing overhead protection. The strong points were fronted with earthworks and linked together by an underground telephone system. Inside this ring of strong points, the Turks planned to place numerous batteries of artillery. The Turks did not have nearly enough artillery for this ambitious scheme and immediately purchased twelve 150mm howitzers, five 150mm guns, and ten 105mm

guns from the Germans; they also brought in 87mm guns from the Second and Third Armies.93 They made other physical improvements as well, including macadamizing the interior roads and constructing bombproof magazines.

Finally, in February 1910, the improvements were completed and the fortress achieved its “first form.”94 However, in that year General von der Goltz, who was on an inspection tour during maneuvers, stopped at the fortress to examine the improvements. Keenly aware of the changing tactical dynamic, von der Goltz recommended that the defensive arrangements for the city be dramatically changed by moving the strong-point system farther out, to key terrain located three to eight kilometers from the city’s center. These changes would result in what the Turks called the fortress’s “second form.” Unfortunately, the Italian War put this idea on hold temporarily and, in 1911, Adrianople actually lost a battery of 105mm guns and twelve 90mm guns that were sent to the Dardanelles and Bosporus defenses. In 1912, during the reorganization of the Ottoman Army, Adrianople became the home garrison of the newly organized IV Army Corps under the command of Ferik Abuk Ahmet Paşa. The new commander was very interested in the second-form project and assigned Staff Major Fuat and Staff Captain Remzi to work with German technical advisors and fortification experts on planning the new system.95 The new plan was ready in April 1912, and work began immediately to move the strong-point system farther out from the city center. The new system had a total of eighteen strong points or redoubts *(direnek),* most of which were located on small hills or ridgelines that dominated the surrounding terrain. The plan called for the strong points to be linked by trenches and barbed wire. The Turks thought that the plan would take four years to complete. Although work had begun and had accelerated as the empire drifted toward war,

the system was incomplete by October 1, 1912. On that date, some of the strong points had been completed (Yildiz, Karagöz, and Ayvaz Baba), but most were incomplete. Pressed by the imminent war, the fortress commander concentrated on the construction of the trench system linking the strong points.96 Map 4.10 shows the Adrianople fortress on the eve of war in 1912.

The peacetime garrison of the city and fortress consisted of the IV Corps headquarters, the 10th Infantry Division, the 4th Rifle Regiment, and corps troops. Strong cavalry forces for the screening of the frontier were also located there and consisted of the 4th Cavalry Brigade (9th, 10th, and 11th Cavalry Regiments) and the 5th Light Cavalry Brigade

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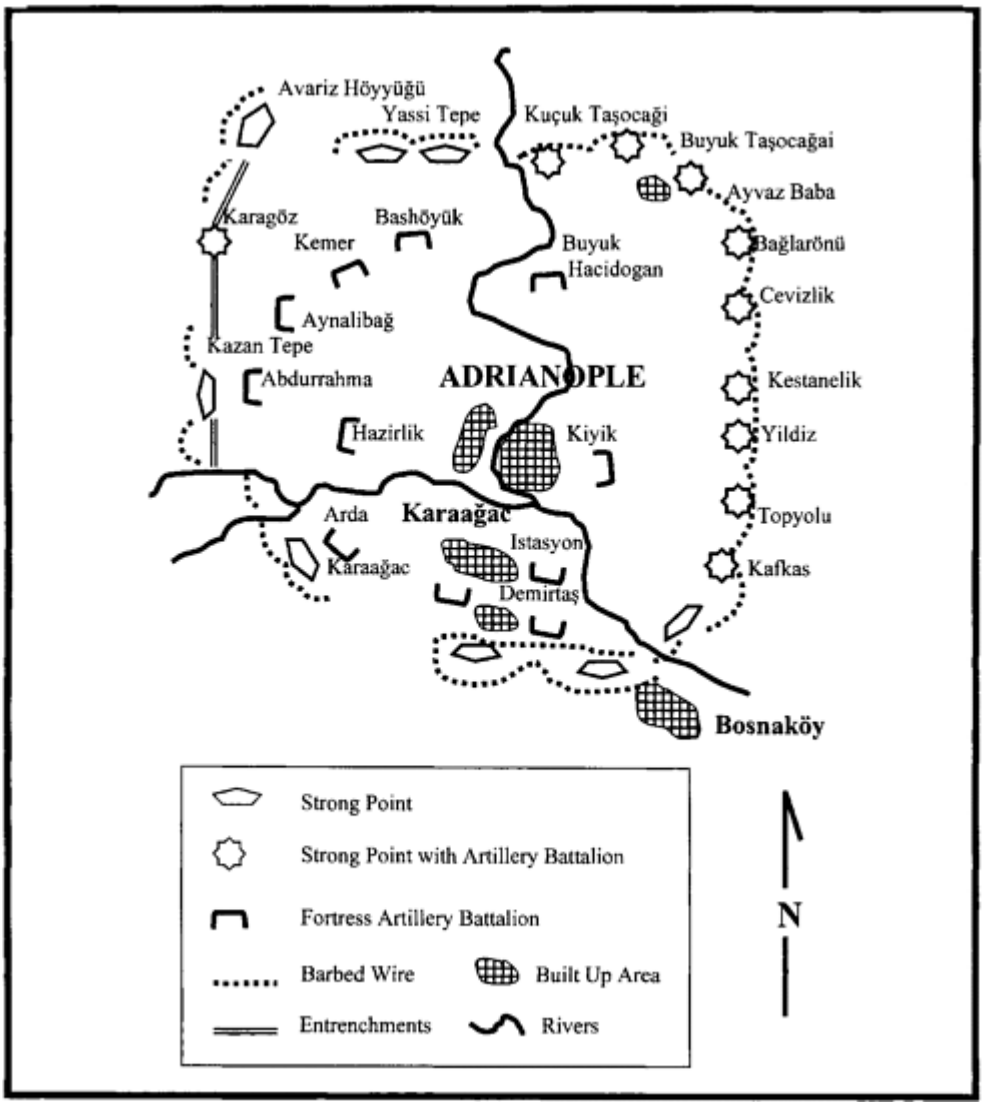

Map 4.10 Adrianople Fortifications, 1912.

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(1st and 2nd Cavalry Regiments). The Fortress Artillery Brigade was extremely powerful and was composed of the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Heavy Artillery Regiments. In 1912, the city of Adrianople was the most heavily fortified position in the Ottoman Empire. Table 4.9 shows the breakdown of the fortress's 247 pieces of artillery.

The fortress began to prepare for war as the civilian population, particularly women and children, began to be sent by train to Constantinople on October 3. That same day, in the capital, the Ottoman Chief of Staff Nazim Paşa appointed himself as commander in chief. On the evening of Saturday, October 6, 1912, Ferik Abuk Ahmet Paşa led the IV Corps headquarters out of the city to its wartime concentration area at Uzunköprü. This left the fortress without a commander and, on October 10, the Ottoman General Staff appointed Mehmet Şükrü Paşa as the new Fortified Area commander.97

The operational plan for the integration of the fortress's defense with the field operations of the Eastern Army has been previously described in this chapter. On October 18, 1912, the fortress had mobilized 926 officers and 50,650 men, but the unplanned attachment of the 11th

TABLE 4.9 Artillery Strength, Adrianople Fortified Area, October 1, 1912

Type of Artillery	*Number of Pieces*
75mm fixed	18
87mm fixed	19
105mm gun	12
120mm gun	36
150mm gun (short)	12
150mm gun (long)	78
150mm mortar	18

210mm mortar	6
75mm antiaircraft	2
Nordenfeldt quick firing	10
105mm heavy field gun	18
150mm heavy field gun	18
Total	247

Note: The field artillery of the infantry divisions assigned to the Adrianople garrison are not included in these totals.
Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 3ncü Kisim, Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 31.

Infantry Division to the fortress brought the October 21, 1912, total personnel strength up to 1,111 officers and 60,139 men.98 The large size of the fortress garrison belied its combat readiness, as only about 25 percent of the men were considered trained and many of the reserve officers were lacking in tactical proficiency as well. The problems with Ottoman mobilization and campaign planning (also previously described in this chapter) significantly affected the defense of Adrianople in a positive way. Under Campaign Plan Number 5, the fortress should have had thirteen regular infantry battalions and thirty-one Redif infantry battalions for its defense. Because of the unplanned inclusion of the 11th Infantry Division in the fortress's order of battle, there were actually nineteen regular infantry battalions and thirty Redif battalions. The Bulgarian invasion on October 17, 1912, brought the 10th Infantry Division into contact with the enemy as it moved forward to its covering force position along the frontier. Early border operations and the combat operations of the Adrianople Provisional Corps during the Battle of Kirkkilise were previously detailed.

The Ottoman General Staff regarded the Adrianople fortress complex as the key to the successful defense of Thrace and Constantinople. The fortress was an instrumental part of the operational encirclement strategy to destroy the Bulgarian Army in October 1912. Failing that, the fortress was well stocked with ammunition and provisions to enable it to withstand a prolonged siege. The Turks were certain that the Bulgarians would not be able to conduct operations deep into Thrace without eliminating or encircling the fortress. The mere presence of strong maneuver formations inside it posed a danger to the Bulgarian flank and rear. This would, at minimum, compel the Bulgarians to draw off a substantial portion of their field army to cover the fortress. The Bulgarians considered it to be the strongest position in Europe. In 1909, a Bulgarian staff officer in mufti had worked in the Bulgarian consulate in Adrianople, employed there to gather intelligence about the fortifications.99 Throughout the early twentieth century, the Turks noted that Bulgarian officers disguised as tourists routinely traveled throughout the region and the city for the same purpose. The Bulgarian General Staff conducted staff studies and war games to plan for the eventual invasion and concluded that Adrianople should come under early attack. By 1912, the Bulgarian war plan had evolved under the assumption that the fortress was too strong to be attacked successfully while conducting simultaneous offensives into Thrace and Macedonia. While the Bulgarians had developed a wealth of intelligence about the fortifications, they had exaggerated the overall strength of Adrianople. Therefore, the Bulgarian Second Army under General Nikola Ivanov was ordered to screen the Adrianople fortress while the First and Third Armies dealt

with the Ottoman field armies. For this mission, Ivanov had the 8th and 9th Infantry Divisions, an infantry brigade, a cavalry brigade, and three battalions of 120mm howitzers. He also had a detachment of aircraft and an observation balloon squadron. The Bulgarian Second Army had personnel strength about equal to the Adrianople garrison. Ivanov wanted to conduct a hasty attack on the city but was given a mission to simply cordon off the defenders and keep them from falling on the flanks and rear of the advancing Bulgarian First Army.

In the late afternoon of October 18, 1912, the Bulgarian Second Army crossed the frontier in force and engaged the Turkish screening forces. On the following day, they began a two-pronged attack down the Meriç River valley with the 9th Infantry Division and down the Tunca River valley with the 8th Infantry Division. The Turk's thin screening forces were unable to hold them or even to slow the Bulgarians down significantly. By October 21, 1912, Bulgarian cavalry had advanced to the north bank of the Arda River, and the infantry divisions had pushed halfway to Adrianople. On the east bank of the Tunca River, the Bulgarian 3rd Infantry Division swept south on the left flank of the Second Army, and the following day its brigades met the unsuccessful attack of the Adrianople Provisional Corps.

In the days that followed the Battle of Kirkkilise, the Bulgarian Second Army began to envelop the southwest side of Adrianople. By noon on October 27, the unopposed 2nd Brigade of the Bulgarian 8th Infantry Division

was across the Arda River and moving south, and on October 28, 1912, Bulgarian cavalry squadrons had cut the Adrianople-Constantinople railroad at Şahinci on the Meriç River. Meanwhile, the 3rd Brigade of the 8th Infantry Division closed on the southwest corner of the fortress, and the 3rd Infantry Division worked its way south down the east front of the fortress to cut the main paved road between Adrianople and Constantinople. A narrow corridor still connected the fortress to the rest of the empire. This would change shortly because the Bulgarian high command decided, on October 29, to completely encircle the city and attempt to capture it. Orders were sent to the Second Army the following day to accomplish this because of the acute danger that the fortress presented to the First and Third Armies (then moving forward toward Lüleburgaz). Moreover, the orders contained the news that reinforcements were on the way and would arrive sometime around November 6, 1912.100

The reason for this shift in Bulgarian strategy was that their Serb allies had won a shattering victory over the Ottoman Western Army (Garp Ordusu) at Kumanova (Kumanovo) on October 25, 1912. This battle was the Macedonian equivalent of Kirkkilise with equally disastrous consequences for the Turks. Now able to honor their prewar agreement, the Serbs sent a substantial portion of their army east to

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assist the Bulgarians. As the Serbian Army began to overrun most of the Vardar Valley, the Serbian General Staff ordered General Stepa Stepanovich's Second Army, composed of the Timok and the Danube Infantry Divisions, to concentrate for movement eastward to Adrianople. Movement began by train on October 30, 1912. Advance elements of the Timok Infantry Division arrived in early November, and by November 5, this division had three of its infantry regiments in the line. This was a remarkable feat of logistics and was a tribute to the high degree of cooperation between the Serbian and Bulgarian General Staffs. The Serbs entered the line on the northwest corner of the Adrianople fortress, flanked on the south by the 3rd Brigade of the Bulgarian 8th Infantry Division and to the north by the newly arrived Bulgarian 11th Infantry Division. Local Ottoman attacks forced the Bulgarian infantry to retreat, but the enemy cavalry still maintained pickets between the Arda and the Meriç Rivers. During the first week of November, the Bulgarians tightened the noose around the city by forcing the Ottoman forces inside the actual line of strong points surrounding the city. By November 5, the Second Army had marched the remainder of the 8th Infantry Division (the 2nd Brigade) entirely around the fortress to the southeast corner in order to release the 3rd Infantry Division for field operations in Thrace. On November 7, 1912, the Bulgarian cavalry again cut the railroad to the east, and two days later infantry from the 8th Division's 2nd Brigade linked up with the cavalry to finally encircle the city. Adrianople was now completely cut off from both the capital and the Ottoman field army. The Bulgarians continued to probe the Turkish defenses by launching an unsuccessful afternoon brigade-level attack on November 8.

Within the fortress, Mehmet Sükrü Paşa ordered several local attacks to test the strength of the encircling forces and, perhaps, to divert attention from the Ottoman Eastern Armies then retreating from the defeat at Lüleburgaz. On November 10 the 10th Infantry Division attacked the newly arrived Serb Timok Infantry Division at 3:30 A.M. and advanced three kilometers before being forced to retire to their lines that evening. Both sides conducted unsuccessful smaller regimental attacks between November 9 and 11 in the southern sector of the fortress. On November 11, 1912, the Bulgarians delivered a four-regiment attack on the Ottoman Keşan Redif Infantry Regiment, which failed miserably.

The Serbian Tuna Infantry Division arrived on November 13 and took over the sector of the line between the Meriç and Arda Rivers. The Serbs now had two complete infantry divisions in the fight holding about five kilometers of front (or about a quarter of the total encircling frontage). The Serb contribution amounted to almost forty-

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seven thousand men and seventy-two artillery pieces101 and enabled the Bulgarians to send the 3rd Infantry Division and two brigades of the 9th Infantry Division to the Çatalca Lines. The Serbs also sent the Timok Cavalry Regiment, which joined the Bulgarian Guards Cavalry Regiment in guarding the southeast corner of the fortress. The Second Army now had under its command the two Serbian divisions and the Bulgarian 8th and 11th Infantry Division, as well as the 3rd Brigade of the 9th Infantry Division. The Bulgarians continued to launch multiregiment attacks on November 15 and 20, on opposite flanks of the fortress, all of which failed. The final battle was an Ottoman attack to the south on November 21 and 22, involving four Nizamiye infantry regiments. This attack drove the Bulgarians back about four kilometers, but the exhausted Turks could not hold the ground against counterattacks.

Beginning on November 10 with the arrival of the Serbian artillery, the Balkan allies began a sustained bombardment of the city with 120mm guns and 150mm howitzers.102 Although the bombardment caused

several fires within the city, the shelling did not seriously impair the defenses. In late November, as at Çatalca, the population of Adrianople became aware that an armistice was imminent, and on December 2, the armies exchanged notes concerning a meeting to discuss this idea. The two sides sent negotiating teams (previously mentioned in this chapter) to Sava Çeşme for preliminary negotiations at 11 A.M. on December 5, 1912. Progress was unusually swift, and the chief delegates signed a preliminary protocol at 1 P.M. that day.103 The terms of the Adrianople Armistice are shown in Table 4.10.

The terms were discussed again with the Bulgarians on December 6 and were approved in principle on the following day, with two exceptions. The Bulgarians requested that the fortress conspicuously mark its frontline positions with white pennants on surveyor's poles and extend the notification of the resumption of hostilities to four days. The Turkish delegates returned to consider these amendments to the protocol. At 11 A.M. on December 8, 1912, the delegates met and signed the amended protocol and then exchanged signed copies with each other. The Turks marked their front lines within twenty-four hours with the agreed-upon white pennants, and the armistice was off to a reasonably good start.

As at Çatalca, the Turks began to repair damage immediately and upgrade their defensive works. Mehmet Şükrü Paşa ordered that all trenches be dug as deep as possible, and he ordered that an additional half meter of earth be added to the tops of the strong-point artillery bunkers and revetments. To conserve his food stocks for what seemed an uncertain future, Mehmet Şükrü Paşa implemented the rationing of food on December 5. He also instituted a formal training program

TABLE 4.10 Terms of the Adrianople Armistice, December 5, 1912

1. Forces will remain in their position at the time of the armistice and will post guards to ensure this.
2. Passage between the opposing lines is prohibited and guards will be posted at noon to avoid mistakes.
3. Visitations (communications) between the lines are forbidden.
4. The meeting point is Sava Çeşme on the Mithat Paşa-Adrianople road.
5. During meetings only authorized officials will conduct talks.
6. To collect the dead, each side will organize parties of unarmed, healthy soldiers.
7. The use of reconnaissance vehicles or assets, including balloons and aircraft, is forbidden.
8. There will be a four-hour warning prior to the commencement of hostilities.
9. The construction of fortifications is permitted, as is the posting of guards.
10. Subjects of complaint must be put formally in writing.
11. Conspicuous complaints (violations) are cause for the breakdown of the armistice.

Signed: Infantry Lieutenant Colonel Celal and Lieutenant Colonel Popof

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 3ncü Kisim, Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 254.

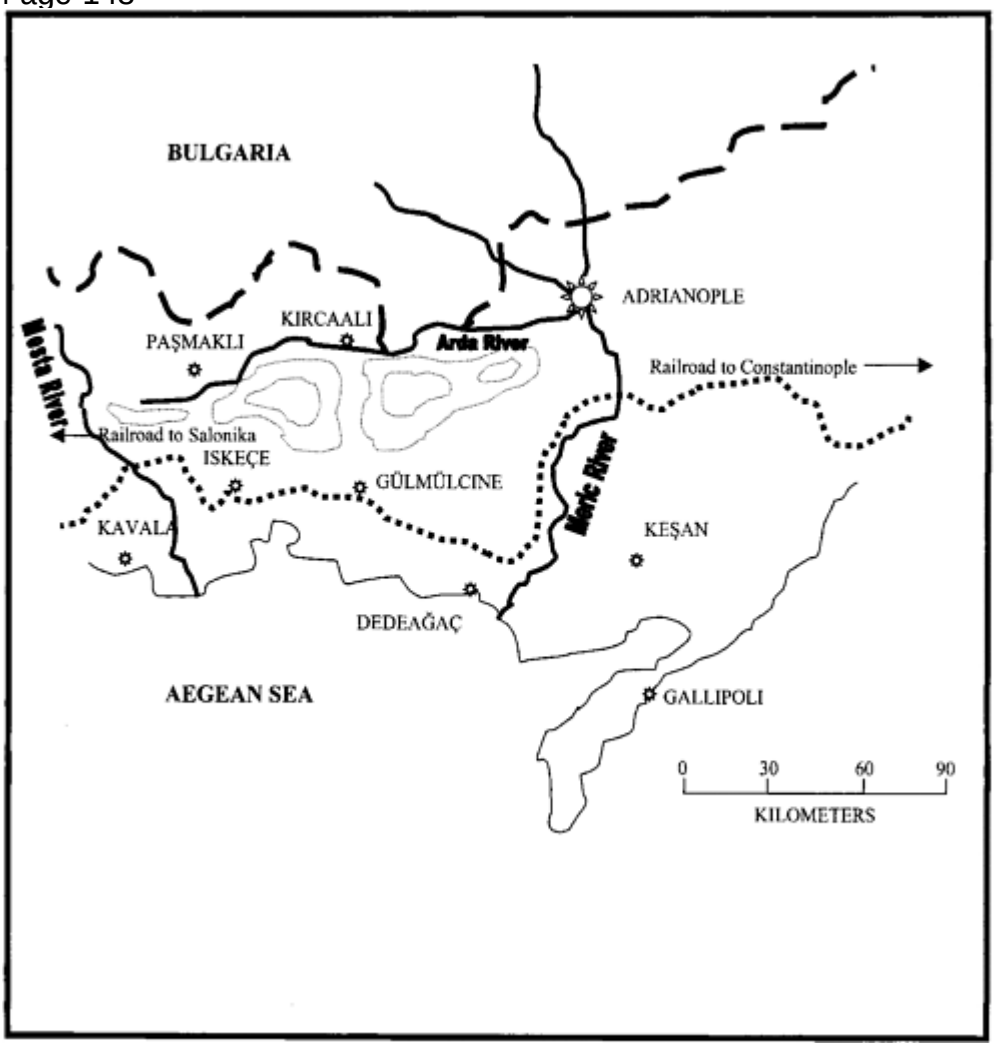
for the reservists, who had reported for duty in an untrained state. The Bulgarians used the time to improve their trenches and also to bring up more heavy artillery, which would be needed should the armistice break down. From Çatalca, the Bulgarian First Army sent a 120mm howitzer battalion (of three batteries) to the Bulgarian Second Army, and the Third Army sent a 120mm howitzer battalion (of two batteries) as well. Again, as at Çatalca, the combatants settled in for the winter, determined to prepare themselves for the resumption of hostilities.

THE KIRCAALI DETACHMENT

There was one final piece in the defensive mosaic of Ottoman Thrace: the Kircaali Detachment (Mufrezesi), commanded by Mirliva M.Yaver Paşa. The detachment was, in reality, a provisional army corps reflecting the importance of its wartime mission. Under Cam-

paign Plan Number 5, the detachment was assigned the Kircaali Redif Division and the Kircaali Müstahfiz (or Home Guard) Division for combat operations. Additionally, the regular 36th Infantry Regiment was to be detached from its parent 12th Infantry Division and assigned to the detachment as a stiffener, giving Yaver Paşa seven infantry regiments in total. The detachment's wartime mission was to keep the Bulgarians away from the vulnerable Constantinople-Salonika railroad that ran through Thessaly. The railroad was generally located about fifty to sixty kilometers south of the Bulgarian frontier. There were two avenues of approach south through the mountains along roads, which the detachment intended to block. The eastern approach connected the town of Kircaali to Gülmülcine (on the railroad), and the western approach connected Paşmakli to Iskece (also on the railroad). The upper Arda River passed through Kircaali and Paşmakli. Although this geography forced the detachment to guard two avenues of approach, the mountainous terrain and the upper

Arda River conferred significant terrain advantages on the Turks (see Map 4.11).
As has been seen previously, mobilization did not proceed smoothly for the Turks, and the mobilization of the Kircaali Detachment was no exception. The Turks planned that full mobilization of the detachment could be accomplished in six to fourteen days.104 Problems arose almost immediately, however, as untrained reservists reported into the depots. Furthermore, the supporting cavalry, engineers, and field hospital formations (coming from the IV Corps) were delayed enroute. The officers of the 36th Infantry Regiment found themselves working around the clock to remedy deficiencies. By October 1, 1912, the 3rd and 4th Border Companies were in position and were supported by the arriving battalions of the 36th Infantry. On October 3, the Palas Redif Infantry Regiment had 2,259 men on its rolls, and on October 6 the Kircaali Redif Infantry Regiment reported 2,483 men present. On October 13, 1912, the detachment chief of staff, Staff Major Hayri, began to form the detachment's wartime headquarters. Two days later, the field bakery arrived, as did the field hospital and the ammunition trains battalion. By October 17, the detachment was more or less fully mobilized (generally, a week longer than projected by the mobilization plan).105 The detachment's main formation, the Kircaali Redif Division, had a total of 10,379 soldiers, of which 2,222 were regular infantrymen from the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 36th Infantry (it also had three batteries of mountain artillery assigned). The smaller Kircaali Müstahfiz Division had 6,822 men assigned, of which 1,071 were regulars from the 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry (moreover, it had a single artillery battery assigned). The detachment also had a cavalry troop of 77 men, an engineer company of 274 men, and two border companies (the 3rd and the 4th).



Map 4.11 Kircaali Detachment—Operational Area, October 21, 1912.
The Kircaali Redif Division was sent to the Kircaali sector, where the commander deployed his two regular infantry battalions in blocking positions immediately behind the border companies. The remaining Redif infantry regiments established a defensive line along the Perperik Dere to block the road from Bulgaria leading to Kircaali. The Kircaali Müstahfiz Division was sent to the Paşmakli sector, where the commander chose to establish defensive rings around the villages of Paşmakli and Çatak. As at Kircaali, this deployment blocked

the roads south. These divisions were approximately twenty-four kilometers apart, and there were no lateral roads that easily connected the two formations. Although the defense was not mutually supporting, there was little alternative given the troops available to Yaver Paşa.

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Opposing the Turks were Bulgarian forces totaling about twenty-five thousand men, which were primarily from the reinforced 2nd Infantry Division. Like the Turks, geography forced the Bulgarians to break their forces down into two groups. In the east, opposing the Turkish Redif division, was the Bulgarian Hasköy Detachment (Haskovo Detachment in Bulgarian), consisting of the 2nd Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade (28th and 40th Infantry Regiments, reinforced by the 3rd Artillery Regiment). In the west, opposing the Turkish Müstahfiz division, was the Left Group of the Rodop Detachment (Rodopo Detachment in Bulgarian), consisting of the 2nd Infantry Division's 1st Brigade (the 21st Infantry Regiment and several border companies). Both detachments were assigned the mission to drive south to cut the Ottoman railroad.

The Bulgarians moved up to the border and crossed it on the morning of October 18, 1912, and by noon, the opposing detachments were in light contact. In the east, the Hasköy Detachment conducted skillful flanking movements that forced the Turks to retreat rapidly to their main defensive line. In the west, the Rodop Detachment's Left Group was less successful with frontal attacks and gained little ground.

The Battle of Kircaali was fought on October 21, 1912, and again resulted in the Turks having both their flanks turned. By evening they were compressed into the town of Kircaali itself until the commander wisely decided to retreat before becoming encircled. The Kircaali Detachment then conducted a two-day twenty-five kilometer retreat south to establish a new line at Mahmutlar, which they accomplished at 6 P.M. on October 22.106 There, the Burdur and Manisa Redif Infantry Battalions joined them. The battle continued on October 27 when the Kircaali Detachment launched a determined counter offensive aimed at retaking the town of Kircaali. The Turks, led by cavalry and a provisional Redif infantry regiment drove sixteen kilometers north to a ridge overlooking the Arda River and Kircaali, where they halted. Content with their gains, the Turks began to dig in and the front stabilized. At 2:30 P.M. on November 14, 1912, the Turks again mounted a serious attack toward Kircaali (known as the Battle of Kişla Arasi), which, by 7:00 that evening, had driven to within four kilometers of the town. Bulgarian reinforcements, however, appeared on the field, and the Turks retreated to their start line by the following morning. Thus, by mid-November, the tactical situation along the eastern Arda River near Kircaali was stable.

To the west, at the Battle of Paşmakli, the Bulgarians again turned the flanks of the Müstahfiz division and forced a five-kilometer retreat on October 26. On October 31, both sides conducted separate flanking attacks at the Battle of Palas. Reinforced by the hard-marching Soma Redif Infantry Regiment, the Turks launched an attack on the right. The

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attack pushed the Bulgarians back, and by evening on November 1, they had been driven back five kilometers. At the same time, the 1st Battalion of the Bulgarian 21st Infantry Regiment conducted a reinforced raid on the Turks left flank, which was intended to cut the railroad. The equally hard-marching Bulgarian infantry marched fifteen kilometers south and seized the Kaşlar Pass but, endangered by envelopment, they chose to retreat on November 1. The front stabilized briefly, but on November 3, 1912, the Bulgarians launched a successful frontal attack on the Turkish center that drove them back several kilometers. Subsequently, the Turks withdrew to defensive positions south of the Arda River. At the Battle of Second Palas, several regiments of Redif troops attacked north to seize the Arda River bridges on November 15. They reached the river but were forced to retreat the following day. Thus, the front along the western Arda stabilized by November 16, with the Turks holding a line about forty kilometers north of the railroad. Although both sides had conducted attacks, neither had a significant superiority sufficient to ensure victory. The difficult terrain also meant that these battles were fought in relative isolation and at nearly equal odds. Adding to the dimension of complexity of these engagements, an odd thing now happened. The Bulgarians, having seized the town of Kircaali, renamed the Haşköy Detachment the "Kircaali Detachment." thereby creating a detachment with the same name (in English at least) as that of the Turks. The Turks, having lost the town, renamed their force in contact with the enemy as the Mestanli Detachment. In the meantime,

Yaver Paşa had moved his own Kircaali Detachment headquarters southwest to Iskeçe to meet a looming new threat. Yaver Paşa's performance in command of the Kircaali Detachment has been criticized by one historian as having "singularly failed to offer the invading Bulgarians significant resistance."107 This is an unfair assessment of the actual operational conditions that ultimately led to the surrender of Yaver Paşa's forces on November 26, 1912. Originally, the mission of the Kircaali Detachment was to prevent significant Bulgarian penetrations that would compromise or sever the Constantino-ple-Salonika railroad. The detachment was

manned to accomplish this mission; however, underlying the defensive plan was the assumption that the detachment would enjoy secure flanks. To the east, the fortress of Adrianople and the presence of the XV Provisional Corps in Dimetoka supposedly guarded the detachment's right flank. Unfortunately, the unplanned absence of the XV Provisional Corps and the encirclement of Adrianople fatally compromised the right flank of the Kircaali Detachment's operational position by enabling Bulgarian formations to outflank it. To make matters worse, the detachment's western flank was supposed to be guarded by the Ottoman Western Army's Nevrekop Detachment. Unfortunately once again the adjacent unit

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failed (in its mission to defend Serez and Drama), and thus the Kircaali Detachment's left flank was compromised as well.

By November 16, 1912, the Nevrekop detachment (really only a reinforced Redif regiment) had collapsed and the Bulgarian Rodop Detachment's Right Group had taken Drama, severed the railroad, and swept eastward to the banks of the Mesta Karasu River (the modern-day Greek Nestos River). In the east, the Bulgarians were able to seize Dimetoka rapidly (it had no Ottoman defenders) and then pushed a provisional infantry brigade (of four battalions) plus the 3rd Cavalry Regiment south along the Meriç River valley. Thus, by mid-November, Yaver Paşa found that he had succeeded in accomplishing his primary mission. However, he now faced brigade-sized Bulgarian forces unexpectedly pushing inward from both the east and the west. It was a strategic nightmare from which there was no relief.

Yaver Paşa was forced to pull troops off from the main defensive line in order to guard his now vulnerable flanks (see Map 4.12). He sent the Kircaali Redif Regiment and some Müstahfiz battalions to Dedeağaç (modern Alexandroupoli) with orders to establish a defense along the lower Meriç River. He created the Mesta Detachment, composed of a Jandarma (gendarmerie) battalion and two Redif battalions to establish a defense on the east bank of the Mesta Karasu River. Yaver Paşa was now trying to fight on three widely scattered fronts.

There were three simultaneous Bulgarian attacks on November 17, 1912. Another Bulgarian attack in the Paşmakli area forced the weakened Turks to retreat. On the same day, the Bulgarian Kircaali Detachment opened an additional offensive that broke the Ottoman Mestanli Detachment's lines. On the Meriç River, the advancing Kircaali Redif Regiment met the oncoming Bulgarians at 3:30 P.M. and, after a battle lasting two hours, were likewise forced to retreat. The following day brought similar setbacks to Ottoman arms as the detachments were forced to retreat on all fronts. This trend continued through November 20, by which time the Kircaali Redif Regiment had been forced back into the town of Dedeağaç. Over the next four days, Yaver Paşa fought a delaying action as he successfully brought his scattered detachments together while retreating steadily toward Dedeağaç. As the Bulgarians had already severed the railroad at Drama in Thessaly and at Adrianople in Thrace, there was little point to defending the connecting rail lines. The Kircaali Detachment was relentlessly pursued by the Bulgarians, but by November 25, Yaver Paşa had consolidated his remaining soldiers on the west bank of the Meriç River. He hoped to be able to break out to the east by crossing the river and taking the road to Keşan. From there he planned to move south to the safety of the entrenched Gallipoli position.

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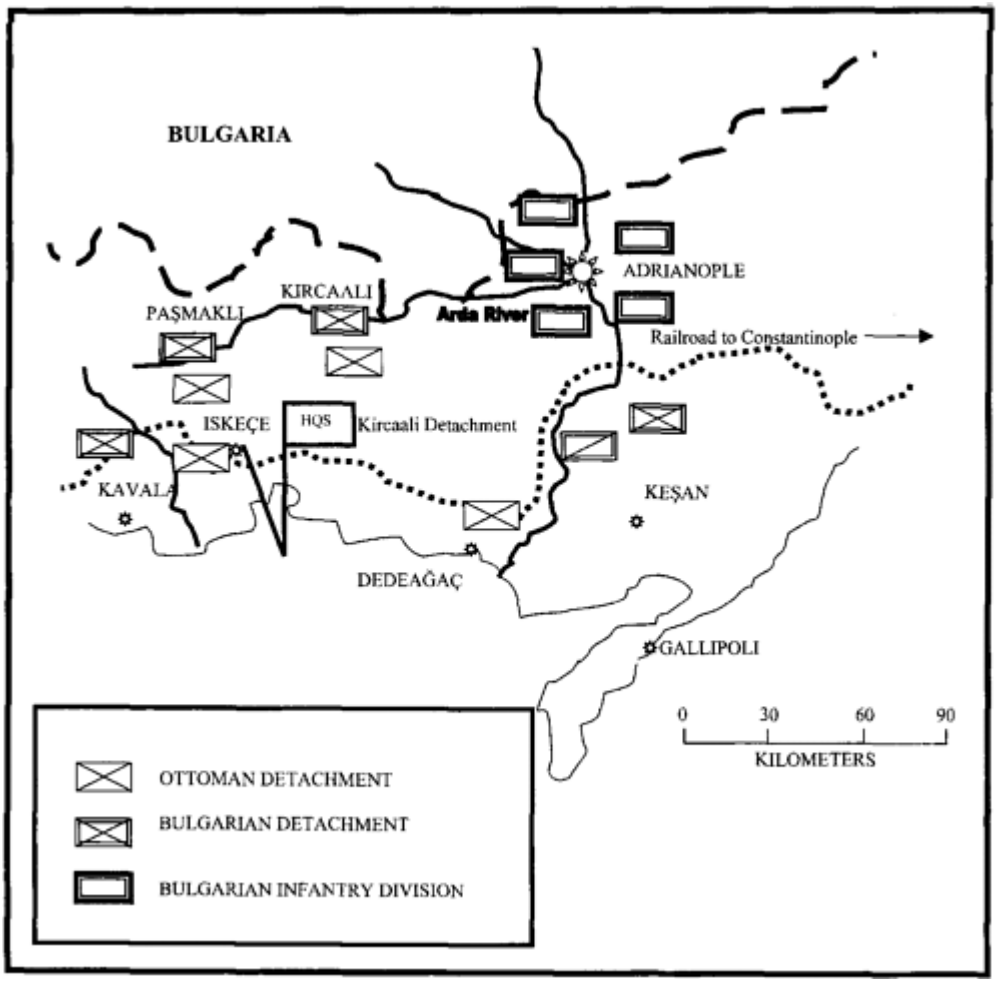

Map 4.12 Kircaali Detachment—Tactical Situation, November 16, 1912.

On November 26, 1912, Yaver Paşa had moved the Soma Redif Battalion and two infantry companies across the river. Unfortunately for the Turks, the Bulgarians had already moved the 7th Cavalry Regiment into Keşan, which continued to move west until it gained contact with the reinforced Soma Battalion. Completely surrounded, Yaver Paşa opened preliminary surrender negotiations with the Bulgarians on November 27 in the hopes of securing favorable terms. He briefly considered continuing the fight, but he knew that the Bulgarians had massed ten thousand men for an attack. They also reinforced their eastern cavalry forces with an infantry regiment on November 28, nailing shut his escape route. Yaver Paşa decided to surrender, and at 1 P.M. that day, the Bulgarian chief of staff, General Darkinkof, came to Kircaali Detachment's headquarters to accept the Ottoman surrender of the remaining troops on the west bank of the river. Although he had

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two infantry divisions assigned on his rolls, Yaver Paşa formally surrendered only 252 officers, 8,870 men, 772 animals, 8,700 rifles, two heavy machine guns, and eight mountain howitzers.108

There was one final bright spot in the history of the Kircaali Detachment. While Yaver Paşa was conducting the final surrender of his command, his soldiers on the east bank of the Meriç River fought a final brief action, at 2:30 P.M. on November 28, 1912. These troops consisted of two companies of the 3rd Battalion of the 36th Infantry Regiment, the Soma Redif Infantry Battalion, a heavy machine-gun section, and a quick-firing mountain howitzer section, accompanied by some Jandarmes, engineers, and cavalry. Altogether there were about 1,500 men, under the commanded of Major Nasuhi of the Soma Redif Battalion, who was determined not to surrender.109 This ad hoc group attacked the Bulgarian cavalry screen at Haydarli and broke through it, continuing along the road to Keşan. However, at Yenice, they left the road and bypassed the entrenched Bulgarians in Keşan. By 7 A.M. on November 29, 1912, they had reached the road going south from Keşan to Gallipoli, where they easily repulsed an attack by a mixed Greek and Bulgarian volunteer detachment. Nasuhi's group kept on heading south and by evening had reached the village of Kadi Köyü. The following day Nasuhi rejoined the main Ottoman forces just to the north of the Isthmus of Bulair, where he and his men were attached to the Trabzon Redif Infantry Division (see Map 4.13).

The Kircaali Detachment has been unfairly judged by history. Up until mid-November 1912, Yaver Paşa's

command accomplished its primary mission of defending the approaches to the Constantinople-Salonika railroad. Then Bulgarian successes in the adjacent sectors negated that mission by severing the railroad on both his flanks. Moreover, Bulgarian forces then appeared on both flanks, forcing him to fight a three-front campaign for which he had inadequate forces. He then fought a very successful delaying action and brought most of his command almost to the brink of safety. The fact that the tenacious Major Nasuhi was able to escape the cauldron with fifteen hundred men illustrates just how close Yaver Paşa came to achieving a breakout.

THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA

As the victorious Bulgarians swept into Eastern Thrace, they reached the Sea of Marmara near Şarköy on December 12, 1912, thus splitting the Ottoman First Army in half. The Bulgarian First Army pushed east toward Constantinople, while cavalry and small infantry detachments

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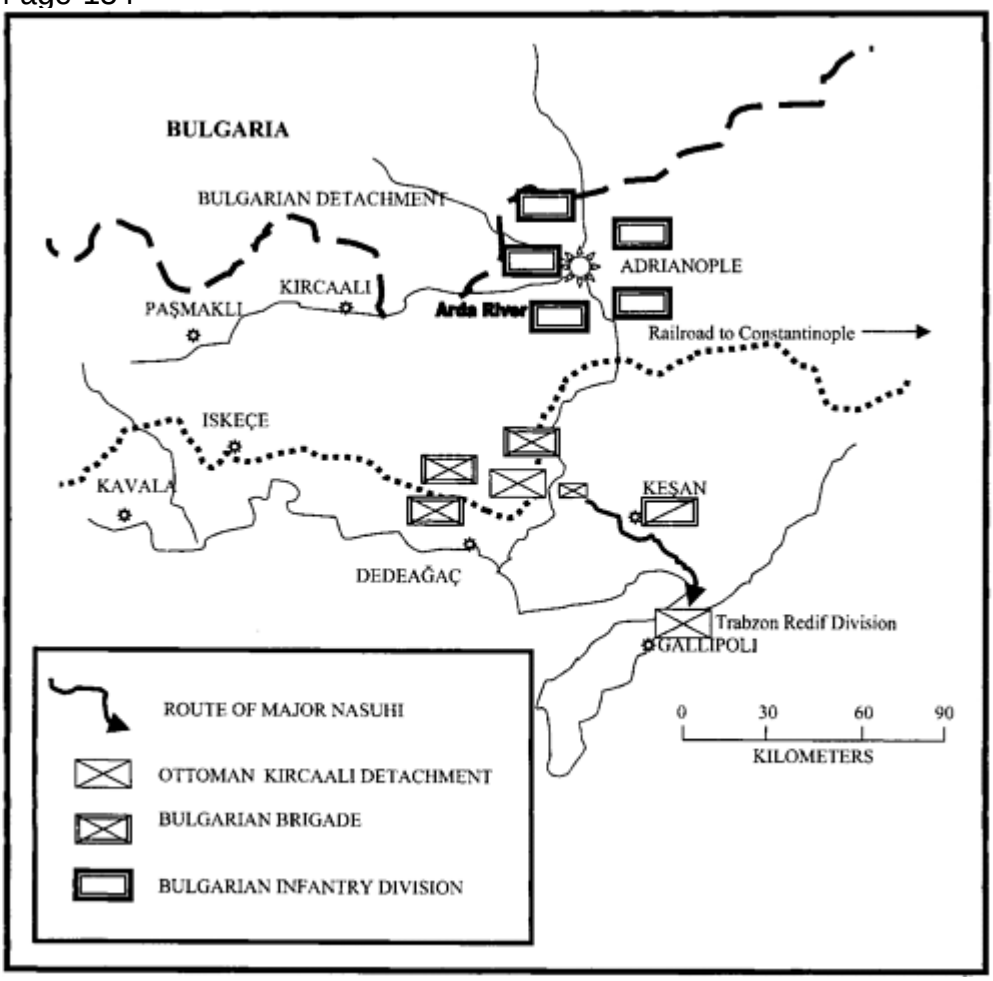

Map 4.13 Kircaali Detachment—Tactical Situation, November 28, 1912.

turned south toward the Dardanelles. Later, on February 8, 1913, the newly formed Bulgarian Fourth Army would close on the Turkish defensive positions at Bulair, at the narrowest part of the Gallipoli Peninsula. Under Campaign Plan Number 5, the Turks did not intend to position a large force to defend the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Dardanelles Straits and the peninsula fell under the command of the Çanakkale Straits Forces and Fortification Command,110 which in peacetime fell under the control of II Corps. The fortress command was assigned the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Heavy Artillery Regiments, plus torpedo and underwater mine detachments for the defense of the straits. The heavy artillery regiments controlled seventy-eight heavy coastal guns, ranging in caliber from eight inch up to fourteen inch, and fourteen heavy mortars. Additionally, there were numbers of smaller guns. The 5th Regiment manned

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four forts at the entrance to the Dardanelles, and the 3rd and 4th Regiments manned ten more forts on both sides of the narrows. These powerful defenses were designed exclusively to keep enemy ships out of the Dardanelles, and the fortress had very little excess manpower for other missions.

As the naval balance of power in the Aegean shifted in 1912 in favor of the Greeks, it was apparent to the Ottoman General Staff that Plan 5 needed modifications to account for the new strategic posture. The danger of an amphibious assault on the peninsula by the Greeks to the rear of the straits fortifications (the singular possession by the Greeks of the fast, armored cruiser *Averoff* ensuring their control of the Aegean Sea)111 was considered a very real possibility. Immediate modifications (previously discussed in this chapter) were made to the concentration plan on October 15, 1912, and the Redif infantry divisions of the XV Provisional Corps were given orders to deploy to the Gallipoli Peninsula. Moreover the regular 27th Infantry Division from Palestine, destined under Plan 5 for the defense of the Balkans, was also diverted to the straits, as were several independent Redif infantry regiments. Altogether these modifications added approximately forty thousand men to the defensive order of battle for the peninsula.

The Çanakkale Fortified Zone was under the command of Brigadier General Fahri.112 Initially, General Fahri had the locally recruited Çanakkale Redif Infantry Division immediately available, and he determined to defend the peninsula by placing it in a beach defense role. He began to form a provisional division of incoming reinforcements from the Trabzon Redif Infantry Division at Bulair and began to push its units northward. He planned to maintain his sole regular army formation, the 27th Infantry Division, as a general reserve at Eceabat. He also began to form the Menderes Detachment to defend the Asiatic shore. As the remainder of the Redif divisions arrived, Fahri planned to increase his strength along the vulnerable beaches. However, by early November 1912, a second strategic threat to the peninsula developed as the Bulgarian Army closed on Şarkoy and the strategic town of Keşan (located on the Salonika-Constantinople railroad). This was an unanticipated development, and there was little that Fahri could do to salvage the situation. He formed the Kavak Detachment, which consisted of an infantry battalion, a mountain howitzer battery, and a cavalry troop, and deployed in the town of Kavak at the Şarkoy-Keşan road junction. Fahri also took control of several companies of Jandarma and consolidated them around the port of Şarkoy. By December 3, 1912, Fahri had developed a very thin defensive screen, behind which he could develop his main defensive line at Bulair. There were some isolated clashes between Turks and Bulgarians, but neither had substantial forces in place to seriously contest the area. On Decem-

ber 6, 1912, the Kavak Detachment commander, Staff Major Nuri, made initial contact with his Bulgarian counterpart to discuss the cease-fire. The final terms for a line that now stretched almost fifty kilometers from the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara were agreed upon three days later.

The cease-fire along this front did not go into effect easily, and there continued to be clashes between the two sides. On December 11, General Fahri sent a two hundred-man volunteer company (from Erzurum) by steamer from Eceabat to reinforce Şarkoy. The Bulgarians responded attacking the town the following day with a similar volunteer formation of about five hundred Bulgarians.113 Fahri responded by sending the 9th Rifle regiment northward to reinforce his thin lines. Further discussions were held on December 15, 1912, regarding the proper protocols to be observed and to discuss the exact frontline trace between the Turks and the Bulgarians. Finally, on December 22, 1912, Colonel Cevat, General Farhi's personal delegate, reached a definitive protocol with the enemy that stabilized the cease-fire line.

During the negotiations, Fahri was not inactive but rather worked hard to remedy the weakness of his northern front. Because his Provisional Infantry Division, assigned to defend the neck of the peninsula at Bulair, was weaker than a normal division, Fahri ordered the 27th Infantry Division north to Bulair as well. In order to replace the 27th in the role of general reserve, Fahri ordered the incoming Afyon Reserve Division to Eceabat. The Çanakkale Reserve Division, composed of men from Gallipoli, Çhanak, and the peninsula itself, was assigned the southernmost tip of the peninsula (the area later known as the Cape Helles front). The Edremit Reserve Division was placed on its right flank, covering the area later known as ANZAC Cove and Suvla Bay. These two divisions constructed battalion-sized strong points on the key terrain features overlooking the beaches. The beaches themselves were covered by company-sized elements, and the divisional artilleries were positioned centrally to support the divisional sectors. The Afyon Reserve Division was headquartered at Eceabat in reserve and was prepared to support either the Çanakkale or the Edremit divisions. These troops began to dig trenches, gun pits, develop a road and communications network, and to rehearse counterattack plans. The ANZACs would later discover what they called "the Balkan Pits"114 in their sector in 1915, which were the remnants of these defensive preparations. On the Asiatic shore, the Menderes Detachment had grown to divisional strength and began similar defensive preparations at Kum Kale and the adjacent coast-lines.115 Finally, a provisional army corps headquarters was established at Eceabat to command and control the three reserve infantry divisions and the Menderes Detachment.

Logistically speaking, the Gallipoli Peninsula became an island as the Bulgarians cut off its overland lines of communications to Constantinople. The Turkish Navy immediately reestablished communications by introducing maritime resupply through the Sea of Marmara and increasing the ferry traffic linking Çanakkale in Asia, with Eceabat and Gallipoli on the peninsula. This system proved adequate throughout the wars, and it should be noted that the Turks retained enough residual shipping capacity to conduct a corps-sized amphibious operation in 1913. Thus, by Christmas 1912, the general defensive dispositions of the Gallipoli Peninsula had taken shape and are shown on Map 4.14.

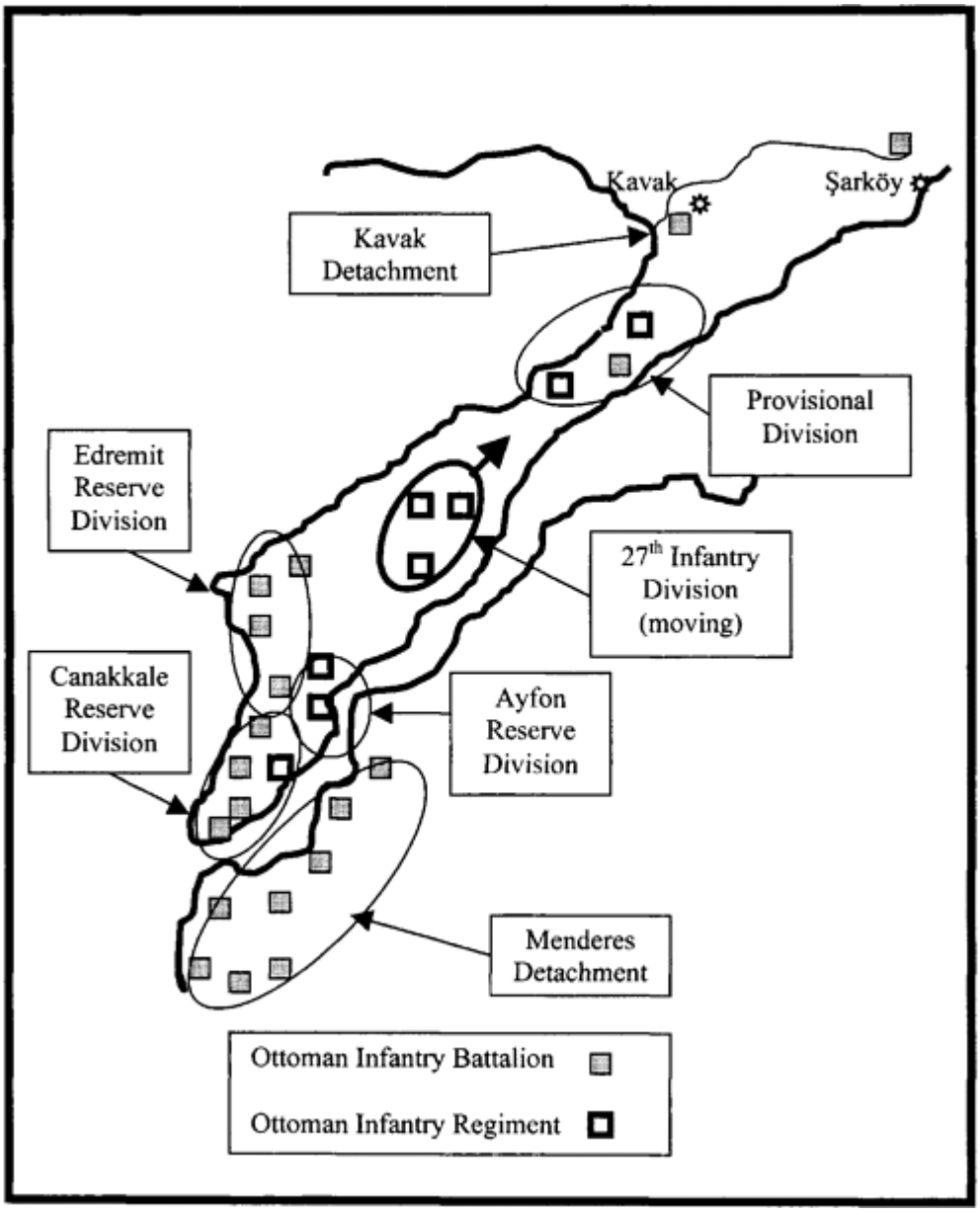
THE AEGEAN ISLANDS

With the Ottoman Fleet bottled up in the Sea of Marmara, the Greek Fleet was free to conduct unimpeded operations in the Aegean Sea. The Greeks took immediate advantage by making amphibious landings on the major islands in the western Aegean that had been held by the Turks for five hundred years. These islands contained mixed populations of Greeks and Turks, but, except for the islands near the Dardanelles, they had little real strategic value in 1912.

The Greeks landed first on the strategic island of Lemnos (Limnos) located at the mouth of the Dardanelles. This island possessed the important Mondros (Mudros) Harbor from which it was possible to sustain a close naval blockade of the Straits. Greek infantry landed near the harbor on October 19, 1912, and rapidly pushed the tiny Ottoman garrison (three officers and thirty men) into the hills. By the following day, two battalions of the Greek 20th Infantry Regiment along with two 75mm guns were landed. The Turks, surrounded, were forced to surrender. By October 22 the island was firmly in Greek hands; they quickly established a wireless station and brought in four 100mm coastal defense guns.116 The captured Turks were sent to Athens as prisoners of war.

The Greeks moved swiftly to consolidate their grip on the islands clustered at the mouth of the Dardanelles. On October 31, 1912, the Greek Army landed on and seized Samothrace (Semendirek), Thassos (Taşöz), Imroz (Gokçeada), and Agios Efstratios (Aystrati). Within weeks they had taken Psara (November 4), Bozcaada (November 7), and Ikaria (Nicaria) (November 17). None of these islands had significant Ottoman garrisons.

Sizable Ottoman garrisons guarded the larger islands, however. The 2nd Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment was stationed on Lesbos (Midilli) and put up a stiff defense throughout November. Nevertheless Lesbos fell on December 19, 1912.117 Chios (Sakiz) had the largest Ottoman



Map 4.14 Çanakkale Fortified Zone, Gallipoli, December 1912.

garrison (about 1,500 men), which was composed of the 1st and 3rd Battalions, 18th Infantry Regiment, the Sakiz Jandarma Battalion, and a small artillery detachment. The Greeks landed on the island on December 1, 1912, but failed to overwhelm the Turks until January 3, 1913. These Turks went into captivity as well. The final battle came later on Samos (Sisam) as the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment and the 6th Rifle Battalion (sent there from the 6th

Infantry Division on October 6, 1912) attempted to hold the island. There was some minor fighting on the island in March 1913, but the Turks were able to evacuate the garrison by sea to the mainland port of Kuşadasi. By March 16, Samos was in Greek hands.118

From the start these were losing battles for the Turks since it was impossible to either reinforce or evacuate the garrisons (Samos excepted). The loss of these islands badly affected the contemporary Ottoman consciousness, and the reclamation of them became a major political issue later during the peace negotiations. Even today the retention of these islands by Greece is a major obstacle in the growth of friendly relations between Greece and the modern Turkish Republic.

NOTES

1. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 3ncü Kisim, Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 46–48.
2. Ibid., 46–48.

3. Ibid., 46.
4. Ibid., 45–46.
5. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi Kronolojisi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1999), 9.
6. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 1 Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazirliklar ve Osmanli Devletinin Harbe Girişi (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 52–55.
7. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncü Cilt, 6ncu Kisim (1908–1920)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1971), 286–287.
8. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi, Etrafindaki Muharebeler,* 69–70.
9. Richard C.Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2000), 25.
10. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi, Etrafindaki Muharebeler,* 118–121.
11. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 25. See also Ulrich Trumpener, "German Military Involvement in the First Balkan War," in Bela K.Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, eds., *East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 349.
12. Harb Tarihi Arşivi, Orders of the acting commander-in-chief to the Eastern and Western Armies, 7:30 P.M., October 16, 1912. This order is signed by both Pertev Paşa and Hadi Paşa, and is signed for release by Nazim Paşa. Cabinet 3, Drawer 10, File 67.
13. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi, Etrafindaki Muharebeler,* 118.
14. Trumpener, "German Military Involvement in the First Balkan War," 353.
15. Turkish General Staff, Murat Tunca, trans., *1912–13 Balkan Harbinde, Turk-Bulgar Harbi, II Cilt, Kirklareli Muharebesi* (Istanbul: Askwei Matbaa, 1943), 167.
16. Mahmoud Moukhtar Pacha, *Mon Commandement au Cours de la Campagne des Balkans de 1912* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1913), 12.
17. Ibid., 13.
18. Turkish General Staff, *Kirklareli Harekati,* 176. The account of the III Corps's battles of Petra, Eskipolos, and Erikler may be found in this source on pages 170–243.

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19. Mahmoud Moukhtar Pacha, *Mon Commandement,* 15. Colonel Şükrü reported the presence of at least ten thousand enemy troops and noted that all three combat arms (infantry, artillery, and cavalry were present within the enemy force).
20. Ibid., 17.
21. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebel,* 120–123.
22. Ibid., 124–137. The material for the Adrianople Provisional Corps's attack of October 22, 1912, is contained in these pages.
23. Mahmoud Moukhtar Pacha, *Mon Commandement,* 21.
24. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbinde (1912–1913) 1. Cilt,* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 226.
25. Turkish General Staff, *1912–13 Balkan Harbinde, I Cilt,* 218.
26. Mahmoud Moukhtar Pacha, *Mon Commandement,* 26.
27. Turkish General Staff, *1912–13 Balkan Harbinde, I Cilt,* 292–355.
28. Ibid., 408–409.
29. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebele,* 140–150.
30. Ibid., 151–153.
31. Turkish General Staff, *1912–13 Balkan Harbinde, I Cilt,* 408–409.
32. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 26–27; and Mahmoud Moukhtar Pacha, *Mon Commandement,* 44–49.
33. Mahmoud Moukhtar Pacha, *Mon Commandement,* 40–42. The III Corps commander was particularly critical of the performance of the Afyon Redif Division (telegram to the Eastern Army at 3:30 P.M. on October 24, 1912).
34. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi Kronolojisi,* 38.
35. Mahmoud Moukhtar Pacha, *Mon Commandement,* 53.
36. Turkish General Staff, Murat Tunca, trans. *1912–13 Balkan Harbinde, III Cilt, Lüleburgaz—Pinarhisar Muharebesi,* (Istanbul: Askeri Matbaa, 1943) 129–130.
37. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 28–29.
38. Turkish General Staff, *1912–13 Balkan Harbinde, III Cilt Lüleburgaz—Pinarhisar Muharebesi,* 160–162.
39. Ibid., 164.
40. Ibid., 168–169.
41. Ibid., 174.
42. Ibid., 196.
43. Ibid., 175–179.

44. Ibid., 217.
45. Mahmoud Moukhtar Pacha, *Mon Commandement Au,* 85.
46. Turkish General Staff, *Lüleburgaz—Pinarhisar Muharebesi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1943), 131.
47. Ibid., 223–224.
48. Ibid., 224
49. Ibid., 225.
50. Ibid., 225–226.
51. Ibid., 230–231.
52. Ibid., 234. These were the incoming reservists of the Ayvalik Redif Regiment and the Limnos Redif Battalion, which were apparently just then disem-barking from troop trains in the forward area.
53. Ibid., 240.
54. Ibid., 266–268.
55. Ibid., 270–272.
56. Ibid., 254–256.
57. Ibid., 250–251.

58. Ibid., 274–275.
59. Ibid., 283–284.
60. Ibid., 311–315.
61. Ibid., 330–333.
62. Ibid., 332.
63. Ibid., 350–351.
64. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 31.
65. Turkish General Staff, *Lüleburgaz—Pinarhisar Muharebesi,* 368.
66. In 1985–1986 the author was assigned to the 528th U.S. Army Artillery Group at Çakmakli, Turkey (located about three kilometers south of Hadimköy), which is directly on the ridgeline of the Çatalca position. The vertical drop to the western valley below may be compared with the Heights of Abraham, Pointe du Hoc at Normandy, or Gabe Tepe overlooking the Anzac beaches. As a combat arms officer, the author used to wonder that the Bulgarians found the will to attack such a splendid and defensible position.
67. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 1nci Kitap, Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 41–42.
68. Ibid., 42–44.
69. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi Kronolojisi,* 52–55.
70. Ibid., 56–60.
71. Turkish General Staff, *Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 23–24, 51.
72. Ibid., 62–63.
73. Trumpener, “German Military Involvement in the First Balkan War,” 348–353; Ismet Görgülü, *On Yillik Harbin Kadrosu, 1912–1922* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurum Basimevi, 1993), 26. It remains unclear exactly which command authorities von Lossow retained.
74. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 34–35.
75. Ibid., 34.
76. Ibid., 35.
77. Turkish General Staff, *Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 103–106, 131–139, 147–154.
78. Bernd Langensiepen and Ahmet Güleryüz, *The Ottoman Steam Navy, 1828–1923* (Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 1995), 18–19. This work contains the most useful chronology of Ottoman naval operations during the Balkan Wars, as well as detailed information concerning ships, training, and command.
79. Turkish General Staff, *Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* Map 7.
80. Ibid., 154.
81. Ibid., 188.
82. Ibid., 211.
83. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 37. Hall’s source for this is Aram Andonyan and Zavren Biberyan’s *Balkan Harbi Tarihi* (History of the Balkan War), (Istanbul: Sander Yayinlari, 1975); however, Andonyan did not cite his source for this information.
84. Turkish General Staff, *Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 157–168.
85. Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912–1913,* 36–38.
86. Turkish General Staff, *Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 211.

87. Ibid., 214.
88. Ibid., 237.
89. Ibid., 267–268.
90. Ibid., 269–271.

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91. John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Alfred A.Knopf, 1994), 70. See pages 69–71 for a fascinating discussion of the “military zones” of the globe.
92. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebele,* 2–3.
93. Ibid., 4.
94. Ibid., 4.
95. Ibid., 4–5.
96. Ibid., 6.
97. Ibid., 66.
98. Ratip Kazancigil, *Balkan* Şavaşinda, Edirne Savunmasi Günleri (Kirklareli-Vize, Turkey: Sermet Matbaasi, 1986), 12; Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebele,* 36–37.
99. Hall, The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, 39.
100. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebele,* 192.
101. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 41.
102. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebele,* 249.
103. Ibid., 254.
104. Ibid., 341.
105. Ibid., 345–346.
106. Ibid., Kroki (Map) 43.
107. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 42.
108. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebele,* 450.
109. Ibid., 450–452.
110. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri Balkan Harbi, (1912–1913), II Cilt, 2nci Kisim 1nci Kitap, Şark Orduşu, Muharebesi ve Şarköy Çikarmasi (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Bağimevi, 1993), 66–67.
111. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi (1912–1913),* 184.
112. Prior to 1934, Turks did not have family names, and the Turkish histories list individuals only by their given name. General Fahri is, therefore, known in the Turkish General Staff’s official history simply by his first name. Obviously, this situation places a certain strain on the researcher wishing to carry individuals forward through different wars and periods.
113. Turkish General Staff, *Şark Orduşu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarköy Çikarmasi,* 33.
114. Modern-day Gallipoli enthusiast Jul Snelders of Belgium uncovered these pits in 1998.
115. Turkish General Staff, *Şark Orduşu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarköy Çikarmasi,* Map 19.
116. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi, VIInci Cilt, Osmanli Deniz Harekati 1912–1913 (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 77–79.
117. Ibid., 80.
118. Ibid., 81 and Map 2.

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5
The Macedonian Campaigns, 1912
STRATEGIC PLANNING
As in the Eastern Theater under Campaign Plans Numbers 1, 2, 4, and 5, the Ottoman General Staff planned to form the Western Army (Garp Ordusu) in the Ottoman vilayets of Kosovo, Işkodra, Manistir, Yanya, and Salonika. The Second Army Inspectorate provided the nucleus of the army staff and transferred all its regular army formations to the new army The formations of the Second Redif Inspectorate and the Sixth Redif Inspectorate were also assigned to the new army. Altogether, the Western Army would field three regular army corps (V, VI, VII Corps); five provisional army corps (II and VIII Provisional, Yanya, Ustruma, Provisional Işkodra); the corps-sized Ipek and Taşlica Detachments,; the division-sized Karaburun, Nevrekop, and Mitroviçe Detachments, several smaller detachments; and an independent cavalry division. When task organized for combat, Ottoman forces in the Balkans were broken down into the Vardar Army, the Independent Yanya Corps, the Ustruma Corps, the Provisional Işkodra Corps, and the VIII Provisional Corps. Map 5.1 shows the Western Army’s Concentration Areas on October 19, 1912.

This confusing array of Ottoman forces (in comparison with the organizationally clean Ottoman Eastern Army orders of battle for Thrace) showcases the strategic problem that the Ottoman Empire faced in the western theater of operations during the Balkan Wars. Unlike the Eastern Army in Thrace, which faced a strategic threat from a single direction, the Western Army confronted an enemy coalition on four major fronts. Although the Turks occupied a central position, which conferred

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Map 5.1 Western Army Concentration Areas, October 19, 1912.

some strategic advantage, the multifront situation left them vulnerable to simultaneous and well-coordinated enemy attacks. Unsure whether their enemies would attack in concert, separately, or not at all, the Turks dispersed their forces into army- and corps-sized groups to oppose all enemies.1 This left them vulnerable to defeat in detail.

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The Second Army Inspectorate staff worked on three of the twelve campaign plans (Numbers 1, 4, and 5) and conducted priority staff work on Campaign Plan Number 4 (involving the “small Balkan coalition”: Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro). However, on October 3, 1912, the Ottoman General Staff notified the newly mobilized Western Army to redirect its priority of planning to the promulgation of Plan Number 5, which

postulated attack by a large Balkan coalition (Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Greece).2 In the case of each plan, the Turks had worked out elaborate calculations concerning the number of enemy infantry battalions and artillery batteries that would deploy against them. The plans were elaborate, and they were orchestrated on a timetable basis, much like the German models that Ottoman General Staff officers had learned at the war academy. The plans attempted to consider, and deal with, all reasonable assumptions and planning parameters. For example, Plan 4 included fifteen hundred Albanian home guard volunteers *(gönüllü müstahfiz)* in its calculations of combat strength. Because of the great dispersal of its forces, the Western Army's campaign plans were primarily defensive at the strategic and operational levels (unlike its sibling Eastern Army, which conducted an operational offensive within the framework of a larger strategic defensive). The plans positioned the army's corps and divisions along the frontiers, guarding the likely enemy avenues of approach into the Balkan provinces.

Further complicating the Western Army's planning process was the complex system of Army Inspectorates created to administer and train the army in peacetime. As explained in Chapter 3, the Second Army Inspectorate was geographically split between the Balkans in Europe and Syria in Asia. The VIII Corps (20 percent of the army's regular strength) was stationed in Aleppo, Damascus, and Jerusalem. Moreover, the Redif infantry divisions assigned to the Western Army in wartime were spread throughout two Redif Inspectorates in Anatolia, a Redif Inspectorate in Syria and Palestine, and the Second Redif Inspectorate in the Balkans. The mobilization plans for this force were equally complex and varied according to the local geography and demographics. For example, a regular infantry regiment in Salonika was expected to be fully mobilized in eight to nine days, a regular infantry regiment in the upland town of Köprülü was expected to be ready in nine to thirteen days, and an artillery battalion in Pirlepe took eighteen to twenty-one days.3 The order of battle for the Western Army's defense of the Balkans is shown in Table 5.1.

MOBILIZATION

The General Mobilization Declaration4 was issued on October 1, 1912, because of the Montenegrin mobilization on September 28, the Bulgar-

TABLE 5.1 Operational Plans, 1912—Projected Ottoman Order of Battle for the Balkans

WESTERN ARMY

Serbian Front

VARDAR Army

V Corps 13, 15, 16 Infantry Divisions Istip Redif Division *Taslica Detachment* 60th Infantry Regiment Taslica Redif Regiment	*VI Corps* 17, 18 Infantry Divisions Manastir, Drama Redif Divisions	*VII Corps* 19 Infantry Division Üsküp, Pristine Redif Divisions	*II Provisional Corps* Uşak, Denizli, Izmir Redif Divisions	*Firzovik Detachment* 20(-) Infantry Division Mitroviçe Redif Division

Bulgarian Front

Uştruma Corps 14(-) Infantry Division Serez Redif Division Nevrekop Detachment	*Montenegrin Front* *Provisional Işkodra Corps* 24 Infantry Division Elbasan Redif Division Iskodra Fortified Area	*Ipek Detachment* 21 Infantry Division Pirzeren Redif Division

Greek Front

VIII Corps 25, 26, 27 Infantry Divisions Nasliç, Aydin Redif Divisions	*Yanya Corps* 23 Infantry Division Yanya Redif Division Yanya Fortified Area	*Independent* Cavalry Division	Karaburun Detachment Salonika Redif Division

22 Infantry Division

Note: (-) indicates formations at less than full strength.

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), Illncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), Charts 2, 3.

ian mobilization on September 30, and the imminent Serbian and Greek mobilizations. The declaration affected the Balkan, Anatolian, Syr-ian/Palestinian, and Caucasian vilayets. All Nizamiye, Redif, and Mustahfz units in the First and Second Army Inspectorates were mobilized, as were the units of the Third Army Inspectorate that were earmarked for service with the Eastern and Western Armies. The declaration promulgated Campaign Plan Number 5 and directed that units activate a minimum cadre of 25 percent of authorized strength immediately. Men from the previously discharged 1908 year group cohort

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were recalled directly to their units. There were other instructions as well. The men of the Müstahfz were tasked to help organize units. Substitutes were authorized for men who could afford to purchase their way out of service. Redif infantry battalions were directed to form columns of fifty men, who would assemble groups of 230 draft animals (previously designated for procurement from their civilian owners) and bring them to the mobilization depots. Detailed written reporting procedures for noting deficiencies were to be published on October 2. In this manner, 136 Nizamiye and 140 Redif infantry battalions were placed on a war footing. Finally, October 8, 1912, was noted as the date by which the Elbasan Redif Infantry Division should be in position to screen the frontier with Montenegro, and on the same date, the Drama, Serez, Iştip, Usküp, and Mitroviçe Redif Infantry Divisions were expected to be armed and ready to move from their depots.

As in the Eastern Army, some divisions were short platoons and companies that had been detached for duties chasing rebels and bandits in Albania and in the Sanjak of Novi Bazar (although this was not nearly as severe a problem as it was in the Eastern Army area). The 14th Infantry Division had a rifle battalion in Yemen, and the 22nd Infantry Division had an infantry battalion there as well. Mobilization proceeded slowly, as the problems with the antique Ottoman railway system affected the timely concentration of the army. By the twentieth day of mobilization, there were supposed to have been 274 trainloads of men and material delivered to the Western Army. However, on that day, the army had received only 188 trains, of which 87 carried troop units, 96 carried individual replacements (soldiers), and 5 carried draft animals.5 To bring its units up to full war establishment, the army needed forty thousand individual replacements from Anatolia, many of which would never arrive.

The V Corps presents a representative sample of how the mobilization proceeded. The corps's replacement depots had received an annual intake of four thousand conscripted men in August 1912. Most of these men were assigned to the 13th and 15th Infantry Divisions (and some went to the 14th Infantry Division). These men were in the early stages of training when the war broke out and were not considered trained. By October 9, 1912, most of the Nizamiye infantry battalions had available only five to six hundred trained men. The V Corps's strength is shown in Table 5.2 and indicates that the corps was at approximately 40 percent of its authorized war strength. The VI and VII Corps were in about the same shape, but the Uştruma Corps was in slightly better condition, at approximately 60 percent of its war strength.

The Ottoman cavalry and artillery units were maintained in peacetime at a higher strength than the Ottoman infantry units (the men served for three years, as opposed to two in the infantry), so the

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TABLE 5.2 V Corps Strength, October 9, 1912

Unit	*Strength*	*Authorized War Establishment*
13th Infantry Division	5,891	13,000
15th Infantry Division	4,312	13,000
16th Infantry Division	3,500	13,000
Iştip Redif Division	5,000	9,000
Corps support units	2,180	4,000
Total	20,883	52,000

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 127.

mobilization of these arms went better than the infantry mobilization. The Independent Cavalry Division was smaller than an infantry division, fielding twenty-one hundred men and fifteen hundred animals. The Independent Cavalry Division was supposed to concentrate for operations during the period of October 11–18,

1912, but the geography and distances involved prevented this from occurring.6

OPERATIONAL PLANNING

Prior to the outbreak of hostilities, the movement of troops into the Balkans proceeded slowly, using both steamships and the single-track railroad that serviced the Ottoman vilayets; the Western Army experienced problems with concentration similar to those of the Eastern Army. After hostilities broke out, the flow of troops to the Balkans more or less stopped. On October 8, 1912, the Turks formally activated the new Western Army in Salonika under the command of Birinci Ferik (Lieutenant General) Ali Riza Paşa. The Operations Division of the army staff immediately published an operations order revising the operational plan.7 The order noted that war was expected to break out shortly with Montenegro. The Uştruma Corps was directed to form a provisional infantry division from the regiments detached from the 1st Infantry Division (then fighting rebels and bandits in the Balkans) and to change the order of battle of the Nevrekop Detachment as well. The Vardar Army was directed to concentrate in the Krivolak-Köprülü-Pirlepe area and to have its headquarters operational within twenty-four hours. The V Corps (a Vardar Army unit) was given priority for rail movement and directed to move forward to screen the Bulgarian border and make contact with the Uştruma Corps. There were many minor changes to the order of battle; Redif infantry regiments were attached to, or detached from, corps and detachments in order to

compensate for battalions and regiments either absent from, or in, Yemen. All the independent corps, divisions, and detachments were activated and assigned appropriate missions. The Yanya Corps was activated and directed to screen the Greek border in Epirus with the Yanya Redif Infantry Division. The VIII Provisional Corps was also activated to screen the Greek border in Thessaly with the Kozana Redif Infantry Division (the Turks had correctly determined that the Greek fleet would prevent the VIII Corps from coming from Syria and Palestine by ship). Ali Riza signed the order and, according to standard Ottoman Army operating procedures, it was encoded and sent to the Ottoman General Staff the following day.

Further instructions followed on October 9, 1912, which activated the Independent Cavalry Division and assigned it to the Vardar Army. The cavalry division was ordered to mass in the vicinity of Kumanova. On the same day, Ali Riza Paşa designated Birinci Ferik Halepli Zeki Paşa as the commander of the new Vardar Army. Halepli Zeki Paşa was ordered to form his army staff in Manastir (the modern Turkish histories do not address the question of where Halepli Zeki Paşa's new staff officers and equipment came from). Western Army Order Number 2 followed on October 10–11, 1912; it noted that information from Germany indicated that the Serbs and the Bulgarians were mobilizing. Moreover, a three- or four-division, combined Bulgarian-Serbian Army was advancing on Macedonia, and a similar Bulgarian force was expected to attack Thrace. The order confirmed that until mobilization was fully completed, the Western Army would operate on the defensive. Future operations were left open-ended, with the Vardar Army operating either offensively or defensively from the Kumanova area. The Vardar Army headquarters received this order in the middle of the night of October 11–12, 1912.

The Ottoman Western Army staff considered five courses of action by the enemy and, in the end, issued Western Army Operations Order Number 3 on October 16, 1912, which confirmed the existing operational groupings. Operations Order Number 4 followed shortly thereafter, on the same day; it activated the II Provisional Corps from elements of the incoming Denizli and Izmir Redif Infantry Divisions.8 Two batteries of the 13th Artillery Regiment were also assigned to the new corps. Moreover, the Turks also worked feverishly to ensure the continued loyalty of the Muslim Albanian population by offering them both money and weapons. War overtook the Ottoman staffs on October 19, 1912, as the infantry divisions of the Balkan League began to cross the frontiers (Table 5.3 shows the Western Army Order of Battle on October 19, 1912).

The exact final number of soldiers on hand in the Western Army is unclear today from modern Turkish histories. Dr. Richard Hall credits

TABLE 5.3 Western Army Order of Battle, October 19, 1912

WESTERN ARMY				
Serbian Front				
VARDAR Army				
V Corps	*VI Corps*	*VII Corps*	*II Provisional Corps*	*Firzovik Detachment*
13, 15, 16 Infantry Divisions Istip Redif Division	17, 18 Infantry Divisions Manastir, Drama Redif Divisions	19 Infantry Division Üsküp, Priştine Redif Divisions	Uşak, Denizli, Izmir Redif Divisions	20(-) Infantry Division Mitroviçe Redif Division

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Taşlica Detachment 60th Infantry Regiment Taşlica Redif Regiment	*Independent Cavalry Division* 7, 8 Cavalry Brigades	
Bulgarian Front *Uştruma Corps* 14(-) Infantry Division Serez Redif Division Nevrekop Detachment	*Provisional Işkodra Corps* 24 Infantry Division Elbesan Redif Division Işkodra Fortified Area	*Montenegrin Front* *Ipek Detachment* 21 Infantry Division Pirzeren Redif Division
Greek Front *VIII Provisional Corps* 22 Infantry Divisions Nasliç, Aydin Redif Divisions	*Yanya Corps* 23 Infantry Division Yanya Redif Division Yanya Fortified Area Karaburun Detachment	*Independent* Salonika Redif Division

Source: Turkish General Staff, Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), Illnucü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski) (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), Charts 2, 3.

the Turks with having about 175,000 men present for combat opera-tions.9 This number was far below what they had counted on in their prewar staff planning process. There was, however, a hidden benefit to the low numbers of soldiers present in the combat theater that would not be apparent until the spring of 1913. Logistically, the Ottoman staffs had based their calculations for food, medicine, and military stores on a total theater strength (including line of communications troops) of 598,000 men and 150,000 animals. The logistics planners had, therefore, stockpiled quantities sufficient for this number of men and animals for two months of combat operations.10 In actual fact, the Western Army staff in Salonika calculated that it had approximately 200,000 men and 50,000 animals available for operations when the war began. As the Bulgarians were to sever the railroad line to the east in early November and the Greek fleet to blockade the sea lanes, the Western Army was com-

pletely isolated and cut off from its sources of supply. Thus, the overes-timation of supplies necessary for combat operations greatly extended the ability of the Western Army to sustain itself into spring 1913.

THE BATTLE OF KUMANOVA (KUMANOVO)

Halepli Zeki Paşa's Vardar Army had received orders from the Western Army to concentrate in the vicinity of the town of Kumanova (Kumanovo), which was near the Serbian frontier and in the north-central part of the Vardar Army's area of operations. It was a risky deployment as it involved the V and VI Corps marching about 150 kilometers from their home garrisons near Salonika and Manastir respectively. The troops, many of whom were poorly trained reservists and not in top physical condition, arrived worn-out and tired. Moreover, the Kumanova concentration area itself was located only thirty kilometers from the frontier, making it very possible that the Serbs might arrive there before the Turks. Unlike the carefully orchestrated Eastern Army plan to fight at Kirkkilise, the Western Army's plan, in retrospect, seems poorly thought out and full of risk. Nevertheless, Halepli Zeki Paşa continued to move his army forward.

There were isolated skirmishes along the frontier as early as October 14, 1912, near the village of Zibefçe as advanced Serb patrols crossed the border. The following day the Turks lost eighteen men and had a handful captured in a brief encounter.11 October 18 found the First Serbian Army massed in three columns on the frontier and ready to attack. The following day, the Serbs brushed aside the frontier posts and invaded Macedonia. The initial encounters with the Vardar Army's covering forces came on October 20, 1912, and are known as the Battles of Bilaç, Eğri Palanga, and Straçin. At Bilaç the Ottoman 19th Infantry Division held off the Serbian Morava Infantry Division (which was coming south down the Morava River) for a day, but that evening, the Turks retreated in the direction of Kumanova. Simultaneously the Serbian Timok Infantry Division attacked west from Bulgaria toward the frontier village of Eğri Palanga and brushed aside negligible Turkish resistance. To the south, the Ottoman 16th Infantry Division was no more successful in holding off the Bulgarian 2nd Infantry Division at the Battle of Koçana on October 20, 1912, and was forced to retreat as well. In all cases, both the Serbs and the Bulgarians were extremely active and skillful in conducting flanking maneuvers that made the isolated Ottoman positions untenable. By the evening of October 21, the Serbs and

Bulgarians had demolished the poorly prepared Ottoman covering forces and were advancing on Kumanova from the north and the east.

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On October 20, 1912, the Vardar Army's headquarters arrived at Köprülü. The next day, they marched north toward Kumanova and issued Operations Order Number 6. This order explained the encounters along the frontier and noted the enemy's multipronged advance. It confirmed the continuing concentration of the Vardar Army forward of Kumanova and instructed the V and VI Corps to advance on designated routes to concentration areas. The order assigned the VII Corps, then in position north of Kumanova, to deploy its entire force to defend the town. Halepli Zeki Paşa based his operational plan on the Western Army's Operations Order Number 3; in it, he indicated that conditions were favorable for an Ottoman attack. He noted in the Vardar Army's operations order that by moving faster than the converging enemy columns, the Serbs might be defeated in detail.12 The next day found the Vardar Army concentrating on an interior position centering on the town of Kumanova. The stillborn II Provisional Corps was inactivated at this time as well, and its incoming formations were assigned to other army corps.

In the early hours of October 22, 1912, the Vardar Army issued Operations Order Number 7, which confirmed that the army would continue marching forward. Halepli Zeki Paşa ordered the Independent Cavalry Division to screen against the enemy cavalry. He also ordered the V Corps to continue to advance and to form the right wing of the army against the enemy forces advancing from Palanga. The Vardar Army continued its approach march throughout the day of October 22. In the meantime, the First Serbian Army continued its southerly advance and occupied a line about ten kilometers north of the Ottoman VII Corps's hasty defenses, north of Kumanova. The First Serbian Army was a powerful force commanded by Crown Prince Alexander and was composed of four infantry divisions (the Morava, Drina, Timok, and Tuna Infantry Divisions) and a small, two-regiment Cavalry Division. Altogether, the crown prince had about 132,000 men under his command. Moving toward the Vardar Army from the east was the Second Serbian Army commanded by General Stepa Stepanovich and composed of about 74,000 men. The Second Army was a composite Serbian and Bulgarian army, with the Bulgarian 7th Rila Infantry Division and the Serbian Timok Infantry Division as its principal formations. Fortunately for Halepli Zeki Paşa (and as predicted by the Vardar Army staff), the Second Army was, in fact, traveling slowly and not in a position to influence the coming battle.

By the evening of October 22, 1912, the 13th Infantry Division of the V Corps had reached its assigned concentration area. The Iştip Redif Division was a day's march behind. The VI Corps divisions (the 17th Infantry Division and the Manastir Redif Division) were moving forward to positions linking the VII Corps in the west with the V Corps in

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the east.13 The V Corps commander, Brigadier Kara Sait Paşa, left the 15th Infantry Division on the Koçana road to delay the oncoming Second Army. During the night of October 22–23, 1912, the Vardar Army staff produced Operations Order Number 8,14 which contained Halepli Zeki Paşa's dispositions for the battle. He began by outlining the Serbian advance to positions to the north and the southeast of Kumanova. Halepli Zeki tasked the Independent Cavalry Division to screen the army's left wing from the enemy cavalry. He ordered the VII Corps (on the left) to stand fast and to fix the enemy right while maintaining a reserve. He ordered the newly arrived V and VI Corps to construct hasty trenches and also to ensure that adequate reserves were maintained (all three corps would place their independent rifle regiments into reserve that night). The order ended by noting that the Vardar Army headquarters was located in the town of Uraş. Halepli Zeki Paşa's daring approach march was almost complete, and he had also received word from the Western Army that the Uştruma Corps had been ordered to conduct a simultaneous supporting attack on his right flank.

The evolving Ottoman strategy for the defense of central Macedonia now crystallized into an all-or-nothing operational offensive aimed at the destruction of the First Serbian Army. To his credit, Halepli Zeki Paşa had sensed correctly and exploited a temporary weakness in the deployment of the First and Second Serbian Armies. He had skillfully concentrated his three Nizamiye infantry corps along multiple and complex avenues of approach into a cohesive grouping on ground of his own choosing. Later, the Serbian chief of staff, General Putnik, would express surprise at the Ottoman accomplishment in massing so large a force at that early point in the war.15 Unfortunately for the Turks, some of the army's assigned infantry divisions were detached to perform flank duties. The 15th Infantry Division was on the far right and the 18th Infantry Division was still far to the south in Manastir, as was the Drama Redif Division. Although he had concentrated all available troops that were on hand, Halepli Zeki Paşa entered the battle with only six of his ten assigned regular and reserve infantry divisions. In fact, the Vardar Army would attack the enemy with a total of only fourteen infantry regiments and three rifle regiments (the Serbs would field a force of about sixteen infantry

regiments). Although the order of battle force ratios were almost exactly one to one in the infantry regiments, the incompletely mobilized Vardar Army had a strength of only 58,000 men. The more completely mobilized and well-prepared Serbian First Army, therefore, had well over twice the available men for the upcoming battle. Nevertheless, Halepli Zeki Paşa and the Vardar Army staff continued to plan to attack the Serbs.

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Early in the morning of October 23, 1912, the aggressive commander of the Ottoman VII Corps,16 Major General Fethi Paşa, had already decided that the moment was opportune to attack. Apparently eager to get at the enemy, Fethi Paşa ordered his corps to attack northward without waiting for specific orders from the Vardar Army. He did, however, have his chief of staff request that the adjacent V and VI Corps launch attacks as well. Later in the morning, at 10:30 A.M., the Vardar Army issued Operations Order Number 9 (Table 5.4), which contained Halepli Zeki Paşa's instructions for the coming battle (specific instructions for Fethi's VII Corps are absent from this order, apparently because he was already moving forward).

In concept, it appears that Halepli Zeki Paşa intended that his three infantry corps would advance and attack the enemy while his cavalry swept in behind a portion of the enemy troops and cut off their line of retreat. The orders of the Western Army are conspicuously different from those of the Eastern Army in that they do not clearly communicate the commander's intent. It is impossible to determine exactly what the commander of the Vardar Army had in mind as he brought his forces north. Perhaps (and very likely), Halepli Zeki Paşa communicated his intent informally to his subordinate corps commanders. Certainly the actions of the VII Corps commander indicate that he had a good understanding of what Halepli Zeki Paşa expected him to do.

TABLE 5.4 Vardar Army Operations Order Number 9, Dated October 23, 1912 (Summary)

1. The Eastern Army continues to attack the enemy in Thrace. The fleet bombarded the enemy ports of Varna and Kavarna. The Uştruma Corps is about to attack from Kresne.
2. The Vardar Army will advance toward the upper Piçinya Suyu (River) and will attack the enemy.
   a. The Independent Cavalry Division will advance to attack the enemy cavalry on the left flank and will cut the enemy's communications between the Komanova-Geylan road and the Piçinya Suyu.
   b. The main body of the V Corps will advance northward along the Piçinya Suyu. The detached elements of the corps will defend in the east against the enemy march column coming from Palanga.
   c. The VI Corps will advance north toward Yeninagoriç and Bektaşli-I Bala.
3. The Vardar Army headquarters will be located in Kumanova this evening.

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 182.

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The modern official Turkish General Staff's history of the Western Army's operations spends a total of only eighteen pages on the Battle of Kumanova and, unfortunately, details of this decisive engagement are sadly lacking in Turkish. To make matters worse, the early campaigns in Macedonia failed to attract as many foreign observers as the more glamorous campaigns in Thrace, and thus Western histories of the battle are also lacking in precise detail. The historical consensus on the Battle of Kumanova is, in many ways, based almost entirely on the observed actions of the Turks rather than on what they planned to do and how they went about it. The battle is regarded today as a poorly managed affair in which Halepli Zeki Paşa was forced into an offensive posture by Nazim Paşa, the Ottoman minister of war and acting commander in chief. Ottoman Army performance during the battle has been characterized by poor handling of artillery and poor morale and dis-cipline.17 These general characterizations tend to obscure what the Turks tried to accomplish in the Battle of Kumanova. Halepli Zeki Paşa's careful massing of his army indicates a high degree of operational and spatial awareness, planning, and forethought. As will be seen in subsequent orders from the Vardar Army, once combat was joined, Halepli Zeki Paşa continued to develop the tactical situation and attempted to favorably effect the battle's outcome. That he failed has more to do with the overwhelming Serbian superiority of men and material than with the operational and tactical performance of the Vardar Army.

Halepli Zeki Paşa's Vardar Army went over to the offensive around 11 A.M. on October 23, 1912. The VI Corps was already in action by that hour, and the 17th Infantry Division was firing heavily at the enemy. The division's artillery was engaged to the south of Paşatepeleri, and in return, the Serbian artillery fire was fierce. The V Corps was also in action at this time, and by 1:52 P.M. had committed all its reserves. To compensate for this, the corps commander ordered the Iştip Redif Division to quicken the tempo of its attack. By mid-afternoon, the Vardar Army had approximately forty-five thousand men attacking thirty thousand Serbs along a twenty-kilometer front.18 Halepli Zeki Paşa had achieved the seemingly impossible: He had brought his

outnumbered army into action and achieved a temporary local superiority over the Serbs. However, he was well aware that the slow-marching Serbs had an additional thirty thousand men available, and he ordered the army to increase the tempo of the attack before these men could enter the fight against him.
In the VII Corps sector, Fethi Paşa's attack was in full swing by 1 P.M. He had both his infantry divisions in action and supported them with six batteries of field artillery, two batteries of horse artillery, and two batteries of mountain artillery. However, this was not enough to tip the scales, and the corps lost several hundred men before its attack faltered.

The Independent Cavalry Division began its intended movement around the flank of the VII Corps and was supported by the VII Corps artillery. The lightly armed division quickly came under heavy enemy fire and was forced to retreat to the village of Çerkezköy.
On the Ottoman right, the V Corps's 53th Infantry Regiment attacked enemy cavalry and gained some ground. Both the 13th Infantry Division and the İştip Redif Division pushed north of Çavusköy, but by late afternoon, the V Corps lay deadlocked in combat. In the center, the Ottoman VI Corps continued to advance under the cover of its artillery. Unfortunately, the effect of the shrapnel and impact fuses was negated by muddy conditions. By late afternoon the determined Serbs had stopped both corps, and as twilight approached, the Ottoman artillery and rifle fires dropped to almost nothing.19 That night the commander of the VI Corps reported that the morale of his soldiers was very poor. Contributing to the lackluster Ottoman performance were continuous rainy drizzle and cold temperatures that dampened the ardor of the soldiers.
The Vardar Army staff and headquarters moved to Uraş on October 23, 1912, and at 1 A.M. on October 24, Operations Order Number 10 was issued (see Table 5.5).
Thus, on paper at least, Halepli Zeki Paşa's operational intent for the Vardar Army finally became clear. The left wing of the army, composed of the VII Corps and the Independent Cavalry Division, would envelop

TABLE 5.5 Vardar Army Operations Order Number 10, Dated October 24, 1912 (Summary)

1. The V Corps has scattered the enemy along the Piçinya Suyu. The VI Corps continues to advance. The VII Corps is committed to seize Bektasli-I Bala.
2. The Vardar Army will continue to advance to envelop the enemy's right flank.
3. The Independent Cavalry Division will advance and envelop the enemy's right flank in coordination with the army (infantry corps).
4. In the morning, the three corps will continue to advance and attack.
   a. The V Corps will advance and force the enemy to retreat toward Yeninagoriç.
   b. The VI Corps will attack toward Yeninagoriç-Çetrice.
   c. The VII Corps will continue to attack with all units and, in particular, will envelop the enemy's right flank.
5. Tomorrow (October 24) the Vardar Army headquarters will be located two kilometers northeast of Uraş.

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 186.

the Serbian right. The VI and V Corps would push northward and create an anvil against which the hammer-like Ottoman left wing would fall. The unfortunate Serbs would be caught in the middle and crushed like a nut. In concept, Halepli Zeki's plan was straight out of the staff college curriculum and was designed to achieve a decisive victory (Map 5.2 shows the Vardar Army's plan). However, in a repetition of the now-familiar Ottoman tendency to underestimate the troops-to-task required to execute plans, the Vardar Army was attempting to compress a numerically superior force with an inferior one.
There are several possible explanations why the numerically inferior Turks chose to attempt an envelopment. The Western Army staff had developed an inaccurate intelligence picture (in the Western Army

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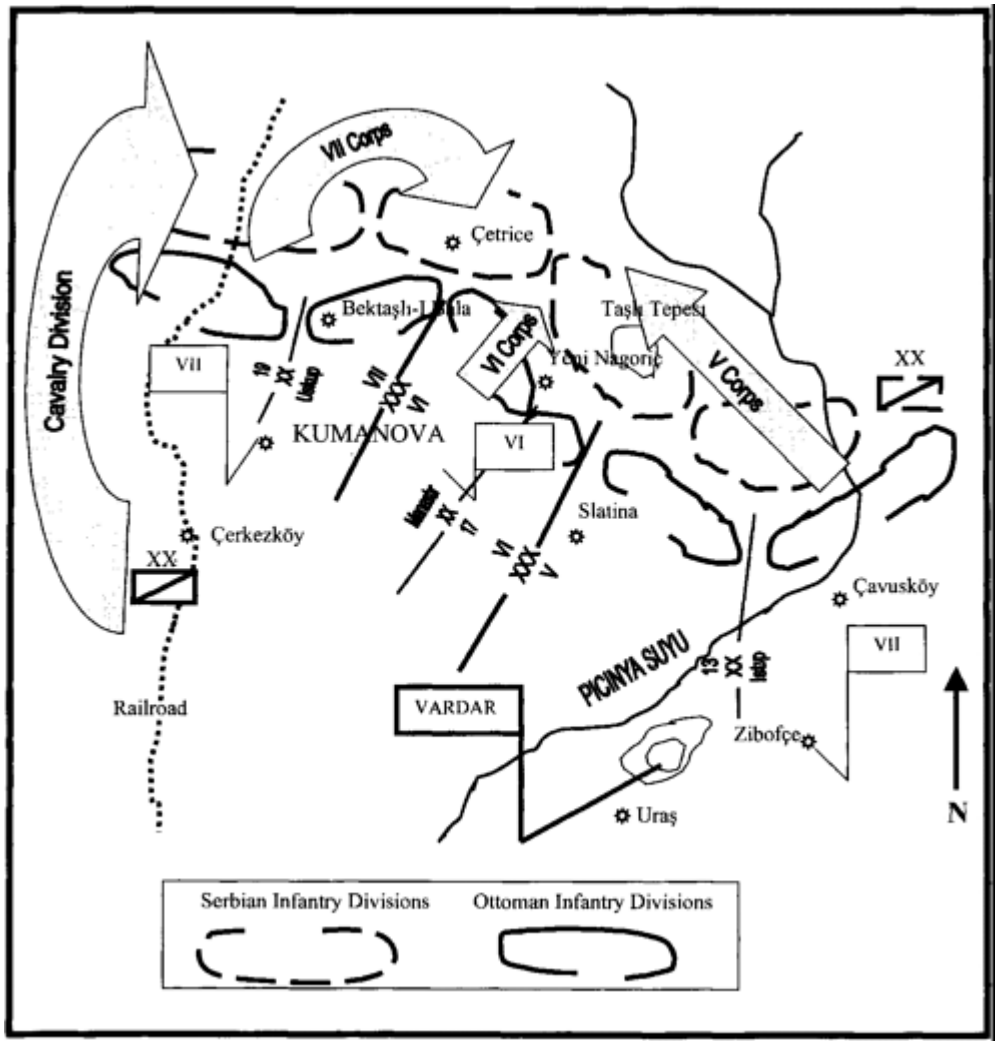

Map 5.2 Vardar Army Operational Plan, Based on Orders Issued October 24, 1912.

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Operations Order Number 2) of a single army threat (of three or four infantry divisions), when in fact there were two enemy armies with a total of six infantry divisions opposing the Turks. Although Halepli Zeki Paşa knew that a multidirectional threat confronted the Vardar Army, he failed to aggressively employ his cavalry to determine the enemy's exact strength (and was, in fact, withholding his cavalry by placing them behind his other troops). It is very likely that Halepli Zeki Paşa did not know the size of the force confronting him, and his estimates of an enemy force of about sixty thousand men tend to confirm this. Moreover, as in Thrace, there was the problem of understanding and employing the newly formed and untested corps and triangular infantry divisions in combat operations. Halepli Zeki Paşa's ad hoc Vardar Army staff was no more familiar with actual corps-level operations than was the Eastern Army. Although it succeeded in massing the army, Halepli Zeki Paşa's staff was unable to conceptualize a viable plan that corresponded to the actual operational and tactical capabilities of the army (and once again, the performance of the Ottoman field artillery, in particular, proved disappointing). There are startling similarities in this regard, then, between the early Ottoman Eastern and Western Army operational failures in the First Balkan War.

There was much staff activity during the night of October 23–24, 1912, as reports poured into the Vardar Army's headquarters. A telegram arrived from the commander of the 18th Infantry Division in Manastir. The division was finally assembled and was preparing to board trains to bring it north to join the Vardar Army. There was also sporadic artillery firing during the night, and enemy rounds occasionally landed near the headquarters, which was located in Uraş; however, past midnight the firing tapered off. The Üsküp Redif Division was in contact with the enemy during the night and was forced to retreat. Also during the night, it was very muddy and foggy, contributing to the confusion.20 The commander of the Üsküp Redif Division, Kadri Paşa, reported that his troops were tired and that the inexperienced soldiers had reacted badly to enemy rifle and artillery fire. He indicated that he intended to rest his troops for the remainder of the night and then to initiate offensive operations again the following morning. Kadri Paşa also indicated that his ammunition stocks were low and that the depots were five kilometers to the rear, creating handling

difficulties at night.
Overnight the Serbs were quite active and brought up the remainder of their uncommitted forces. The First Army commander ordered that offensive operations begin on October 24, and the confident Serbs intended to begin their attacks at 6 A.M. Map 5.3 shows the tactical situation on October 24, 1912. Many of the Serbian infantry regiments

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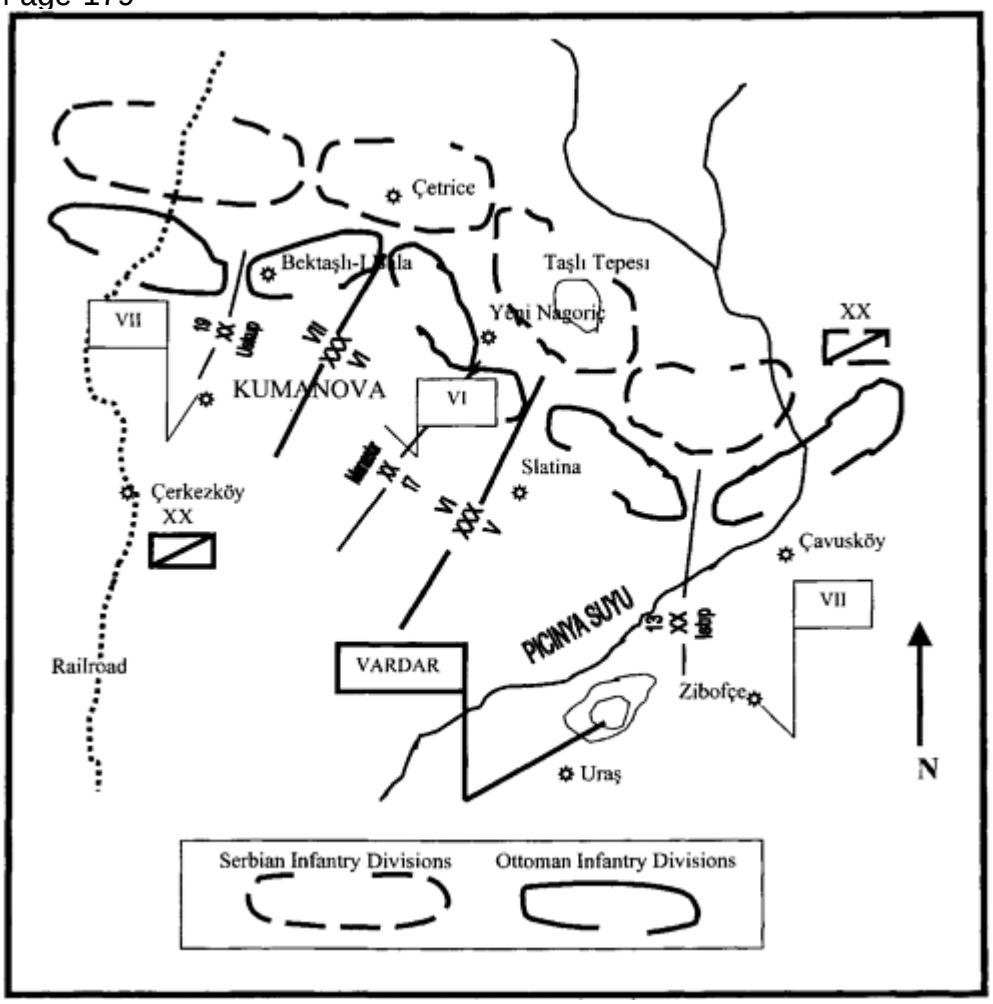

Map 5.3 The Battle of Kumanova, October 24, 1912.
marched all night in order to be in their attack positions at dawn. At 5:30 A.M. on October 24, 1912, the Serbian artillery began its preparatory fires all along the line of battle. The Serb artillery was handled superbly, and well-placed artillery observers on the high ground skillfully directed the fires. The Manastir and Üsküp Redif Divisions were severely mauled by these fires. These two reserve infantry divisions were adjacent to one another and occupied a large salient that bulged forward into the Serbian position. Thus, enfilading fire from their flanks savaged the Turks. Shortly thereafter, the Serbian skirmishers began to move forward under the cover of the artillery, followed by the infantry. Over the next five hours, the operational and tactical initiative passed from the Turks to the Serbs. By 10:30 A.M., both the V and the VI Corps were

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in difficulties as the relentless Serb infantry stormed their lines. A half hour later, the first crack appeared in the Ottoman line as the VI Corps commander sent word that the Üsküp Redif Division was in retreat. The corps reserve, the 6th Rifle Regiment, had been committed but was unable to stop the enemy.21 Moreover, an enemy artillery group had decimated the rifle regiment. The Ottoman artillery arm was unable to effectively counter the Serbian artillery. Because of this, the VI Corps commander was forced to order his entire corps to retreat. By 2 P.M., the Üsküp Redif Division was in full retreat to the west, toward the town of Kumanova. The VI Corps position was rapidly collapsing, and some artillery and wagon units that were slow to withdraw were overrun. By 3 P.M., the VI and VII Corps artillery fire had all but stopped, and numerous enemy infantry columns were observed marching toward the Turkish lines. A half hour later, Serbian artillery

fire intensified and concentrated on the positions of the Ottoman 17th Infantry Division (the right-wing sector of the VI Corps front), and it was apparent that the Serbs intended to conduct a massive attack on the Vardar Army's center.

Observing the destruction of his plan and the hammering of his army, Halepli Zeki Paşa ordered that his troops stand fast through to the evening. Although his right and left wings were apparently in solid shape, Halepli Zeki Paşa's center was in serious trouble as the VI Corps began to retreat. By committing his entire army to the offensive (except for corps tactical reserves), Halepli Zeki Paşa had failed to maintain an operational reserve with which to effect the outcome of the battle. Now, having lost the initiative to the enemy, he had no option but to attempt to maintain his line. At 3 P.M., Halepli Zeki Paşa even ordered some war academy students, there to observe staff operations, to take up arms and help stop the retreat. Shortly thereafter, he issued the Vardar Army's Operations Order Number 11.22 This order noted that the Serbs had attacked along the entire front and held the initiative. Halepli Zeki Paşa noted the importance of continuing to hold Kumanova because it was the key to the retention of the strategic town of Köprülü. He ordered the Independent Cavalry Division to screen the army's left flank and the VI and VII Corps to conduct an orderly withdrawal toward Kumanova. The cavalry was ordered to maintain contact with the VII Corps. He ordered the V Corps (on the far right flank of the army) to begin a withdrawal south along the Piçinya Suyu toward the city of Üsküp. The retreat was to be conducted at night, and the corps were ordered to leave detachments behind, if necessary, to break contact with the enemy. Finally, the Vardar Army headquarters itself would withdraw and spend the night with V Corps units at Novasil.

As darkness fell, the defeated Vardar Army began its withdrawal, which rapidly turned into a somewhat disorganized retreat. Casualty

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statistics concerning the battle are mixed, depending on the sources that are used. American historian Richard C.Hall, citing official Serbian sources, gives the following numbers; "at Kumanovo the Serbian 1st Army suffered 687 dead, 3,208 wounded, and 597 missing. The Ottomans suffered 12,000 dead and wounded and about 300 were taken prisoner."23 The modern official Turkish General Staff history of the Western Army's operations24 reported: 1,200 killed, 3,000 wounded, and a further 38 officers and 289 men taken prisoner, for a total of about 4,500 men. The Turks use the following numbers for Serb losses: 1,127 killed and 3,468 wounded, for a total of 4,595 casualties. The Turks further noted that on October 24, 1912, the Serbian Tuna Infantry Division lost 10 percent of its strength, and thus hint at greater Serbian casualties. Additionally, the Vardar Army lost eighty-one artillery pieces either in the battle or during the retreat. While there is general agreement concerning the Serbian losses, there is a wide gap between the Turkish and Serbian estimates of Ottoman casualties. It is readily apparent that the round numbers presented by both sides are general estimates. Until the Turkish government publishes definitive casualty statistics, a disinterested observer might well speculate that the actual Ottoman casualties were somewhere in between: perhaps around 7,000 men. Dr. Hall noted that the intensity of the Serbian attacks on October 24 reminded contemporary observers of the notoriously costly Japanese attacks of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905. If this were true, then it is possible that Serbian casualties were higher as well. An estimate of 10 percent of the attacking infantry would push the Serb numbers up to around 7,000 men as well. In any case, when compared to the later battles of World War I, Kumanova hardly ranks as a skirmish.

The significance of the battle of Kumanova was not in the number of men killed nor in the strategic value of the town itself. Its significance was that the battle for the strategic and operational initiative passed immediately to the Serbs in Macedonia. The Ottoman plan to wrest the initiative from the invaders came to naught and the defeat of the Vardar Army was a disaster for the Turks because they had no contingency plan to accommodate defeat. The similarities between the nearly simultaneous Battle of Kumanova (October 23–24, 1912) in Macedonia and the Battle of Kirkkilise (October 22–23, 1912) in Thrace are remarkable and reflect the German influence in Ottoman strategic thought. In both cases the Turks sought to seize the operational initiative within the larger framework of strategic defense. Both campaign plans used the idea of the encirclement battle to achieve a decisive victory through annihilation. In both cases, however, they underestimated both the enemy force opposing them and the troops-to-task required to conduct their planned operations.

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THE RETREAT FROM KUMANOVA

Halepli Zeki Paşa sent his initial situation report25 from Köprülü to the Western Army headquarters in Salonika on October 25, 1912. He began by stating that his Vardar Army was in retreat after two days of fighting. He blamed the poor performance of the Redif infantry battalions in the center of his line, which gave way at the

critical moment in the battle. He also noted that the exceptionally muddy conditions had impaired his army's performance. The report failed to convey the seriousness of his situation.
That day, situation reports from the major subordinate formations began to arrive at the Vardar Army's headquarters. The commander of the Independent Cavalry Division reported that his division was attempting to screen the army's left flank while retreating south along the railway. The commander's report for the V Corps arrived, which noted the difficulty of the situation. Soldiers from the Iştip, Manastir, and Üsküp Redif Divisions were already badly intermingled, and the news of the defeat had already traveled throughout the corps. Furthermore, the muddy road conditions were making the wihdrawal difficult, and the spirit of the troops was broken. The incoming report from the VII Corps was similar and noted that animals and wagons were being left behind in the retreat. The corps had already lost twelve artillery pieces. There was also some good news, however: An advancing group of 150mm howitzers, long delayed in coming to Kumanova, met and joined the corps on the road. The VII Corps commander reported sending a situation report to Cavit Paşa, the VI Corps commander, in order to try to coordinate and separate the retreat routes. The VII Corps report concluded with a telling bit of important information, which was that the morale in the infantry companies had been destroyed *(morale bozuktur*).26
The Western Army sent a message27 by telegraph to the Vardar Army on October 25, 1912. This message contained command guidance for the Vardar Army, which was falling back on the key strategic cities of Üsküp and Köprülü. The message directed Halepli Zeki Paşa to form a new defensive line along the Vardar River for the defense of Köprülü. The Western Army also asked whether the VII Corps was going to defend its home garrison city of Üsküp. During the night of October 25–26, 1912, Halepli Zeki Paşa sent another situation report that began with the phrase, "The luck of battle *[harp şansi]* has been of no help to me."28 He continued by stating that the sky-high morale of the high command was not in evidence on the ground in Macedonia. This view displeased Ali Riza Paşa, the Western Army commander, who responded testily that it was the not the luck of battle that had cast down the army. Rather, he stated, it was the decisions and planning done by the commander

and his staff that had caused the defeat. Furthermore, he did not believe that failure was entirely the fault of the Redif soldiers.29
The Western Army headquarters promptly sent a situation report to the Ottoman General Staff that reported the loss of Kumanova and also noted that the army was now actively fighting on four fronts. Late in the day of October 25, 1912, the Western Army headquarters issued a general order30 to its forces. These orders directed the Vardar Army to detach the 18th Infantry Division (then entraining for movement north to join the army) to deploy, instead, to Manastir to defend that city against the Bulgarians approaching from the east. The Uştruma Corps, the VIII Provisional Corps, and the Nevrekop detachment were ordered to conduct a defense but, if necessary, to retreat in the direction of Salonika. Staff Major Behiç was directed to form an ad hoc detachment for the defense of Bük. The orders also noted the traditions of the Ottoman Army, summoned the officers to faithfully execute their orders, and exhorted the soldiers to exhibit the highest morale. Finally, the Western Army headquarters noted that it would move inland to Manastir the following day because of the approaching enemy forces.
The headquarters of the Western Army began movement by rail from Salonika on October 26 and by nightfall was mostly gone from the city. While the army headquarters itself was able to leave the city, other units were not as lucky. Panic hit the Salonika railway station as cries of "The enemy comes!" swept through the ranks. One artillery unit blew up five howitzers and their rifles to prevent their capture. Fortunately, most of the soldiers remained under control and the Turks were able to move two horse artillery batteries and one mountain artillery battery up the railway toward Üsküp (which fell to encirclement on October 26–27, 1912, prior to the arrival of the guns). On October 27, the Western Army received word that the city of Köprülü had been lost and the Vardar Army was retreating toward Manastir.
An early official history of the campaign31 written by the Vardar Army's chief of operations, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Fevzi (later Field Marshal Fevzi Çakmak), noted that the distribution of the Ottoman forces over a wide area gave the initiative to the enemy. He also noted that the mobilization and concentration plan was poorly designed and flawed. Furthermore, Lieutenant Colonel Fevzi indicated that there were great deficiencies in artillery, wireless, and air units. However, Fevzi wrote that he had put forth the idea of creating a six-corps army of one hundred thousand men operating on interior lines from the Manastir area. He felt this newly reorganized army could have beaten the enemy in detail as they advanced on widely scattered fronts. After the loss of Kumanova and the receipt of the Vardar Army's depressing messages, this was extremely aggressive thinking, which reflected German doctrine and ideas about the importance of objective and initiative.

As the Western Army continued to fragment its forces in piecemeal fashion, however, it is obvious that the aggressive ideas of the Western Army's chief of operations had little effect on Ali Riza Paşa.
On October 26, 1912, the cities of Üsküp and Köprülü had came under attack by the Serbs and, after token resistance, had fallen. The Vardar Army continued its retreat toward Manastir. More cannons, wagons, and horses were lost. Again the corps commanders reported that morale was broken. There were two general lines of retreat southwest. In the west the VII Corps retreated on Kirçova. Twenty kilometers to the east, the Vardar Army headquarters and the V Corps and VI Corps retreated to the town of Pirlepe. Pirlepe had mountains to its north and offered a good defensive position. The V Corps (now composed of the regular 13th and 15th Infantry Divisions, the Iştip Redif Division, an Independent Cavalry Brigade, and the 5th Rifle Regiment) fought a delaying action, while most of the army artillery and the VI Corps continued south through the town to establish defenses around the strategic town of Manastir. As the VI Corps cleared the town on October 28, the V Corps prepared to delay the enemy once again. Oddly, on this day the last of the reinforcements from faraway Anatolia arrived (twenty-five hundred men) and were assigned to the VI Corps. Additionally, on October 28 the headquarters of the Western Army was operational in Manastir and was actively engaged in issuing orders to form special commissions to attempt to sort out the intermingled collections of demoralized soldiers that had arrived there.

THE BATTLE OF PIRLEPE (PRILEP)

On October 29, 1912, the V Corps began to prepare for a defense of Pirlepe with its weakened divisions. The corps received orders from the Vardar Army that because of the acute danger from the enemy, the corps must perform a delaying action. The Vardar Army also directed the VII Corps to form a small Provisional Infantry Division (under Yusuf Ziya Bey) of twenty-five hundred men on the same day. The next day, the Western Army sent out orders32 that clarified what was happening in Macedonia. The Serbs were advancing from the north on Manastir, and the Greeks were now advancing from the south on the town. There were not enough troops in the area to oppose the Greeks, and the Western Army directed that the VI Corps move south to defend the town to avoid its capture. Of course this meant the loss of one third of the Vardar Army's combat power in the fight against the Serbs; however, there were few options for the Turks.
The oncoming Serbs were also engaged in the restructuring of their army. After their unexpected victory at Kumanova, the Serb high com-

mand resolved to honor its commitment to send troops to help the Bulgarians in Thrace. For this reason, the Serbs began to pull the Second Army off the line to staging areas for movement by rail to Adrianople. By October 27, 1912, the Timok Infantry Division was enroute and the Tuna and Drina Infantry Divisions were about to depart as well. The Serbs also sent the 4th Infantry Regiment, three artillery batteries, a howitzer battery, and five 120mm howitzers to Thrace. The Serbs then reorganized their strategic priorities33 and directed the Serbian Third Army to drive westward and to make a corridor connecting Serbia with the Adriatic Sea (access to the Adriatic was a longtime Serbian foreign policy objective). This still left the Serbian First Army with three large four-regiment infantry divisions and two smaller three-regiment infantry divisions, a two-regiment infantry brigade, and a cavalry division (a total force of eighty infantry battalions and thirty-five artillery batteries) with which to pursue the defeated Ottoman Vardar Army south.
On November 1, 1912, the Vardar Army issued Operations Order Number 12,34 which formalized the ongoing fragmentation of the army. It was noted that the Serbs continued to advance from Köprülü along multiple axes of approach. Halepli Zeki Paşa then communicated his intent to delay the enemy while conducting a retreat to Manastir. He directed the V and VII Corps (now the only remaining parts of the army facing north) to reconnoiter along the approaches threatened by the Serbs and to establish delaying positions. He also directed them to be prepared to retreat toward Manastir should one corps of the two-corps defense collapse. He ordered the VI Corps's 16th Infantry Division, then detraining at Manastir, to march south against the Greeks. Finally, Halepli Zeki Paşa noted that his headquarters would be located in the municipal building in Pirlepe. The order was very critical of the army's performance in battle and urged corps commanders to motivate their soldiers, but cautioned them not to spare their blood in order to execute their orders.
Indeed, both the Vardar Army and the Western Army were acutely aware of the unsatisfactory performance caused by poor morale and indiscipline. On November 1, the Western Army sent a message35 to the Ottoman commander in chief, Nazim Paşa (in Constantinople), concerning this problem. Ali Riza Paşa's staff noted that the Ottoman Empire had a six hundred-year military tradition at stake and that the eyes of the empire and the entire world were on the Western Army. In recognition of this, the number one priority in the Western Army would be to restore morale. This message, as well as the Vardar Army's Operations Order Number 12, reflected a general unhappiness with the army's performance. The Vardar Army's operations order was transmitted down to the three corps, and by November 2, 1912, it was in the hands of the regimental

commanders.36

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There are two important points to make here. First, it is evident that the Ottoman commanders on the ground who actually fought the battles in Macedonia were extremely aware of what was happening to their army. They pinpointed troop morale and organizational difficulties as the primary sources of their difficulties. Both the theater army staff and the field army staff reacted to the reports from the corps commanders by attempting to rectify these problems. Second, the rapidity of the reporting system, from corps to army to theater command, and then back down again in reverse order, demonstrates communications systems that were functioning at a high level of efficiency. An example of this system at work is the Vardar Army's Operations Order Number 12, which was distributed down to regimental level within twenty-four hours of origination.

The best defensive positions for Pirlepe were in the mountains about ten kilometers north of the town. Unfortunately for the Turks, the aggressive Serbs threw infantry regiments around the Ottoman right flank, thereby forcing the Turks to abandon the high ground. The V Corps commander, therefore, deployed his retiring forces just to the north of Pirlepe with the 15th Infantry Division on the left flank and the 13th Infantry Division on the right flank. On November 3, 1912, the Serbian Morava and Drina Infantry Divisions closed on the V Corps's positions, and the Battle of Pirlepe began. The initial Serb attacks were unsuccessful, but the following day brought yet another Serb flanking attack, this time of two infantry regiments around the Ottoman 15th Infantry Division's left flank. The V Corps was caught with no uncommitted reserves and was again forced to retreat (the Turks call this phase of the battle on November 4 the Battle of Kristiç). By November 5, 1912, the V Corps was forced out of the town and had established positions immediately to the south of Pirlepe. Continuous Serb attacks forced the corps to retreat farther south to the high ground around the town of Alinça (on the road between Pirlepe and Manastir). On November 6, 1912, the two Serb infantry divisions continued their attacks on the weakened Ottoman V Corps and again forced it to retreat (the Turks refer to this engagement as the Battle of Alinça). During these battles, it should be noted that the Turks were not attempting to conduct a do-or-die defense, but rather were conducting a deliberate withdrawal toward Manastir. Although the Ottomans were pushed back, they ex-acted a bloody toll on the Serbs. During the struggle for the town of Pirlepe, the Serbs lost about three thousand men while the Turks lost about six hundred.37 The Turks estimated that the Serbian Drina Infantry Division lost thirty-five hundred men killed and wounded during the four days of continuous battle. Despite this favorable casualty ratio, V Corps chief of staff Staff Colonel Mustafa sent messages to the Western Army that confirmed the continuing problem of rock-bottom

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morale among the Ottoman soldiers. He particularly pointed out the effectiveness of the enemy artillery as being a factor that contributed to this problem.38

THE BATTLES OF KIRÇOVA AND SOROVIÇ

To the west, the weakened VII Corps, which had only six thousand combat effective soldiers on the rolls, was under attack as well. On November 4, 1912, the Serbs closed on the 19th Infantry Division's positions at Kirçova and, in a two-day battle, forced the VII Corps to retreat as well. The corps retreated south and east toward the V Corps. Casualties in the Battle of Kirçova were considerably lighter, with the Serbs losing only 250 men killed.

To the south of Manastir, the infantry of the Vardar Army's VI Corps were coming into contact with the enemy as well. The corps had been ordered south and, on October 31, 1912, the corps headquarters had arrived in the town of Florina. The 18th Infantry Division, commanded by Colonel Hüsnü Bey, was concentrating in the vicinity and had four infantry battalions, six quick-firing artillery pieces, and a cavalry detachment present around Vakifköy. Two thousand volunteers from Debre had collected in Florina (mostly elderly homeguardsmen and retired gendarmes). These men were distributed throughout the VI Corps to fill the ranks. Additionally, the 16th and 17th Infantry Divisions were aboard trains and were due to arrive shortly. The advancing Greek 5th Infantry Division advanced to positions just to the east of the Ustruva Gölü (Lake) and on November 1, 1912, was moving north along the railway to Manastir. On November 3 the Ottoman 16th Infantry Division launched a successful attack on Baniçe. This was followed by a second successful attack by the Ottoman 18th Infantry Division on Sorviç on November 5–6, 1912. The Ottoman 17th Infantry Division also launched a successful attack on the same days retaking Ekşisu. By November 7, 1912, the Greeks had been pushed back to Nalb-ant Köyü. The threat from the south to Manastir had been temporarily halted (the Turks call this series of engagements the Battle of Sorviç).

THE OTTOMAN DEPLOYMENT AROUND MANASTIR

After the Battles of Alinça and Kirçova, the V and VII Corps continued to retreat south toward the town of Manastir. By November 7, elements of the V Corps had established a blocking position at Petilip Hani while the VI Corps established a defensive ring to the north of Manastir itself. The tactical situation was somewhat stabilized during the next five days as the Serbs slowly brought their infantry divisions

south. The Vardar Army used this time to consolidate its hold on Manastir and to prepare for the final stand in Macedonia. On November 8, 1912, the Vardar Army issued Operations Order Number 23, which tasked the subordinate corps to establish defensive positions surrounding the city.

The weather on November 8 was very cold and rainy, but by November 11 the skies had cleared. In the intervening three days, the Ottoman defense began to harden as the troops dug in. The composition of the Vardar Army had changed somewhat from its order of battle at Kumanova three weeks earlier (Table 5.6 shows the Vardar Army's order of battle on November 12, 1912). The advances of the Serbs and the Greeks had compressed the Vardar Army into a pocket centered on Manastir that forced it to man concentric lines to the north, east, and south. This dispersion of combat strength greatly impeded the effectiveness of the army. Moreover, the number of troops was also greatly below authorized strength as there were no replacements for soldiers killed, wounded, or missing, and no reinforcements to replace lost formations. The strength of the depleted Vardar Army was about thirty-eight to thirty-nine thousand men armed with a little over one hundred artillery pieces.39

The Serbian First Army's advance toward Manastir began to accelerate on November 8, 1912, when the high command responded to a Bulgarian request for assistance. Since the Bulgarians had not managed to make an agreement with the Greeks over the occupation of Macedonia, the successes of the Greek Army worried the Bulgarians and, to forestall a Greek occupation of Manastir, they asked the Serbs to occupy the town.40 The Serbian First Army, therefore, was ordered southwest to seize Manastir. Bad weather and the destruction of the railroad by the retreating Ottoman army greatly hampered and slowed the Serbs.

TABLE 5.6 Vardar Army Order of Battle, November 12, 1912

Northern Group		*Southern Group*
V Corps	*VII Corps*	*VI Corps*
13, 15 Infantry Divisions	19 Infantry Division	16, 18 Infantry Divisions
5 Rifle Regiment	Istip Redif Division	6 Rifle Regiment
26 Cavalry Regiment	17 Cavalry Regiment	
19 Artillery Regiment		
Independent Cavalry Brigade		*Southeastern Group*
		17 Infantry Division
		Manastir Redif Division

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 267–269.

The Serb First Army was a powerful force over 109,000 men and, unlike the Vardar Army, was fairly well concentrated into two major groups. One Serb group approached from the northwest, and the other approached from the northeast.

The Vardar Army was now facing a terribly difficult situation. Tactically, its infantry divisions were depleted and the morale of the soldiers was still at rock-bottom levels. Operationally, the army was trying to defend against threats from opposite directions (the Serbs from the north and the Greeks to the south). The Vardar Army was dangerously outnumbered, and to make matters worse, the soldiers themselves knew it. On the night of November 13, 1912, the Vardar Army staff issued Operations Order Number 14.41 The ever-aggressive Turks, however, conceived yet another plan that attempted to seize the initiative from the enemy. In concept, the Vardar Army recognized that the Greek threat was minimal as the Greeks were focused (at least at the strategic level) on the capture and the retention of the city of Salonika and that the primary threat was the Serbian First Army. Operations Order Number 14 attempted to deal with this situation by weighting the upcoming fight against the Serbs. The Ottoman V and VII Corps were ordered to develop their defensive positions on the high ground just to the north of Manastir. The V Corps was directed to extend its lines to the west. Both corps were ordered to put every available unit into the line. These defensive works would attract and hold the oncoming Serbs. The VI Corps was ordered to conduct a reconnaissance of the road network around Resne (to the west of Manastir) with a view to launching a flank attack on the Serb's

right. The VI Corps was ordered to leave small infantry detachments behind to watch the Greeks and to begin to move its 16th and 18th Infantry Divisions north to positions on the left flank of the Vardar Army's northern position. The VI Corps was also directed to form a Provisional Infantry Division, under Colonel Hüsünü, of five infantry battalions, two horse artillery batteries, and a cavalry detachment, and to move it north into the V Corps sector as well. Even the regional Jandarma battalions were ordered to organize into a group under Lieutenant Colonel Ali and sent west. When finally set, the Vardar Army would have its three corps once again on line, with the VI, VII, and V Corps extending from west to east.42 The Vardar Army headquarters itself occupied the Ziraat Bank building in Manastir and ordered the three corps and the Independent Cavalry Brigade to send staff officers there by 8 P.M. on November 14, 1912.

THE BATTLE OF MANASTIR (BITOLA)

The weather on November 14 was unusually good as the Serbian First Army closed on Manastir. The Turks continued to move their

forces into battle order as the formations of the VI Corps came north. The Vardar Army's Operations Order Number 15,43 dated November 14, 1912, confirmed the ongoing Ottoman movements. The V Corps was ordered to withdraw its forward elements from Petilep Hani, and both the V amd VII Corps were ordered to hold the enemy at whatever cost along the Oblakova ridge. The VI Corps was ordered to continue its movement to the Resne Road and to prepare to launch a flanking attack from there. However, the 18th Infantry Division was detached to the V Corps, and in its place, the VI Corps received the 19th Infantry Division. Finally, all three corps were ordered to form a reserve. The headquarters staff of the Vardar Army remained in the Ziraat Bank building in Manastir. Moreover, the Vardar Army commander, Halepli Zeki Paşa, also sent a separate special order44 to his troops that day that spoke to their duty as Ottoman soldiers. Halepli Zeki Paşa expounded that, God willing, the army and the nation would achieve a great victory over the Serbs. He explained that the magazines and storehouses of Manastir were well stocked with munitions and supplies and that the Serbs were walking into his hands. He also reminded his soldiers of the great heritage of Plevna (the great siege of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878) and the glory that result from a similar modern feat. There was little else the Turks could do but await the Serbian First Army.

November 15 was, likewise, a fine day. The V Corps rear guard departed the Petilip Hani at 3:30 P.M. As the Serb infantry closed on the Turks' lines, the Ottoman field artillery took pot shots at groups of them and inflicted some casualties. That night the Vardar Army staff produced Operations Order Number 16, which finalized the operational plan. The order confirmed that the Serbs were, indeed, advancing as expected down the Pirlepe-Manastir Road. The staff predicted that the Serbs would launch strong attacks against the V and VII Corps, and the Vardar Army ordered the VI Corps to launch its counterattack from the left on the following day. The V Corps was ordered to detach the Hüsünü Provisional Division and to send it along to the VI Corps. The VI Corps was also ordered to form the Fethi Bey Detachment to command and control these additional troops. The VII Corps was ordered to be prepared to provide its reserves to the VI Corps if necessary. Finally, the Independent Cavalry Brigade was placed under the orders of the VI Corps as well. Thus, in a span of four days, Halepli Zeki Paşa and the staff of the Vardar Army had put together a very powerful counterattack force and moved it to ground of their own choosing. It was a bold plan and, once again, one that reflected the tendency of the trained Ottoman General Staff officers to attempt to claim the initiative. The deployment of the Vardar Army on the morning of November 16, 1912, is shown in Table 5.7.

TABLE 5.7 Vardar Army Deployment, November 16, 1912

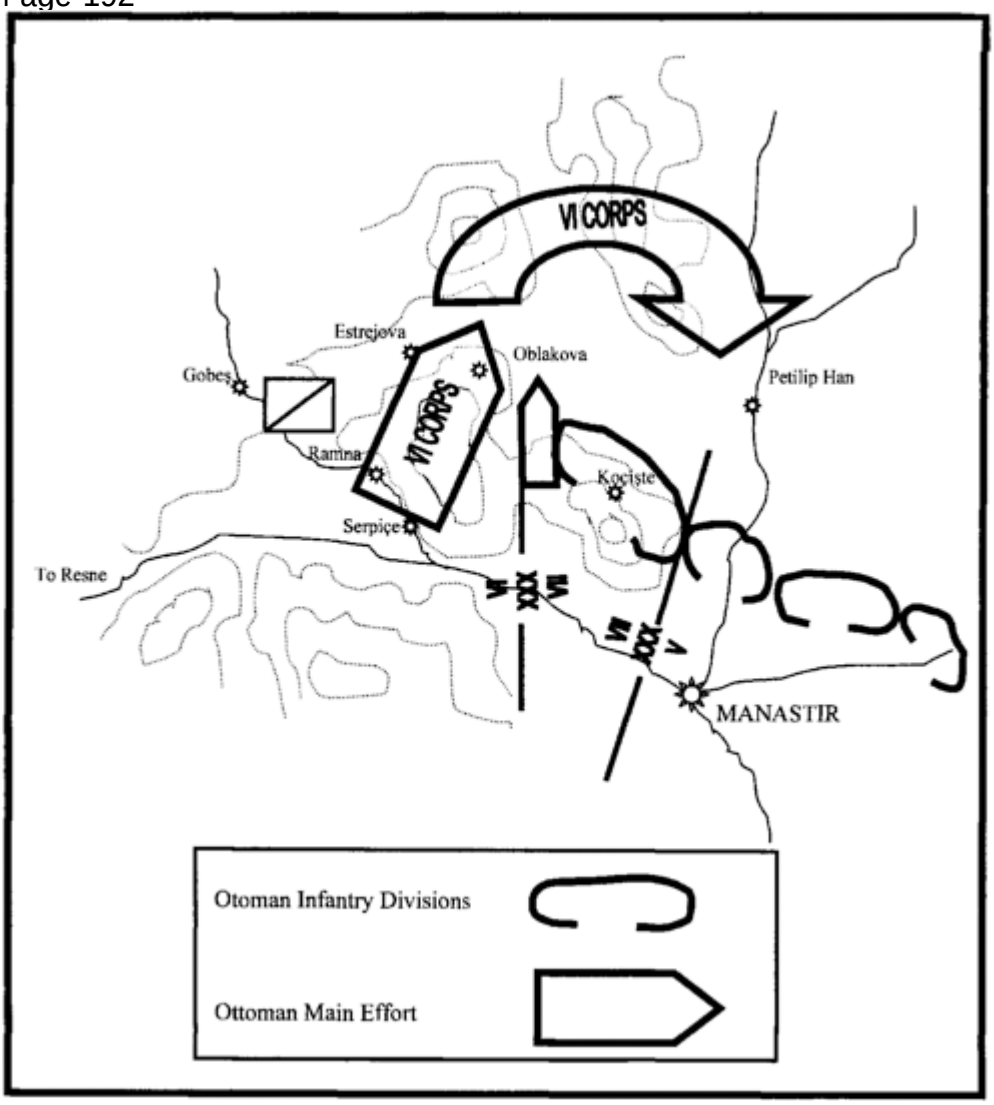
Left Flank Offensive Corps	Right Flank Defensive Corps	
VI Corps	VII Corps	V Corps
16, 19 Infantry Divisions	Iştip Redif Division	13, 15, 18 Infantry Divisions
Fethi Bey Detachment		
Independent Cavalry Brigade		

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 274.

Copies of the Vardar Army's Operations Order Number 16 were also sent to the headquarters of the Western Army, which was also located in the town of Manastir. The Western Army sent a message45 to the Minister of War explaining what the Vardar Army was attempting to accomplish and that a large battle was imminent on November 16. The message also contained the disturbing news that many young men and women had died at the hands of the advancing enemy and that young women were suffering from rapes and attacks as well.

During the day of November 16, the Turks made their final preparations as the Serbs brought their considerable forces closer. However, the slowness of the Serb advance caused the Vardar Army to delay its planned attack, thus creating the need to issue Operations Order Number 17.46 This order noted that although the Serbs had closed on the V and VII Corps along the Oblakova ridge, their right flank had advanced only to the vicinity of Gobeş. The commander reiterated the importance for the V and VII Corps of holding the enemy while the VI Corps conducted a powerful flanking attack. Additionally, the VII Corps reserve, composed of two infantry regiments and a mountain artillery battery under the command of Faik Bey, was ordered to support the VI Corps attack. Finally, the VI Corps was ordered to advance from Serpiçe and Ramna northeast to the town of Oblakova. This, then, was the final attack order of the Vardar Army. Map 5.4 shows the Vardar Army's operational plan based on Operations Order Number 17.

The Battle of Manastir (or Bitola as it is now called) began on November 17, 1912 (although there had been some light skirmishing on November 16). The good weather that had held for several days now turned cold with light rain. Somewhat concerned about the effect that the worsening weather would have on his carefully laid plans, the chief of staff of the Vardar Army sent his General Staff officers out to conduct trafficability surveys. The results indicated that the weather might slow the attack but would not fatally disable it, so the VI Corps launched its attack toward Oblakova. The VII Corps launched its supporting attack



Map 5.4 Vardar Army Operational Plan, Based on Orders Issued November 15–16, 1912

using the Faik Bey Detachment in order to screen and protect the right flank of the VI Corps. Resistance was light, and the Turks drove forward all day. On the V and VII Corps fronts there was heavy fighting as the Serb First Army attacked the positions of the Ottoman 13th and 15th Infantry Divisions. By mid-morning, the VI Corps was about halfway to Oblakova, and by midday the 16th Infantry Division had taken the town. On the VI Corps's left flank, the Köprülü Redif Infantry regiment had, likewise, taken the town of Estrejove. Unfortunately for the Turks, however, counterattacks by the Serbian Morava Infantry Division

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forced the VI Corps to retreat to the Lera-Ramna-Serpiçe road by nightfall.
On the night of November 17–18, 1912, the Vardar Army headquarters issued Operations Order Number 18, confirming the continuance of the planned operations. The Independent Cavalry Brigade was ordered to continue to move to the far left flank to screen the VI Corps. Copies of the order went to all subordinate formations as well as to the headquarters of the Western Army. Later that night, the Western Army staff sent a situation report to Constantinople that outlined the day's events and noted that the Vardar Army wanted to continue its attack the next day. The Western Army also recorded in its historical war diary the disturbing news that the fall of Salonika had made available some thirty-five thousand Greek troops.47 The Ottoman forces in the southeast were directed to hold them from the Vardar Army's ongoing operations. The Western Army staff also determined to move the headquarters from Florina southwest to Görice on November 18.
The rainy weather continued on the morning of November 18, 1912, and Halepli Zeki Paşa left his headquarters for Kocişte Tepe (Hill) to observe the action in the VII Corps sector. Overnight the corps commanders had been very active making final preparations for the coming battle, and the VII Corps reserves were positioned on the hill when the Vardar Army commander arrived there. Heavy Serb attacks began almost immediately on the positions of the Ottoman Iştip Redif Division and the 15th Infantry Division. Once again the enemy attack seemed aimed at the seam between the two Ottoman corps (the V and VII Corps). Fighting raged all day as the V and VII Corps commanders were forced to commit their reserves. Once again the poor morale of the Ottoman soldiers proved decisive as the defensive lines crumbled before the Serb artillery fire and infantry assaults. Casualties were heavy, particularly among the artillery draft animals and machine-gun crews. In the VII Corps sector, Fethi Paşa, the corps commander, repeatedly rallied the demoralized Ottoman soldiers, who were fleeing from the heavy Serb rifle fire. The official Turkish General Staff history noted that Fethi Paşa behaved with the bravery typically displayed by company commanders *(bir bölük komutanı gibi)*.48 While attempting to hold the Serb attack in this heroic manner, the VII Corps commander, Major General Fethi Paşa, fell dead from a rifle bullet near Kocişte Tepe. By 4 P.M. the V Corps line was beginning to crack, and by 7 P.M. the corps was starting to retreat. The left-flank attack of the VI Corps was as unsuccessful as the right-flank defense, and the VI Corps could make absolutely no progress against the determined Serb defenders.
That night Halepli Zeki Paşa decided that he had lost the battle against the superior Serb army and should withdraw his battered

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Vardar Army to the southwest. Losses were heavy; the Vardar Army lost one thousand men killed and two thousand wounded.49 The general retreat began that night, and almost immediately the Vardar Army experienced confusion and difficulty as the artillery and wagons of the VII Corps began to withdraw through the rear areas of the VI Corps. This confusion was probably caused by the untimely death of the VII Corps commander. (Brigadier General Galip Paşa, later the commander of the 13th Infantry Division, took command of the VII Corps.) Leaving the Manastir battlefield, the Western Army headquarters and the V Corps (the right wing of the Vardar Army) withdrew south toward Florina and then continued to march southwest toward Behlişte. The VI and VII Corps and the Vardar Army headquarters (the left wing) withdrew southeast toward Görice.
The Western Army staff supported and approved the Vardar Army's plan to conduct an economy-of-force mission facing the Greeks while the army concentrated against the Serbian First Army. Once again the Ottoman staffs had succeeded in concentrating their forces along interior lines to achieve a decisive mass. The movement of the widely dispersed Vardar Army in a four-day period to concentrate in its battle positions at Manastir was an important accomplishment. Unfortunately, the Vardar Army's operational plan failed (yet again) because the Turks underestimated the troops-to-task required for such an aggressive scheme. The Turks ran into a force over twice their strength and far superior in troop morale. Hall noted that the Serb artillery, once brought up, was a decisive factor in breaking the Ottoman main defensive positions.50 The Battle of Manastir (or the Battle of Bitola) was decisive. It destroyed the last vestige of serious Ottoman resistance in Macedonia and in the Vardar Valley. The Vardar Army was, for all intents and purposes, destroyed as a coherent fighting force. Lieutenant Colonel Fevzi noted that the Vardar Army's effective strength for its seventy-eight infantry battalions (authorized war establishment [capacity] strength of about 70,000 men) was 39,398 men after the Battle of Manastir (shown in Table 5.8).
The depleted ranks of the infantry divisions told only a part of the story of defeat. After Manastir, the Vardar Army had only about one hundred artillery pieces and twelve machine guns remaining with the army. Indeed, many of the men were without rifles and equipment, which had been lost in the constant retreats. Moreover,

in the logistical sense, the campaigns had been a disaster because the main Ottoman lines of communications ran along the railroad lines connecting Üsküp with Salonika and Salonika with Manastir, which, by November 19, 1912, had all been lost to the enemy. Unfortunately for the Turks, the main food depots and ammunition storage depots of the Western Army lay in these three cities. Equally important was the fact that the Western

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TABLE 5.8 Vardar Army Effective Strength, November 19, 1912

Formation	*Regiments/Detachments*	*Effective Strength*
V Corps		
13th Infantry Division	37, 38, 39 Inf. Regts., 13 Rifle Bn., MG Co.	5,613
15th Infantry Division	43, 44, 45 Inf. Regts., 15 Rifle Bn., MG Co.	5,382
18th Infantry Division	52 Inf. Regt., 18 Rifle Bn., Prov. Inf. Bn., 9 Cavalry MG Co.	2,072
Corps Troops	5 Rifle Regt., 5 Engineer Bn., 26 Cav. Regt., MG Co.	2,746
V Corps Total		15,813
VI Corps		
16th Infantry Division	Prov. Inf. Regt., Köprülü Redif Regt., two MG Co.	4,119
Fethi Bey Provisional Division	provisional troops, MG detachment, Field Jandarma Det., 8 Cavalry MG Co.	3,575
Corps Troops	6 Rifle Regt., 7 Rifle Regt., 6 Engineer Bn., MG Co., Cav. Det.	2,576
VI Corps Total		10,270
VII Corps		
19th Infantry Division	56, 57, 58 Inf. Regts., MG Co.	4,511
Other troops	7 Rifle Regt., Iştip Redif Regt., Jandarma Regt.	3,278
Corps Troops	7 Engr. Bn., 7 Cav. Regt.	693
VII Corps Total		8,482
Independent Cavalry	6, 13, 15, 16 Cav. Regts.	854
Brigade	Other, incl. animal handlers & wounded	479
Cavalry Total		1,333
Artillery Men Total		3,500
Vardar Army Total (Effective Strength)		39,398

Note: MG=machine gun, Engr=engineer, Cav=Cavalry, Inf=infantry

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 307–308.

Army had lost its main army hospitals, which were also located there. There remained only one major logistical node under Ottoman control: the remote fortress city of Yanya located in the southwest corner of the western theater. The effect of the logistical losses meant that the Vardar Army could not remedy its material deficiencies.

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THE RETREAT TO ALBANIA

The Vardar Army began its retreat by foot and horse-drawn wagon southwest toward the town of Görice. There was nowhere else for the defeated Turks to go but west toward the dubious sanctuary of Albania. Bad weather followed the Turks and slowed their retreat. On November 22, 1912, the Western Army sent a telegraph message51 to the Ministry of War that explained the situation and reiterated the fact that the morale of the officers and men was broken. The message noted that the enemy was pursuing the Vardar Army; however, the Western Army headquarters also pointed out its intent to draw reserve officers and artillery animals from the Yanya fortress. Finally, the army announced its intent to close up, unite its three corps around the town of Görice, and defend it.

The fast moving V Corps reached Behlişte on November 20, 1912, having marched twenty-two kilometers by foot in forty-eight hours. The VI and VII Corps as well as the headquarters of the Vardar Army arrived in Görice on November 23, 1912. A seven-gun artillery battery sent north from the Yanya fortress was already in Görice to reinforce the Vardar Army. The VI Corps remained somewhat behind the main body to conduct rear guard operations against the Serbs along a stream just north of the town of Palas, located some twenty kilometers northeast of Görice. The Vardar Army now had two corps abreast: the V Corps at Behlişte and the VI Corps at Palas. On the following day, Greek cavalry probed the Turkish outposts near the town of Behlişte.

The Western Army headquarters continued its withdrawal south to the town of Leskovik on the road to Yanya. On November 24, 1912, the Vardar Army made major adjustments in its order of battle. The VI Corps was given the mission to defend Görice from the Palas-Behlişte position, and it was given substantial reinforcements to accomplish this mission. The V Corps was stripped of the 18th Infantry Division, and the VII Corps was stripped of the 19th Infantry Division and the Iştip Redif Infantry Regiment, all of which were sent to join the VI Corps. Additionally, the 17th Infantry Division that had been detached to ward off the southeastern Greek threat had rejoined the main body of the Vardar Army and was also assigned to the VI Corps. A second provisional infantry division was formed under Osman Necati. Altogether, the reinforced VI Corps was now composed of four Nizamiye infantry divisions and two provisional infantry divisions. The remaining elements of the V and VII Corps continued their march toward Albania.

The Muslim population of Albania (as was described in Chapter 2) had attempted several times in the early twentieth century to throw off the yoke of Ottoman domination. Now, in the late fall of 1912, a unique

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opportunity presented itself to the Albanians. It was apparent to the leaders and the people of Albania (who were mostly Muslim) that the Ottoman Empire was fast losing the war and that the time was ripe to declare independence. Therefore, in the third week of November 1912, the Muslim and Christian Albanian political leadership, led by Ismail Kemal Bey, convened the Albanian Independence Congress at Avalonya to consider the future of the Albanian people.52 After discussions, the consensus of the congress was for complete independence, but fearing domination by Christian Montenegro and Greece, it was also for continued friendly relations with the Ottoman Empire. Fearing misrepresen-tation as traitors, the congress sent out telegraphs to the Western Army, the Vardar Army, and the independent Yanya Fortress pledging continued support for the war against the Christian states. On November 24, 1912, Ismail Kemal Bey, Akif Paşa, and thirty-one delegates signed a document of independence. Shortly thereafter, twenty-four delegates signed another copy in Yanya and twelve more delegates signed one in Görice. Finally, on November 28, 1912, in Tirna, an independent Albanian state was proclaimed under the leadership of Ismail Kemal Bey. He then formed a multiethnic and multireligious cabinet that represented his varied constituencies. Behind the diplomatic scenes, Ismail Kemal Bey had been busily in contact with the local European consulates and almost immediately secured the support of Italy and Austria-Hungary. He also wrote immediately to the Serb and Greek high commands requesting a termination of the fighting in Albania, but was less successful with this endeavor. By this time, however, almost the entire surviving strength of the Western Army had withdrawn into Albania (the Yanya Vilayet), and Ismail Kemal Bey had little real choice but to continue to support the operations of the Ottoman Army.

On November 29, 1912, the Western Army noted the independence of Albania and signaled its intent to the Ottoman General Staff to withdraw the V Corps into the town of Berat and operate the Vardar Army in conjunction with the Yanya Corps to ensure control of the province.53 In fact, the independence of Albania had no actual effect on the operations of the Ottoman Army as these moves were dictated by the enemy situation rather than by the actions of the Albanians. However, there was a brief period of tension (November 29–30, 1912), during which the Western Army staff feared that the Albanians would actively support the Balkan League and thereby cut the Western Army in half. The army staff began to make plans for a withdrawal into the Yanya Fortress; however, within several days it became clear that Ismail Kemal Bey was not going to jeopardize the fragile, new Albanian state by antagonizing the still-powerful Ottoman Western Army.

The Western Army itself was also wrestling with the knowledge that an armistice was imminent and that protocols were being worked out

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between the combatants on the Çatalca Lines and at Adrianople. By December 3, 1912, it was apparent that Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Serbia favored a crease-fire, whereas Greece did not. That night, the Western Army received an order from the Ottoman General Staff noting that an armistice would go into effect immediately between the Turks and the Bulgarians, the Serbs, and the Montenegrins, but not the Greeks. The actual protocols took several days to implement, but by December 7, 1912, an agreement was reached with Serbian delegates at Palas. There were continued disagreements as the Serbs and Turks rushed to occupy contested ground that was unoccupied by either side. Nevertheless, the armistice went into effect, stabilizing the Western Army's operational and tactical situation. Because the armistice excluded the Greeks, the Western Army was still faced with an active enemy presence on the Yanya and Görice fronts. By refusing to sign the armistice, the Greeks signaled their determination to take Epirus (as they called lower Yanya); thus, they were expected to continue their offensives.

THE BATTLES OF BEHLIŞTE AND GÖRICE

The victor of Salonika, the powerful Greek Army of Thessaly (composed of five infantry divisions and a cavalry regiment), now converged on the Ottoman VI Corps at Behlişte. The Battle of Behlişte began on December 12, 1912, and caught the VI Corps spread out over a wide area. Although the corps had six infantry divisions at its disposal, it only had two infantry divisions on the Palas-Behlişte line. Moreover, the Greeks brought their forces to bear on the uncovered Ottoman right anchored on the town of Behlişte itself. Defending the town was a small detachment, which held off attacks by the Greek 18th Infantry Regiment (of the 6th Infantry Division) and the 1st Cavalry Regiment. A determined Turkish counterattack from the 2nd Provisional Infantry Division consisting of 1st Provisional Infantry Regiment (an ad hoc formation), an engineer company, and the regular 16th Rifle Battalion drove off the attackers. The Turks pushed the Greeks away from the town the following day, but by December 14, the Greek 3rd Infantry Division arrived on the field and began to work its way around, behind the Turks in Behlişte. The aggressive Turks continued to push east from Behlişte with two infantry regiments supported by an artillery group. The Greek 5th Infantry Division arrived the following day, as did the remaining regiments of the 6th Infantry Division. The Ottoman VI Corps moved in a provisional infantry regiment under Major Cemal and the 2nd Battalion of the 49th Infantry Regiment to guard the open southern (right) flank of the Behlişte position as well. Altogether, as

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dawn broke on the morning of December 18, 1912, there were three full-strength Greek infantry divisions and a cavalry regiment opposing three weak provisional regiments of the Ottoman VI Corps. The Greeks launched a massive attack of fifteen infantry battalions that broke the Ottoman position and sent them reeling in retreat. As the Greek cavalry and 3rd Infantry Division threatened to envelop the twenty-six hundred Ottoman defenders of Behlişte, Cavit Paşa, the Ottoman VI Corps commander, authorized the retreat from the town. The loss of Behlişte made the Palas position to the north untenable, and that night Cavit Paşa decided to abandon that town as well. Its front now broken, the Ottoman VI Corps began to withdraw to Görice.

Cavit Paşa began to move his reserves forward to form a new defensive line north of Görice. This force was composed of the 2nd Provisional Infantry Division and was composed of several provisional infantry regiments and the 6th Rifle Regiment. This weak formation managed to hold the Greeks for a day, but was rapidly outflanked by the Greek 3rd Infantry Division. The corps fell back to Görice itself on December 20, 1912, but was pushed out of the town (narrowly escaping encirclement) as the three advancing Greek infantry divisions massed against it. The Greeks kept up the advance and pushed the reeling Turks twelve more kilometers southwest by nightfall on December 20. Finally, the Ottoman 17th Infantry Division, which had been occupying a fall-back position on the road to Avalonya, was able to halt the Greeks. Although the VI Corps was defeated in this series of delaying battles, it bought the Vardar Army enough time to withdraw the bulk of its forces into the safety of the Albanian sanctuary.

OPERATIONS OF THE UŞTRUMA CORPS

The wartime mission of the Uştruma Corps was to guard the avenues of approach from Bulgaria into Macedonia along the Uştruma (Struma) River and Mesta Rivers. The corps was not particularly strong and was composed of the Nizamiye 14th Infantry Division, the Serez Redif Infantry Division, and the Nevrekop Detachment. The corps also had the 25th Cavalry Regiment attached to it, as well as engineers, artillery, and home guard detachments. The corps deployed the 14th Infantry Division and the Serez Redif Infantry Division in the Uştruma River avenue of approach, which led south directly to the Salonika-Constan-tinople railroad. The Nevrekop Detachment, consisting of the Nevrekop Redif Infantry Regiment and four additional independent Redif infantry battalions, was deployed in the Mesta River avenue of approach, which led south to Drama. Map 5.1 showed the general concentration areas of the Uştruma Corps.

On October 18, 1912, the Bulgarian 7th Rila Infantry Division, composed of three full infantry brigades, crossed the frontier and drove down the Uştruma River valley. The 3rd Brigade of the Bulgarian 3rd Trakya Infantry Division also crossed the frontier on the same day, in the Mesta valley. The initial engagement occurred at the Battle of Cuma-I Bala on October 17–18, 1912, pitting two brigades of the Bulgarian 7th Infantry Division against the Ottoman covering force, composed of the 42nd Infantry Regiment. Meanwhile, the main body of the Uştruma Corps was preparing strong defensive positions around the town of Kresne. At the Kresne position, the Uştruma Corps placed infantry regiments on the east and west sides of the Uştruma River and ordered them to dig in. The position was a natural choke point and had high mountains on both sides of the valley floor. Immediately behind these troops, the corps placed a further two regiments. The overall command of this line was given to the commander of the Serez Redif Infantry Division. The 14th Infantry Division was withheld about eight kilometers behind the lines as the principal counterattack force.

The Bulgarians closed on this position on October 21, 1912.
The Nevrekop Detachment was similarly pushed back from the frontier and, because of a deadly combination of enemy flanking attacks, was unable to hold the Bulgarians. By October 25, 1912, the Bulgarians had advanced to the town of Nevrekop itself. Again the Bulgarians outflanked the Turks and almost encircled the town, forcing a retreat on October 28. The next day the remnants of the detachment began to retreat toward the city of Serez. The rapid collapse of the Nevrekop Detachment was attributed to the fact that the detachment was almost entirely made up of Redif reservists.54 The Bulgarians drove southeast toward Drama.
At the Kresne choke point (Kresne Boğazi), the Bulgarians made contact with the outpost line at Seymenli (a few kilometers north of Kresne). The Uştruma Corps commander issued Operations Order Number 6,55 which informed his subordinates of the enemy's advance on Seymenli and indicated that he anticipated an attack on Kresne shortly. The order also reminded them to use care in the posting of the machine guns and to ensure that observation posts were placed on the high mountains, on the flanks of the regiments. Furthermore, the corps commander informed his subordinates that the Vardar Army had ordered its 15th Infantry Division to move eastward and gain contact with the Uştruma Corps. The Uştruma Corps did not have long to wait.
The main defensive line of the Uştruma Corps lay just to the south of the small village of Krupnik, but its forward outpost line was nearer to Seymenli. The Turks had about thirty-five hundred men in the defensive works. At 3 P.M. on October 22, 1912, the cannons of the Bulgarian

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7th Infantry Division began to pound the Turkish positions. (The Turks refer to this as the Battle of Seymenli.) The battle raged, and the Bulgarians were able to make little progress against the well-entrenched Turks. By dark, the exhausted Bulgarians ended their assault. However, on the next day they renewed their attack under a hail of very effective artillery and rifle fire. Casualties were severe, especially among the Ottoman draft animals, which apparently were somewhat exposed. The Bulgarian infantry threatened to break through the trench lines. That night, although the Turks held the line, the Uştruma Corps began to retreat. This decision was taken on learning the news that the adjacent Nevrekop Detachment (on the corps's right flank) was in serious trouble and unable to hold its positions, thus making the Kresne position untenable.
On October 28, the Uştruma Corps began to embark formations on trains bound for Salonika to join the VIII Provisional Corps. The corps commander's Operations Order Number 12, dated October 29, 1912,56 confirmed his intent to retreat to Salonika. In this, he was encouraged by the commander of the VIII Provisional Corps, who urged him by telegraph to rapidly dispatch his divisions south. The 14th Infantry Division (the only regular formation in the Uştruma Corps) was put on trains and sent south by November 1. This poorly thought-out development ensured that when the Bulgarians caught up with the retreating Uştruma Corps, the Turks were spread out along the railroad, with many waiting for transportation. The Bulgarians rapidly swept up prisoners and captured many men from the Serez Redif Infantry Division in the city of Serez when it fell on November 4–5, 1912. The remainder of the corps (mainly the rump of the Serez Redif Division and the Nevrekop Detachment, plus the 14th Infantry Division) slowly retreated toward Salonika.
The Uştruma Corps had completely failed in its mission to keep the Bulgarians away from the Salonika-Constantinople railroad. Moreover, it failed to accomplish a relatively easy mission: to defend two avenues of approach against forces with which it was more or less evenly matched. Although the loss of the railroad was important, what was worse, the back door to Salonika was now open to the advancing Bulgarians. This was an unexpected development for all parties con-cerned—the Turks, the Greeks, and the Bulgarians—and would cause difficulties later at Salonika.

OPERATIONS IN THE SANJACK OF YENIPAZAR (NOVI BAZAR) AND KOSOVO

The Ottoman Western Army's strategy for the defense of its operational area attempted to retain as much key terrain as possible, for both

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political and emotional reasons. The creation of a myriad ad hoc detachments attests to this principle. The northernmost Ottoman possession in the Balkan theater was the Sanjack of Yenipazar (Novi Bazar), control of which was contested by the Ottomans, the Serbs, the Montenegrins, and the Austrians. The region was the source of an ongoing diplomatic confrontation between those countries that dated back to the mid-nineteenth century. Directly to the south of the Sanjack lies the modern Yugoslav province of Kosovo, centered on the town of Pristine (Pristina). Together these areas lay like an outstretched thumb beyond the Ottoman center of gravity in the Balkans. As such, they were indefensible militarily, but for reasons of prestige and politics, the Ottoman state could not simply abandon them.
The defense of the Sanjack of Yenipazar and Kosovo was assigned to two ad hoc detachments of

approximately infantry-division strength.57 The Western Army formed the Taşlica Detachment (composed of two Redif infantry brigades) for the defense of Yenipazar and the Pristine Detachment (composed of two Redif infantry regiments) for the defense of Kosovo. Map 5.1 shows the general concentration areas of these forces. For mobilization and concentration, both detachments fell under the operational responsibility of the VII Corps, but upon activation, they were detached for independent duties. Opposing these small ves-tiges of the Western Army from the east was the Serbian Third Army, commanded by General Bozhidar Jankovich. Unfortunately for the Turks, however, the Sanjack of Yenipazar was enveloped on the west by Montenegro, creating a threat from opposite directions. Facing the Montenegrins was yet another ad hoc formation, the Ipek Detachment commanded by Cavit Paşa, which was composed of two regiments of the 21st Infantry Division.

The main Serb thrust came from the Third Army, composed of three infantry divisions moving toward Pristine. The Serbs crossed the frontier at 8 A.M. on October 17, 1912, brushing aside the weak Ottoman border posts. The first engagement, fought on October 19, was called the Battle of Podiyevo by the Turks. The Ottoman forces, primarily Redif infantry, were almost immediately caught between Serb pincers and retreated to avoid encirclement. Serb excesses against the local Albanian inhabitants began almost immediately.58 This caused hundreds of volunteer Albanian irregulars to flock to the Ottoman colors to wage war on the invaders.59 Despite the assistance of the Albanian volunteers, the commander of the detachment, Mehmet Paşa, continued to retreat and attempted to build a defensive line just to the north of Pristine. Again the Serbs outflanked his position, this time with the remaining third infantry division from the Serb Third Army. He fell back to the town of Pristine on October 21, but could not hold it against the three full-strength Serb divisions descending on it from the north.

On October 23, the Pristine Detachment abandoned the town and continued to retreat south toward Firzovik. Other elements of the detachment, including more Albanian volunteers, were forced out of the town of Geylan on October 21 (in the Battle of Geylan) and retreated toward Firzovik as well.

To the north in the Sanjack of Yenipazar, the Taşlica and Ipek Detachments were equally pressed by superior forces from opposite directions. The Serbs entered the province on October 18, with the Yavur Brigade (in Serbian the Javorska Brigade) and immediately paused to await the reaction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After several days it was apparent that the Austrians would not contest the Serb conquest of the Sanjack, and the Yavur Brigade continued westward. On October 24, 1912, the Serbs took the town of Seniçe (the Battle of Seniçe) with little Ottoman resistance. The provincial capital of Yenipazar fell after a small, two-day battle on October 22–23. The Montenegrin 9th Infantry Brigade (part of the Eastern Division) invaded earlier from the west and encountered elements of the Ipek Detachment. There were several sharp engagements between October 9 and October 20. On October 21, Brigadier General Cavit, commander of the 21st Infantry Division, personally led his soldiers in a counterattack designed to push back the Montenegrins at the Rugovo Canyon. This attack was successful, but a subsequent Montenegrin attack two days later broke the Turks' morale when Cavit was wounded in a three-hour battle. The Ipek Detachment retreated, and the Montenegrins met the Serbs on October 23. Mitroviçe fell on October 26, and the town of Ipek fell to the Montenegrin 4th Infantry Division on October 31. Thus, by November 1, 1912, the Montenegrins and the Serbians had complete control of the Sanjack of Yenipazar. As the majority of the Ottoman Taşlica Detachment was composed of local Redif soldiers, most of these men simply discarded their weapons and equipment and went home.

The victorious Serbian Third Army continued its advance from Geylan toward Firzovik and attacked the town on October 23–24, pushing the unfortunate Turks out. Mehmet Paşa attempted to form another defensive position around the town of Kaçanik and was yet again forced to retreat on October, 27, 1912 (the Turks refer to these engagements as the Battles of Firzovik and Kaçanik). Thus, by the end of October 1912, the Turks were forced to abandon Kosovo and retreat into Albania.

The conquest of Kosovo was an emotional triumph for the Serbian nation. Located immediately to the south of Pristine is the field of Kosovo Polje (the Field of the Blackbirds), where the flower of Serb chivalry went down in defeat to the Ottomans in 1389. More important in the military sense, the conquest of Kosovo opened the door for the Serbian nation to achieve a long-held dream of expansion to the Adriatic Sea. The conquest of Novi Pazar enabled the Serbs and the

Montenegrins to achieve direct physical contact between the two Slav states. This was an important prerequisite for the eventual unification of a greater Serbia. The loss of the territory by the Ottoman Empire was expected and had no direct effect on the strategic direction of the war. The total Ottoman commitment to the campaign was twenty-six infantry battalions (mostly poorly trained Redif infantry formations), against

which the Serbs concentrated forty infantry battalions and the Montenegrins another twelve infantry battalions. As the Ottoman position was hopeless from the start, all that they could hope for was to delay the conquest for as long as possible. All three Ottoman detachments held out through the end of October 1912 and drained off significant enemy forces from the main theater. Although the three detachments' performance may be judged as somewhat successful, the failure to hold the Serbs in Kosovo was extremely damaging to the overall Ottoman strategic position in the Balkans.

THE SERB ADVANCE TO THE ADRIATIC SEA

After the collapse of the Ottoman position in Kosovo and the simultaneous defeat of the Vardar Army, the road to the Adriatic Sea was open to Serbia. The idea of access to the Adriatic was a cherished dream of the Serb nation, and the lure of seizing ports proved irresistible. After a brief pause to regroup, the Serbian General Staff ordered the Third Army to advance from Kosovo toward the Adriatic Sea. The advance began on November 9, 1912, against the surviving formations of the Ottoman Ipek and Priştine Detachments.60

The retreating 61st and 62nd Infantry Regiments (21st Infantry Division) of the Ipek Detachment had fallen back to the vicinity of Yakova and Pirziren on October 29, 1912, where they were joined by the retreating formations of the Pristine Detachment. The Western Army formed them together in an ad hoc army corps called the Montenegrin Border General Forces Corps (Karadağ sinir Umum Kuvvetleri),61 under the command of Ferik Mahmut Hayret Paşa. By November 3, Mahmut Hayret Paşa had put the force into a semblance of order and had rested and resupplied his troops. The Western Army ordered the deployment of the 21st Infantry Division south via Dedre to Ustruga on November 6, and Mahmut Hayret Paşa put the division on the road with instructions to ensure proper march discipline. Mahmut Hayret Paşa accompanied the division and established his headquarters in Debre on November 9, 1912.

In Debre, Mahmut Hayret Paşa received orders from the Western Army concerning the overall strategic situation in the Western The-ater,62 which gave him command of all Ottoman forces in the area.

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Mahmut Hayret Paşa immediately began to reorganize his ad hoc corps by forming a Provisional Infantry Division under the command of Colonel Fethi on November 10, 1912. By now the Serbian Third Army was beginning to make its way west toward the sea, and Mahmut Hayret Paşa began to prepare to retreat farther south. That night, the headquarters pulled out of Debre toward Ustruga, where Mahmut Hayret Paşa intended to make a standing with his two infantry divisions. However, on November 12 he received bad news from the Western Army. Due to the deteriorating situation around Işkodra, Mahmut Hayret Paşa was ordered to detach the 21st Infantry Division and send it via Elbasan to Işkodra. This order effectively cut the force in half (the 21st Infantry Division was composed of nine infantry battalions and the Provisional Infantry Division, which was composed of eleven infantry battalions). With this, Mahmut Hayret Paşa sent Cavit Paşa's 21st Infantry Division on its way and then decided to fall back to the west on Elbasan.

The Serb Third Army advanced on two separate avenues of approach, one in the north directly toward the sea and one in the south toward Elbasan. The Serb southern pincer surged into the vacuum created by the retreating Ottoman forces. The Serbs took Yakova on November 22 and kept advancing toward Debre. The Serb northern pincer advanced on the seacoast town of Şingin, which was held by two battalions of the Ottoman 53rd Infantry Regiment. At 5:50 A.M. on November 14, the Serbs and the Montenegrins attacked in overwhelming strength (consisting of the Serbian Drina Infantry Division, the Montenegrin 3rd Infantry Brigade, and the 1st Şumadiye Albanian Detachment of two battalions of Christian volunteers).63 In a brief morning battle, during which most of the Ottoman battalion officers were killed,64 the Serbs took Şingin. The next day, word of this defeat reached the Western Army and the Işkodra fortress. The Turks fell back to the town of Selimiye and, on November 17, 1912, fought a second unsuccessful battle. The 53rd Infantry Regiment then began to retreat toward Tirana.

The situation continued to deteriorate as Mahmut Hayret Paşa received word of the disastrous defeat at Manastir. He was ordered to maintain a line of retreat for the Vardar Army at Elbasan but, unfortunately, had already abandoned that position to the oncoming Serbs. On November 17, Mahmut Hayret Paşa sent word to the Western Army that the regiments of the 21st Infantry Division were heading north in small groups toward Işkodra. The Eastern Army sent back the devastating news that an enemy force had swept down and taken the town of Şingin, which isolated Işkodra from the rest of Albania. This cut the Montenegrin Border General Forces off from completing the mission to reinforce Işkodra with the 21st Infantry Division.

Serb infantry and cavalry now came swarming down the road to Tirana. Mahmut Hayret Paşa attempted to form an improvised defense

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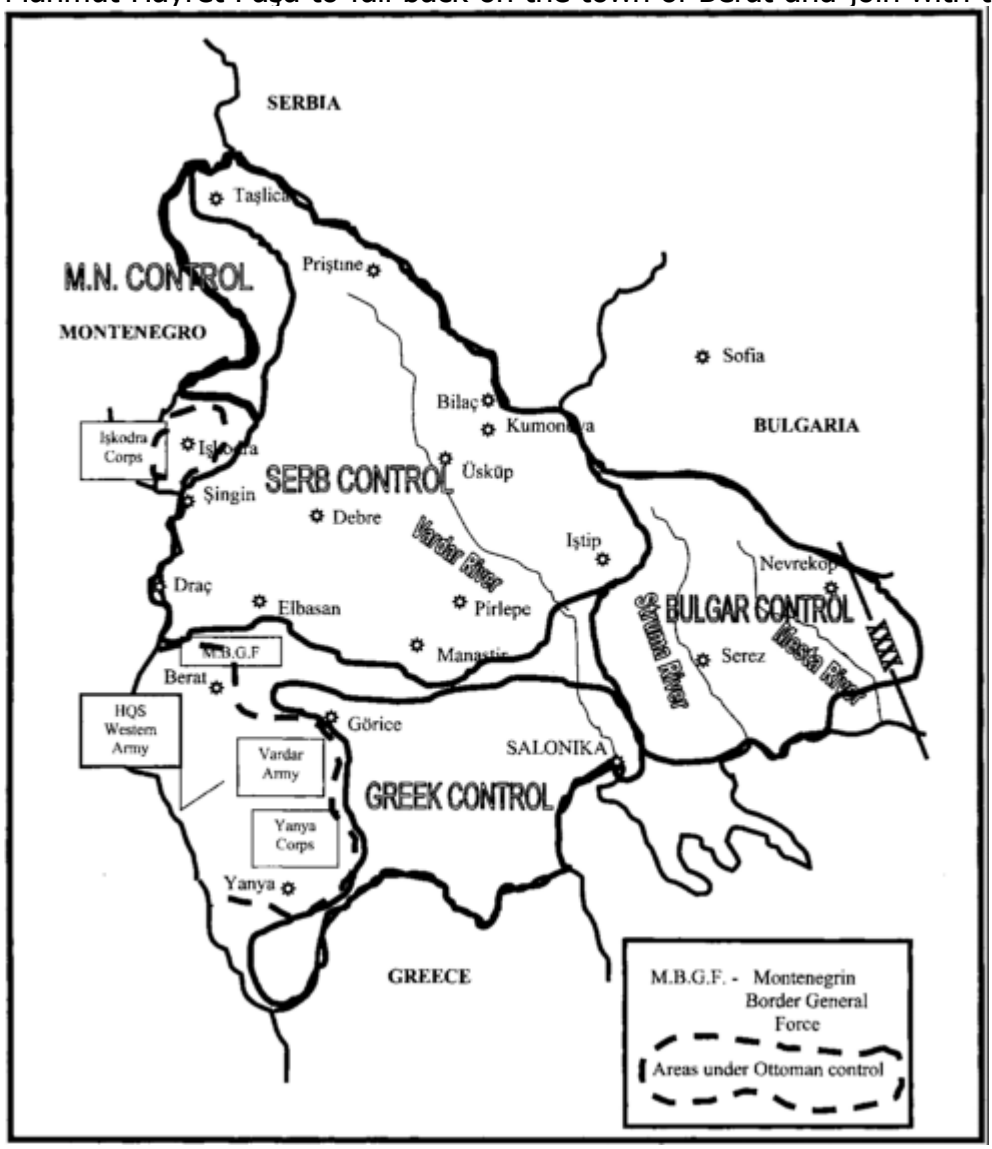
at Akçahisar but was pushed back rapidly. He sent the 61st Infantry Regiment to the port of Draç (Durazzo or

Durres), while the 63rd Regiment attempted to hold Tirana. Both regiments were too weak to accomplish their assigned missions, and the Serbs took both towns on November 28, 1912. Serbia now had its window on the Adriatic Sea. Map 5.5 shows the Western Army situation on November 28, 1912. On November 29, the corps consolidated its regiments in the town of Loşne, and on December 2, 1912, the Western Army ordered Mahmut Hayret Paşa to fall back on the town of Berat and join with the Western Army.



Map 5.5 Western Army Situation, November 28, 1912.

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Further orders came on December 4 that detached the 21st Infantry Division for operations farther south at Yanya. The armistice found the Montenegrin Border General Forces holding the town of Berat on December 6, 1912.

NOTES

1. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), Chart 2.
2. Ibid., 64.
3. Ibid., 487–489.
4. Ibid., 119–120.
5. Ibid., 120–121.
6. Ibid., 129.
7. Army Order Number 1, Operations Division, Western Army Headquarters, Salonika, October 8, 1912. ATASE Arşivi 4/7342, Record 658, Shelf 11, File 1–41, 1–42; Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 86–88.

8. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 100–101.
9. Richard C.Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913* (London: Routledge, 2000), 46.
10. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 428.
11. Ibid., 163.
12. Ibid., 174–175.
13. Ibid., Map 16.
14. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 178.
15. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 47.
16. Fethi Paşa was the former Ottoman ambassador in Belgrade. The active and aggressive Fethi would later be killed in action at the battle of Bitola on November 18, 1912. He was the highest-ranking officer of any combatant to be killed in the Balkan Wars.
17. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 47–48.
18. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 182–183.
19. Ibid., 184.
20. Ibid., 186–187.
21. Ibid., 188
22. Ibid., 190.
23. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 48.
24. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 211.
25. Ibid., 211–212.
26. Ibid., 213.
27. Ibid., 214.
28. Ibid., 214.
29. Ibid., 215.
30. Ibid., 216.

31. Ibid. 217–218. Quote from Fevzi Çakmak, *Garbi Rumeli'nin Suret-I Ziya ve Balkan Harbinde Garp Cephesi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1936), 180–181.
32. Ibid., 228.
33. Ibid., 229.
34. Ibid., 230.
35. Ibid., 231.
36. Vardar Army Order Number 12, November 1, 1912, ATASE Arşivi 5/9672, Record 732, Shelf 2, File 1–51; Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 232.
37. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 246.
38. Ibid., 253.
39. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 51.
40. Ibid., 51.
41. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 269–270.
42. The modern Turkish General Staff histories show a different tactical arrangement (VI, VII, and V Corps) than that suggested by Hall in *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913.* Hall noted that the Turks deployed the VII Corps on the left (west) and then the VI and V Corps going to the east. Turkish sources reflect the alignments shown in the text.
43. Vardar Army Order Number 15, November 14, 1912, ATASE Arşivi 5/9672, Record 714, Shelf 2, File 1–84; Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 271.
44. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 272.
45. Western Army Report to the Ministry of War, November 16, 1912, ATASE Arşivi 4/9556, Record 714, Shelf 2, File 1–95; Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 275.
46. Vardar Army Orders Number 17, November 16, 1912, ATASE Arşivi 4/9556, Record 714, Shelf 2, File 1–108; Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 277.
47. Western Army War Diary, November 17, 1912, ATASE Arşivi 4/9556, Record 714, Shelf 2, File 1–117; Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 285.
48. Ismet Görgülü, *On Yillik Harbin Kadrosu 1912–1922, Balkan-Birinci Dünya-Istiklal Harbi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurum Basimevi, 1993), 36–41; Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 286–287.
49. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 290.
50. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 51.
51. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 350.

52. Ibid., 357–360; Stanford J.Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire, Volume II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 297.
53. Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 362.
54. Uştruma Corps Operations Order Number 6, October 21, 1912, ATASE Arşivi 5/7460, Record 667, Shelf 2, File 1–22; Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 332.
55. *Garp Ordusu Vardar Orduzu ve Ustuma Kolordusu,* 332–333.

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56. Uştruma Corps Operations Order Number 12, October 29, 1912, ATASE Arşivi 5/7460, Record 667, Shelf 2, File 1–44; Turkish General Staff, *Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu,* 338.
57. *Garp Ordusu Vardar Orduzu ve Ustuma Kolordusu,* Chart 9.
58. Ibid., 158–159; Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 53–54.
59. *Garp Ordusu Vardar Orduzu ve Ustuma Kolordusu,* 159. For example, 250 men volunteered from Üsküp and 90 volunteered from Mitroviçe.
60. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913,* 54.
61. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), Garp Ordusu Karaddğ Cephesi, IIIncü Cilt, 3ncü Kisim* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), Chart 4.
62. Ibid., 120. This message began with the phrase, "From Salonika, Işkodra, and Yanya there is nothing but bad news." The message also contained a summary of the intent to make a stand at Manastir and, finally, presented information about the high numbers of prisoners that had been lost.
63. Ibid., 134.
64. Ibid., 131–133.

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6
The Greek and Montenegrin Campaigns, 1912
STRATEGIC PLANNING

The overall organization and strategic planning endeavors of the Ottoman Western Army were detailed previously, in Chapter 5. The Greek and Montenegrin fronts (refer to Map 5.1) were actually subsets of the larger strategic picture facing the Ottoman General Staff and the Western Army staff. In both cases the Ottoman staffs sought to defend the Greek and Montenegrin borders, while the decisive campaign was fought in Macedonia against Serbia. The defense of both the Greek and Montenegrin frontiers was assigned to independent army corps, each of which covered a major avenue of approach into the Ottoman Empire's Balkan possessions. The strategic goal on each front was simply to stop the enemy near the frontiers. There were two avenues of approach from Greece, one in the east, leading to the prized port city of Salonika, and one in the west, leading to Albania and the port of Avalonya (Valore). The Ottoman staffs considered that the eastern avenue, leading through extremely rugged and mountainous terrain on the Larissa-Salonika road in Thessaly, was easily defensible. Ideally, the Ottoman Second Army's VIII Corps, stationed in Syria and Palestine, would be mobilized and moved under the concentration plan to cover the eastern avenue of approach. However, as the Greeks acquired increasing naval strength in 1910–1911, which negated Ottoman overseas communications, it was apparent that the Second Army's reinforcements might never arrive.1 As an interim measure, under Campaign Plans 1, 2, 3, and 5, the Ottoman staffs planned to mobilize the VIII Provisional Corps from locally available army

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formations. This provisional corps was then assigned the critical eastern avenue of approach leading to the strategically important city of Salonika. The western avenue of approach led directly through the fortress city of Yanya (called Jannina in 1912 and Ioanina by the modern Greeks) in Epirus. The Ottoman General Staff determined that the Yanya fortress, if reinforced by mobile tactical formations, could act something like a cork in the avenue of approach leading into Albania. To accomplish this, the Ottoman staffs planned to mobilize and activate the Independent Yanya Corps (Bağimsiz Yanya Kolordu). In effect, Yanya was a smaller version of Adrianople. Both the Independent Yanya Corps and the VIII Provisional Corps were ordered to fight

defensive battles and to deny the Greeks penetration into the empire.
Along the Montenegrin frontier, rough terrain likewise impeded the enemy's avenue of approach into Albania. Moreover, the fortress city of Işkodra (Scutari) blocked the main roads south and was the northern geographical equivalent of the Yanya fortress. Similarly, the Ottoman campaign plans mobilized and activated the separate Işkodra Corps to fulfill the mission of blocking the enemy penetration. Like the Yanya fortress, the Işkodra fortress was heavily stocked with food and ammunition to enable it to hold out for an extended period. Map 6.1 shows the fortresses and associated terrain.
In the technical sense, these campaigns should be included in the general category of the campaigns of the Western Army as all the formations assigned were a part of that theater-level organization. However, the story of the western theater of operations is one of disconnected and separate campaigns fought in relative isolation and, consequently, is very difficult to explain. Therefore, this chapter sepa-rates and presents these campaigns independently in the following sequence: the campaign in Thessaly (Greek front), the campaign in Epirus (Greek front), and finally the Işkodra campaign (Montenegrin front).

MOBILIZATION AND CONCENTRATION

The Independent Yanya Corps and the VIII Provisional Corps experienced problems with mobilization and concentration similar to those experienced by the Eastern Army in Thrace and the Vardar Army in Macedonia. However, making matters worse was the fact that the Ottoman lines of communications in these three outer theaters were very poor. Many of the formations exceeded their mobilization timetables by ten days, and most of the mobilized formations found themselves marching by foot to their concentration areas. Mobilization proceeded very slowly. By October 8, 1912, the VIII Provisional Corps

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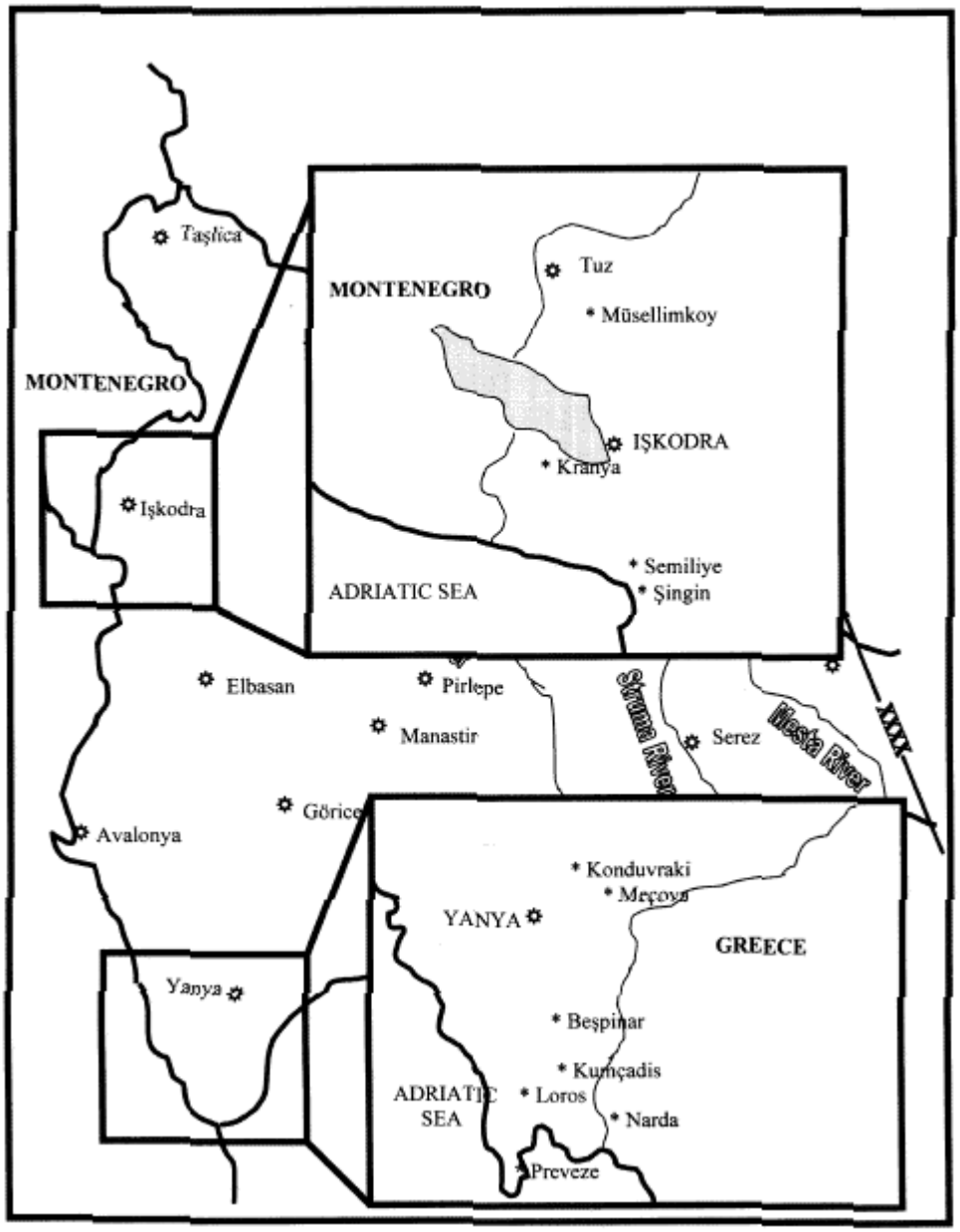

Map 6.1 The Epiran and Montenegrin Fronts.

had only 9,439 men on its rolls and the Independent Yanya Corps had a mere 4,241 men assigned. Typically, in addition to men, draft animals seemed particularly scarce and were slow to arrive at mobilization stations. Furthermore, the fortress artillery regiments were especially short of trained officers and men.

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A serious problem that the Ottoman Army faced on the Greek and Montenegrin fronts was one of forming corps-level command groups and general staffs. The regular army corps of the Ottoman Army (which comprised the bulk of the Eastern Army and the Vardar Army) were commanded by major generals (or, in rare cases, lieutenant generals) who had corps-level General Staffs assigned in peacetime. When the Ottoman General Staff created independent or provisional army corps, it had to find qualified commanders and trained General Staff officers to flesh out the new ad hoc headquarters. For example, in order to fill the requirements of the VIII Provisional Corps, the Yanya fortress commander, Ferik Hasan Tahsin Paşa, was pulled out from his peacetime assignment in Yanya and given the post.2 Naturally, the reassign-ment of Hasan Tahsin Paşa left a gap in the command structure of the Yanya fortress, and when the Independent Yanya Corps was formally activated on October 2, 1912, it had no commander. To cover this gap, the Second Army assigned the commander of the 23rd Infantry Division, Brigadier General Esat, as the new Independent Yanya Corps commander. In turn, then, the 23rd Infantry Division was now left leaderless, requiring that Brigadier General Cevat be reassigned as the new divisional commander from army staff duties. To fill the post of VIII Provisional Corps chief of staff, the Second Army pulled Staff Lieutenant Colonel Halil Recai from his

assignment as the commander of the European Gendarmerie (Rumeli Jandarma Komutani). The VIII Provisional Corps headquarters itself was formally activated on October 12, 1912, and stripped company grade officers from the divisional staffs. In this manner, numerous line and General Staff officers were pulled from their peacetime assignments to fill requirements on the new staffs, much to the disadvantage of their original units.

VIII PROVISIONAL CORPS'S INITIAL OPERATIONS

The VIII Provisional Corps was assigned the 22nd Infantry Division, the Nasliç Redif Division, the Aydin Redif Division, and the 14th Cavalry Regiment. On paper it seemed a powerful force, but it was composed mostly of Redif soldiers. It was particularly weak in field artillery (only twenty-four field guns and twelve mountain howitzers) and in machine guns (seven). Initially, only the 22nd Infantry Division and the Nasliç Redif Division were available for operations. Over the first two weeks of October 1912, Hasan Tahsin Paşa began to move his corps forward, and by October 17 he had deployed his border companies and the 14th Cavalry Regiment to screen the frontier. He sent the 66th Infantry Regiment to Alasonya (Elasson) to establish a defensive position in the hills just north of the town (blocking the road to Salonika),

while the remaining regiments of the 22nd Infantry Division went to work to fortify the strategic mountain passes. The terrain in the vicinity was extremely rugged, with Mount Olympus rising 2,917 meters above sea level to the east and Mount Vourinos rising 1,866 meters above sea level in the west. Given time to develop the defenses and to bring up the divisions of the VIII Provisional Corps, the Ottoman position in Thessaly might have held. Unfortunately for Hasan Tahsin Paşa, time ran out on October 18, 1912.

Skirmishers of the Greek 1st Infantry Division overran the string of Ottoman border posts along the frontier on the morning of October 18, 1912, and, on the following day, the Greeks moved up infantry and artillery toward Alasonya. At 10:30 A.M. October 19, 1912, Greek artillery began to pound the Turkish lines. By noon the Greek 2nd Infantry Division had joined the fight, and both Greek divisions joined in an attack on the positions of the Ottoman 66th Infantry Regiment. The Turks held their positions throughout the day while the Greek Army of Thessaly brought up powerful reinforcements in the form of the 3rd Infantry Division. Faced with such overwhelming strength, the Turks held until dark but withdrew overnight. To the west of Alasonya, two battalions of the 65th Infantry Regiment held the border town of Dişkata, which came under attack by the Greek Evzon Detachment on October 19. The Greeks attacked at 9 A.M. and quickly smashed the Ottoman positions. The remainder of the Greek Army of Thessaly (the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Infantry Divisions) was following close behind the first echelon of infantry divisions.

It would soon be apparent to Hasan Tahsin Paşa that his VIII Provisional Corps was grossly outnumbered by the overwhelming Greek Army of Thessaly (seven complete infantry divisions). For reasons not clearly explained in the modern Turkish General Staff's campaign histories of the Balkan Wars, Ottoman intelligence had disastrously misread the Greek military intentions. In retrospect, it would appear that the Ottoman staffs believed that the Greek attack would be balanced on two major avenues of approach. The Second Army staff had therefore, more or less, evenly balanced the combat strength of the Independent Yanya Corps and the VIII Provisional Corps along this line of thinking. This was a fatal decision for the Western Army, which would lead to the early loss of the strategic city of Salonika. In actual fact, the Greeks, having the initiative at all levels, threw almost all their entire field army against the VIII Provisional Corps. Table 6.1 shows the decisive inferiority under which Hasan Tahsin Paşa attempted to undertake the defense of Salonika.

It is very apparent from Table 6.1 that the Greeks intentionally conducted an economy-of-force mission against the Yanya fortress. More-

TABLE 6.1 Force Comparisons, Greek Front, October 19, 1912

	VIII Provisional Corps	*Army of Thessaly*
Infantry Battalions	29	73
Cavalry Troops	3	11
Artillery Batteries	9	39
Machine Guns	8	84
Rifles	29,328	100,000 (approximate)
	Yanya Independent Corps	*Army of Epirus*
Infantry Battalions	22	8
Cavalry Troops	1	1
Artillery Batteries	6	6
Machine Guns	8	12

Rifles	22,589	13,000 (approximate)

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, 2nci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu, Yunan Cephesi Harekati (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 152.

over, the Greek Army of Epirus was composed entirely of nondivisional infantry regiments and battalions. Nevertheless, the Army of Epirus closed on the Yanya fortress and acted as a magnet for even more Ottoman reinforcements (see Chapter 5). Unfortunately for modern historians, contemporary Turkish records do not explain this lapse in an otherwise understandable Ottoman strategic posture.

THE BATTLES OF KIRKGEÇIT AND LAZARAT

The fight of the 65th and 66th Infantry Regiments bought several days of time for the VIII Provisional Corps to establish a solid defensive line in the valley floor, just to the south of the village of Kirkgeçit. The flanks were anchored on the high mountains flanking the pass through which the Salonika road led. The ground was ideal for the defense, and Hasan Tahsin Paşa deployed the 22nd Infantry Division and the Nasliç Redif Division shoulder-to-shoulder blocking the road. Although the Ottoman line stretched over fourteen kilometers, much of the front was impassable mountains. The western end of the line was centered on the town of Lazarat. Many of the troops had been in the position since October 15, and work on the defenses had progressed well. Furthermore, the Western Army had decided to reinforce the VIII Provisional Corps by sending it the Drama Redif Division, which was due to arrive on the afternoon of October 22, 1912.

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The corps staff ordered that the position be converted into a defensive zone (defense in depth) and, furthermore, that the infantry companies heavily reinforce their trenches with stone.3 As the 66th Infantry Regiment withdrew into the defensive zone from Alasonya, it was retained immediately behind the front line along the Salonika road as the corps commander's immediate reserve force. The 65th Infantry Regiment, withdrawing from Dişkata, was ordered to halt at the village of Lazarat and to convert it into a defensive stronghold. The limited artillery that Hasan Tahsin Paşa possessed was kept in the center of the corps sector to support the main battle. Thus, by the night of November 21, the VIII Provisional Corps was as well prepared for the coming battle as could be reasonably expected. Perhaps against a force half the size of the Army of Thessaly, it might have been considered prepared.

Over the course of October 20–21, the Greeks brought six of their seven infantry divisions up and on line for the attack on the Ottoman position. They also brought up a cavalry brigade and three independent infantry battalions. The attack order of the Army of Thessaly was issued to the Greek infantry divisions at 8:45 P.M. on October 21. The awful weight of the Greek strategic concentration was about to fall on the VIII Provisional Corps.

Greek infantry began moving forward to their lines of departure between 5 and 7 A.M. on October 22, 1912, through very muddy conditions and under a mantle of fog and drizzle. The Greek artillery began firing at 9:30 A.M., and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Infantry Divisions began their main attacks at the same time into the heart of the Ottoman line defending the mountain pass. The Turkish artillery began coun-terfires at 10 A.M. The Greek attacks were largely unsuccessful against the well-entrenched Turks, and many Greek infantry companies were forced to retreat. The Army of Thessaly moved the 6th Infantry Division forward immediately behind the 2nd Infantry Division. On the Greek left flank, the 5th Infantry Division, the cavalry brigade, and two Evzon infantry battalions launched simultaneous attacks on Lazarat. These attacks were unsuccessful as well. However, in the center of the Ottoman line, the Greek 4th Infantry Division, fighting uphill into the Bonaje Sira mountain range, managed to gain a foothold in the defenses of the Ottoman Kozana Redif Regiment around 2 P.M.4 The aggressive Greeks drove through the Ottoman lines and at 5:30 P.M. began to march down the back slope of the mountain toward Rahor and Kaldat.

Hasan Tahsin Paşa responded to the alarming reports from the Nasliç Redif Division concerning the Greek breakthrough by committing his corps reserve. He dispatched the Drama and Nusratli Redif Infantry Battalions to the rear with orders to restore his line of communications and to push the Greeks away from the critical road intersection. Moving

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through the VIII Provisional Corps's combat trains, the Redif infantry attacked the Greeks around dusk and pushed them back. By 11:30 P.M. the situation was less critical, with the Greeks holding Rahor and the Turks holding Kaldat.

Overall, the Greek breakthrough was a tactical disaster for the VIII Provisional Corps. The towns of Rahor and Kaldat sat at the intersection of the only two roads leading down to the Ottoman corps's rear from the

forward mountain positions. These towns blocked any retreat by the corps and were, thus, the key to the defense. Although the Turks had a very successful day, characterized, for once, by the excellent handling of their artillery, the appearance of Greek troops at this key intersection spelled trouble for Hasan Tahsin Paşa. By now the VIII Provisional Corps knew the full extent of the strength of the Greek Army of Thessaly with which it now lay locked in combat. Unfortunately Hasan Tahsin Paşa did not know the strength of the Greek force at Rahor nor the location of the Greek reserves, and it was night in bad weather. Therefore, he made the decision to pull out of his carefully prepared defensive position. It appears from the Turkish histories that, at the time Hasan Tahsin Paşa made the decision to retreat, he still had the 66th Infantry Regiment and a battalion from the Nasliç Redif Division in corps reserve.5 Why he chose to retreat while in possession of a substantial tactical reserve is unclear today. In any event, the order to retreat went out to the formations of the VIII Provisional Corps in the early hours of October 23, 1912.

On the following day, the VIII Provisional Corps was withdrawing in good order. Hasan Tahsin Paşa was very careful to specify in his corps orders that the withdrawing regiments and battalions should post small rear guard detachments to slow the advancing Greeks, which allowed the Ottoman main body to pull out.6 He summoned his division commanders at 2 P.M. in order to personally receive their situation reports. The postbattle discussion revealed the usual problems with morale, training, and logistics, but the principal problem was identified as the enemy's overwhelming strength. The Turks estimated that the Army of Thessaly threw approximately 65,000 men against their 15,836 (fifty-eight Greek infantry battalions in contact against twenty-one Ottoman battalions).7 Of particular interest is the fact that the Turks identified their failure to lay enough telegraph cable to ensure adequate communications between the corps headquarters and the divisions and detachments. This problem disabled the speedy transmittal of situation reports and orders and left Hasan Tahsin Paşa in the dark concerning the tactical situation. This absence of reliable and updated information caused him to order a hasty retreat (as opposed to a deliberate one) and ensured the loss of substantial quantities of munitions, wagons, and supplies, plus twenty-one badly needed field artillery pieces. In the

battle, the Turks lost about five hundred men killed and another one thousand wounded.

Over the next several days, the VIII Provisional Corps conducted a withdrawal by stages. Small rear-guard detachments were left in place as blocking forces to enable the divisions to retreat. By October 24, 1912, the corps had withdrawn about twelve kilometers. In one memorable incident, the Turkish rear guards pulled back and observed the advancing Greeks enter the village of Serfiçe and set fire to the local mosque.8

On October 26, 1912, the Greek Army of Thessaly reached the vicinity of Kozana (Kozani), whereupon it split up to pursue the rapidly retreating Turks. The Greek 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 6th Infantry Divisions pursued the Ottoman VIII Provisional Corps west toward Salonika. The Greek 5th Infantry Division and the independent Cavalry Brigade drove north toward Macedonia and Florina. The Greek 7th Infantry Division had previously been detached to follow a small Ottoman detachment westward to the Aegean Sea. The main body of five Greek infantry divisions still far outnumbered the retreating Turks and pushed them back relentlessly about ten kilometers every day. On October 28, 1912, despite very muddy conditions, the Greek 7th Infantry Division caught up with elements of the Karakova Redif Infantry Regiment at Katerin and pushed them out of the village with only small losses. The next day, the infantry divisions of the Army of Thessaly occupied the villages of Kumkoy and Karaferye and cut the vital railroad running from Salonika to Manastir. The Greeks advance was (by the standards of 1912) almost a blitzkrieg, and the VIII Provisional Corps maintained its retreat to establish a new defensive position on the west bank of the Karaazmak Nehir (Aliakmon River).

The main body of the Ottoman corps reached the river on October 28, 1912. A substantial reinforcement, the Drama Redif Division, was now under the command of the VIII Provisional Corps and was immediately put into the line. Hasan Tahsin Paşa placed the Drama Redif Division on his right flank, blocking the road to Salonika, and the 22nd Infantry Regiment on his left, blocking the railway line. The Naslic Redif Division and a provisional Redif infantry regiment were placed in reserve, immediately behind the forward divisions. The Greeks pushed forward, and on October 31, the Greek 7th Infantry Division brushed aside the thin Ottoman cavalry screen and advanced to the river. The Turks had relatively strong positions well backed by reserves, and Hasan Tahsin Paşa hoped to make a determined stand on the river. The VIII Provisional Corps now had its back literally against the wall. The new defensive position was a mere fifteen kilometers west of Salonika, and there was nowhere left to retreat to but the city itself.

THE BATTLE OF YENICE (YANITSA)

The much needed 14th Infantry Division (detached from the Uştruma Corps on October 28 and rushed south

by train to Salonika) arrived on October 31, 1912. The 40th and 41st Infantry Regiments arrived first and were rushed to the village of Venice (Yanitsa) on the far right flank of the Ottoman VIII Provisional Corps's position. Three batteries of the 14th Field Artillery Regiment and two batteries of the 13th Field Artillery Regiment accompanied the infantry. The Katerin Redif Regiment was also sent to the village and placed under the command of the 14th Infantry Division commander. The 42nd Infantry Regiment and the remaining batteries of the 14th Field Artillery Regiment were inbound and were also given orders to deploy to Venice. The reason for this last-minute addition to the Ottoman line lay in a situation report from an Ottoman light cavalry detachment, which was received on October 31, 1912.9 This report concerned Greek movements from the night of October 30–31 and confirmed that large enemy forces were moving north to encircle the Ottoman right flank. Hasan Tahsin Paşa took immediate action by ordering the inbound 14th Infantry Division to positions at Venice. He also ordered the Salonika garrison to send seven artillery batteries from the corps reserve forward to the battle area. He told his chief of staff and division commanders that he thought the main Greek effort would be directed toward enveloping his right flank.10 He also directed two aircraft from Salonika to conduct an aerial reconnaissance of the Greek advance in the early evening hours of October 31, 1912, and furthermore ordered the cavalry to aggressively probe the Greek front to confirm its movements. By nightfall on October 31, 1912, Hasan Tahsin Paşa had correctly confirmed the Greek plan. He was convinced that the Greeks had left the 7th Infantry Division on the Karaazmak River line to conduct a diversionary attack. The main Greek attack, he believed, was composed of the Greek 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 6th Infantry Divisions, and the Independent Cavalry Brigade, which was then marching hard to envelop his right flank. Overall, it was a masterful piece of intelligence gathering and analysis.

Hasan Tahsin Paşa now took a calculated risk and ordered his lines on the river facing the single Greek infantry division to be thinned so that he could mass his combat power against the Greeks on his right. He ordered the Nasliç Redif Division to conduct the defense of the river and reinforced it with the 64th Infantry Regiment and the 1st Battalion of the 66th Infantry Regiment. He placed his remaining regiments (the Drama, Kavala, and Görice Redif Regiments; the 65th Infantry Regiment; the remainder of the 66th Infantry Regiment; and a battery of the 13th Field Artillery Regiment) under the command of the Drama Redif Division and ordered these forces to prepare to move north toward

Venice. This would place the bulk of the VIII Provisional Corps's combat strength facing the Greek main effort.

At 9 A.M. on November 1, 1912, near the Ballica Farm, Greek infantry attacked elements of the Ottoman light cavalry screen, thus initiating the Battle of Venice. By noon, the Greek 2nd and 3rd Infantry Divisions, supported by artillery, were attacking the outpost line of the 40th Infantry Regiment. The Ottoman supporting artillery from the 14th Field Artillery Regiment was particularly well handled and savaged the Greek 2nd Infantry Division. The Greek attack stalled, and by 4 P.M., both Greek divisions had halted offensive operations. In the center, at 2:30 P.M., the Greek 4th Infantry Division had wheeled its artillery forward and began to pound the Ottoman 41st Infantry Regiment's positions. After an hour of sustained bombardment, the Greek infantry went forward. The Greeks broke the forward line of Turkish infantry and pushed ahead several hundred meters into the Ottoman defensive zone. However, a determined counterattack by the reserve battalion of the 41st Infantry Regiment struck at 4 P.M. This attack pushed the Greeks back to their start lines. The late-arriving 42nd Infantry Regiment occupied the right flank of the 14th Infantry Division's line; it was attacked at 4 P.M., by the Greek 6th Infantry Division. The situation was briefly in doubt, but the 14th Infantry Division committed the Karakova Redif Battalion (in reserve), which tilted the balance and repulsed the Greek attack. At 9:30 P.M. Hasan Tahsin Paşa ordered the reinforced Drama Redif Division north to join the fight at Venice. Light rain began falling, and by 10 P.M. the field was very muddy. Over the course of the day's fighting, Greek casualties, especially among junior officers, were severe. Overall, Hasan Tahsin Paşa was encouraged by the day's successful fighting, and the bad weather reinforced his determination to fight on.11

The Greeks were not idle overnight as they prepared to renew the attack on the next day. Greek infantry began to move forward to their lines of departure as early as 2:30 A.M. on November 2, 1912 (Map 6.2 shows the situation on that date). The Greek 2nd and 3rd Infantry Divisions began their attacks on the 40th Infantry Regiment at 6:30 A.M., and the 4th Infantry Division began a half hour later, against the 42nd Infantry Regiment. The Greek 6th Infantry Division attacked the 41st Infantry Regiment nearly simultaneously. The well-coordinated Greek attack was heavily supported by artillery and concentrated overwhelming force against the infantry regiments of the Ottoman 14th Infantry Division (odds of six to one, three to one, and three to one, respectively). Hasan Tahsin Paşa's incoming reinforcements, despite marching through the night, were still several kilometers away and incapable of decisively influencing the action. The Ottoman front collapsed as the powerful Greek attacks drove in the defenses. By 9 A.M., the 40th

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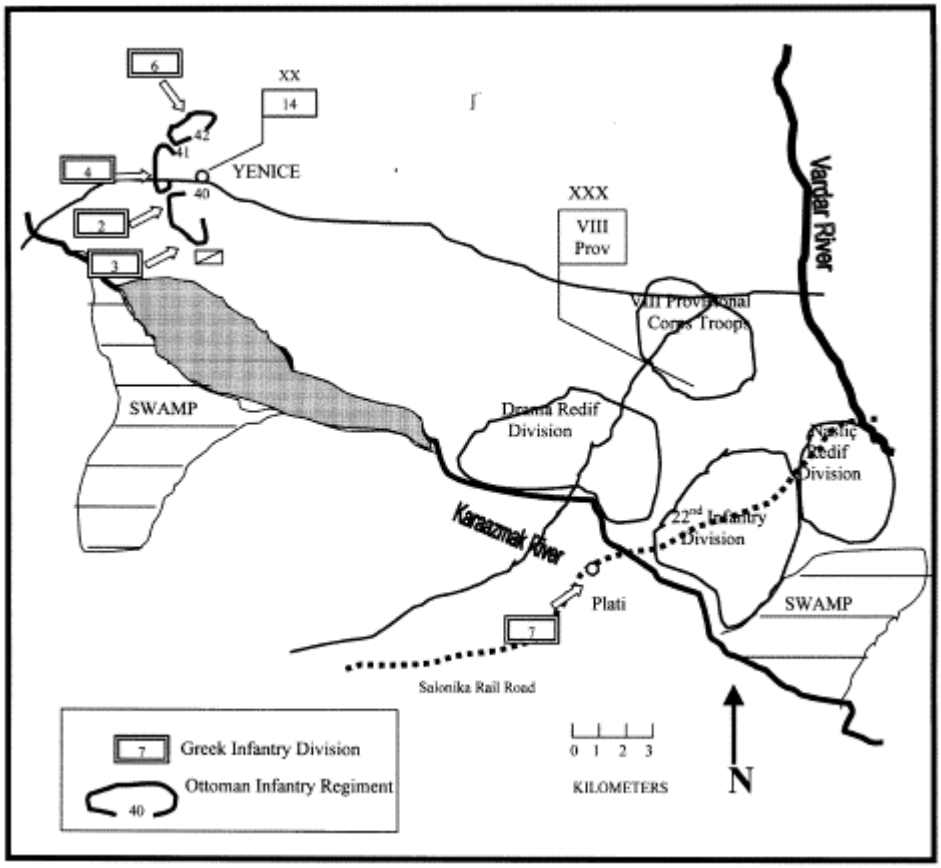

Map 6.2 The Battle of Yenice, November 2, 1912.

Infantry Regiment was in retreat and the 42nd quickly followed; the 41st joined the flight at 10 A.M. To the south along the river, the Greek 7th Infantry Division attacked the Ottoman 3rd Battalion, 64th Infantry Regiment in the village of Plati that morning and drove them back. The aggressive Greeks drove forward over the Salonika railroad bridge and overran the defenders of the 1st Battalion, 64th Infantry Regiment. Hasan Tahsin Paşa's risky attempt to conduct an economy-of-force mission along the river had failed. The beaten VIII Provisional Corps now began its final retreat in to the confines of the city of Salonika. Casualties had been fairly light for the Greeks: ten officers and 178 killed, plus twenty-nine officers and 756 men wounded from the six infantry divisions. Ottoman casualties were much heavier and were mostly concentrated in the 14th Infantry Division (thirty officers killed or wounded, 250 men killed, and 1,000 men wounded). Another 200 Turks were captured in the engagement. The Turks also lost eleven field artillery pieces and four machine guns.12

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Hasan Tahsin Paşa's planning and intelligence assessments were first-rate. His tactical dispositions were sound, and he planned to take advantage of his central position to mass his scant forces. Although the economy-of-force mission along the Karaazmak River was risky, it involved sound military thinking based on an accurate appraisal of the enemy's intentions. The first day's battle at Venice ended in the Turks' favor, with the 14th Infantry Division holding its lines. If there was a mistake in handling the battle, it was Hasan Tahsin Paşa's belated decision to release the reinforced Drama Redif Division to Venice. This powerful force of five regiments might have tipped the tactical balance in the Turks' favor had it arrived on the field overnight on November 1–2, 1912. It failed to arrive in time to save the doomed 14th Infantry Division, and moreover, the absence of these troops on the Karaazmak River line enabled the Greeks to penetrate there as well. As had happened in other theaters, the Ottoman staff's planning process proved superior to the operational command process. It is questionable whether the VIII Provisional Corps might have held the Greeks at Venice, and the final result was probably inevitable, given the superiority of the Greek Army of Thessaly.

THE FALL OF SALONIKA

Salonika now became the focal point of a number of Ottoman forces retreating to within its perimeter. The beaten VIII Provisional Corps was heading toward the city from the west. The Uştruma Corps and the

Nevrekop Detachment were retreating toward the city from the northeast. The city itself was defended by the Salonika Redif Division and was somewhat of a fortress, at least from its seaward flank. It was a large cosmopolitan city with a Jewish majority of Ottoman citizens, and all the European Great Powers had consulates within the city. As the Greeks and Bulgarians approached, panic began to seize the inhabitants of the city, which was made worse by the appearance of the Greek Navy on October 31. The navies of the Great Powers sent cruisers to the port to calm the many foreign nationals who resided there and to prepare to evacuate them if necessary. Despite their presence, a Greek torpedo boat entered the harbor on the night of November 1 and launched two torpedoes at the *Fethibülent.* Although the ship survived the attack, six crewman were killed.13

On November 3 at 6:30 A.M., the VIII Provisional Corps received orders from the Vardar Army to consolidate the defense of the city under the command of Hasan Tahsin Paşa. Under these orders, the Salonika Area commander, Brigadier General Muhittin, and the Uştruma Corps commander, Brigadier General Ali Nadir, now fell

under Hasan Tahsin Paşa's command. The VIII Provisional Corps staff went immediately to work to finalize the defensive plans for the city. In particular, the staff began to centralize the few remaining artillery pieces. The defensive plans hinged on a defense of the Vardar River and the bridges that crossed it. Although an order to hold at all costs *(dur emrine)* went out on November 4 from the Salonika Area commander, it was evident that the badly battered Ottoman divisions would have difficulty holding the lines. At 8 A.M. the following day, the corps ordered the final retreat to the city's perimeter. In the meantime, the Serez Redif Division, which was retreating down the Uştruma River, made its way into the city's eastern suburbs. The situation was not favorable for the Turks; the Greek Army of Thessaly bore down from the west, while the Bulgarians bore down from the northeast. Hasan Tahsin Paşa began to make overtures through the consulates of the Great Powers to surrender his forces and the city.14 On November 7, the Greeks had nearly encircled Salonika, and on November 8, 1912, they made contact with the advancing Bulgarians and cut the telegraph lines into the city. Salonika was now encircled and isolated. Although it was well stocked with munitions and supplies, the city had never been fortified against a landward attack and, furthermore, was not blessed with terrain favoring the defense.

On November 8, 1912, at 8 P.M. the Greeks and Turks agreed to a surrender protocol, the terms of which were designed to encourage the Turks not to fight for the city.15 The generous terms of the surrender allowed the Turks much latitude and dignity while going into a relaxed captivity. The protocol seemed to indicate that the ultimate fate of the city was unclear and left open the question of what to do with the Bulgarians (see Table 6.2).

The news of the protocol went out rapidly to the Ottoman infantry divisions, and by 1 P.M. on November 9, 1912, the major infantry, artillery, and cavalry formations had been notified. The Turks planned to finalize the turnover by November 10.16 The Ottoman soldiers from the Balkan vilayets and local area were discharged and told to return home. The Ottoman soldiers from Anatolia were instructed to wait for orders. Moreover, the soldiers were ordered to clean their weapons before turning them over to the Greeks, and directed to feed and care for the draft animals before turning them over as well. Three thousand rifles were turned in on November 9, and the surrender appeared to be going smoothly. At noon on November 9, 1912, two Greek infantry battalions marched into the outskirts of Salonika, and elements of the 7th Infantry Division began to occupy the suburb of Bahçeler. The advancing Bulgarians learned of this coup while marching toward the city. The angry Bulgarian commander ordered some parting artillery fires on the Serez Redif Division but quit after a short while.

TABLE 6.2 Surrender Protocol, Salonika and Ottoman Forces in the Area, 8 P.M. November 8, 1912 (Summary)

1. The Ottoman soldiers will disarm themselves at a depot to be guarded by the Greek Army, and the surrender will be conducted.
2. The Ottoman soldiers at Karaburun and Topcular (outlying coastal defense positions on the southern peninsula of the Salonika harbor) will, likewise, disarm, and will be victualed by the Salonika authorities.
3. The city of Salonika will be handed over to the Greek Army until the signing of a peace agreement.
4. All of the officers, generals, and others of similar rank will remain under parole in the city of Salonika. They will agree not to take up arms against the Greek Army for the duration of the war.

5. The entire provincial administrative staff structure and civilian officials will remain free.
6. The Jandarma and police will remain under arms.
7. The coastal guns and fortifications at Karaburun will be turned over intact to the Greek Army.
8. Planning for an orderly turnover is authorized to be conducted for two days from Friday, November 9, 1912.
9. This situation will continue until a peace agreement is signed.
10. Ottoman Jandarma and police officials will continue their duties pending new orders.

Salonika, Novembers, 1912.

The delegates of the Greek Prince
V.Dusmanis,
Jan Metaksas

Ottoman Army Commander
Hasan Tahsin Paşa

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, 2nci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu, Yunan Cephesi Harekati (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 316–317.

On November 10, the Greek 1st Infantry Division entered the city. The 7th Greek Infantry Division was ordered to advance rapidly and occupy the positions of the Ottoman Serez Redif Division in order to prevent the Bulgarians from entering the city. The Bulgarian 7th Infantry Division, commanded by General Petur Todorov, closed on the Greek 7th Infantry Division and established contact, which allowed the Bulgarian commander the opportunity to view the Greek fait accompli of the occupation of Salonika.

The surrender of Salonika was a disaster for the Ottoman Army, in which two corps headquarters (the VIII Provisional Corps and the Uştruma Corps), two Nizamiye infantry divisions (the 14th and 22nd Infantry Divisions), and four Redif infantry divisions (the Salonika, Drama, Nasliç, and Serez Redif Infantry Divisions) were lost to the Ottoman order of battle. Altogether, twenty-five thousand men and one

thousand officers went into captivity.17 Additionally, the Turks lost seventy artillery pieces, thirty machine guns, seventy thousand rifles (the Salonika depots were packed full), and twelve hundred draft animals. The Turks estimated that fifteen thousand officers and men had been killed during the campaigns for Salonika, bringing total losses up to about forty thousand soldiers.

It is apparent from the surrender protocol and from the relaxed and friendly turnover of the city, its fortifications, and the armament of the Ottoman forces in the area that the Greeks made the Turks “an offer they could not refuse.” Certainly, the Greek Army of Thessaly possessed the combat superiority to decisively crush the Ottoman forces in Salonika, but it did not. A prolonged battle for the city (even for several days) would have given the Bulgarians the opportunity to descend on the city from the north. The Bulgarians, in turn, would have expected a share of the spoils or, perhaps, access to the port facilities. Instead, the Greeks seized the opportunity to unilaterally occupy the city and thus ensured its retention in the postwar world. The price for this success was to grant Hasan Tahsin Paşa a surrender protocol under very relaxed conditions. For the Ottomans, Hasan Tahsin Paşa knew that his outnumbered forces could not hold the city and, instead, managed to secure exceptional terms for his officers and men. In doing so, while the Ottoman Army lost a significant portion of its Balkan order of battle, Hasan Tahsin Paşa also ensured that most of his surviving soldiers went home safely after the war.

THE INVASION OF EPIRUS

The frontier and defenses of Eprius were the responsibility of the commander of the Independent Yanya Corps. Under Ottoman Plan Number 5, the Independent Yanya Corps was slated to possess twelve Nizamiye infantry battalions and ten Redif infantry battalions, with an accompanying artillery of twelve batteries of mountain and field guns. Its major formations were the 23rd Nizamiye Infantry Division and the Yanya Redif Division, both of which would have to march on foot to their concentration areas. Mobilization timetables projected that the Nizamiye division would concentrate in ten to seventeen days and the Redif division in six to sixteen days.18 On October 2, 1912, the commander of the 23rd Infantry Division, Brigadier General Esat, moved up to command the Independent Yanya Corps.

Mobilization went very slowly. There were particular problems with finding enough draft animals to pull the artillery and wagon trains. The Epirus region was very mountainous, with few farming villages from which to draw draft animals. Compounding this was the fact that the

VIII Provisional Corps received a higher priority for draft animals than did the Independent Yanya Corps. By October 8, the Yanya Corps depots had collected 1,889 draft animals and were ordered to send 1,100 of them to the VIII Provisional Corps.19 Four batteries of field artillery were consequently left in the Yanya fortress because there were no animals to pull the guns and caissons. In addition to sending draft animals east, several regimental machine-gun detachments (from the 65th and 66th Infantry Regiments) were sent east to Constantinople.

The Yanya Fortified Area itself was also having difficulty bringing itself up to its war establishment. There were supposed to be 3,034 men on hand by October 8, 1912, but only 2,640 men had reported in by that date. Of these men, 1,255 were collected up and dispatched to the replacement depots of the 23rd Infantry Division.20 The fortified area was commanded by Staff Lieutenant Colonel Mehmet Vehip, brother of General Esat, the corps commander. The fortress itself was quite well armed with five battalions of fortress artillery with a total of 102 artillery pieces (eighty-two 87mm guns, four 90mm guns, four 120mm howitzers, and twelve 150mm howitzers). Ammunition stocks were plentiful (28,424 shrapnel shells for the 87mm guns, 1,771 shrapnel and 248 high-explosive shells for the 120mm, and 1,570 shrapnel and 4,278 high-explosive shells for the 150mm).21 Additionally, there were thirty multibarrel Nordenfeldt heavy machine guns. These five battalions of artillery were organized into the 11th Heavy Artillery Regiment under the command of Artillery Lieutenant Colonel Şükrü.

The fortress had recently been modernized under the direction of General von der Goltz.22 The fortifications were constructed of concrete and self-contained bunkers, searchlights, trenches, and barbed wire entanglements. There were eleven forts of varying sizes designed to contain eighty-six artillery pieces; however, the Turks had augmented the defenses with additional artillery. The largest fort was the Bijan Fort, which contained thirty-two artillery pieces and nineteen Nordenfeldt heavy machine guns and was located to the southeast of the town of Yanya. Modern telephone lines connected the major Ottoman forts to the fortress headquarters. The fortress also possessed the Yanya Area Hospital, which could provide medical services for twenty-five hundred men.

The 67th Infantry Regiment arrived in Yanya on October 15, and the 68th Infantry Regiment arrived thereafter from Albania (where it had been on detached duty chasing bandits and rebels). The 69th Infantry Regiment detached its 1st Infantry Battalion and sent it to garrison the port of Preveza (Preveza). The Yanya Redif Division was very slow to mobilize, and the division reported critical manpower shortages in its battalions, most of which had only three hundred trained infantrymen available.23 Nevertheless, Brigadier Esat threw a thin line of outposts

along the frontier to screen the border. Esat knew that his corps had run out of time, and on October 17, 1912, he issued his first operations order as commander of the Independent Yanya Corps (Operations Order Number 1). Esat ordered the 23rd Infantry Division to concentrate around the town of Loros on October 18, and he ordered a Redif infantry battalion to accompany the regulars. On October 18, 1912, Esat issued his Operations Order Number 2, which sent the Yanya Redif Division to march on foot to the town of Beşpinar on the following day. The Loros-Beşpinar position was midway between the Yanya Fortified Area and the port of Preveze. The position blocked the primary avenue of approach into Epirus along the Yanya-Narda (modern Arta, then a Greek garrison town on the frontier) road. Screening the frontier itself were twenty-one border posts. Although he did not know it, Esat possessed a larger force than the Greeks would send against him.

The tiny Greek Army of Epirus, commanded by Lieutenant General Constantine Sapountzakis,24 crossed the border at 11:30 P.M. on October 18, 1912. It was initially composed of the Narda garrison (1st and 2nd Battalions of the Greek 15th Infantry Regiment, the 7th Evzon Battalion, and a small cavalry group). The Turks expected this because earlier in the day they had received reports that the larger Greek Army of Thessaly crossed the frontier against the Ottoman VIII Provisional Corps. Esat issued Operations Order Number 3 to his formations.25 It contained the news that hostilities had broken out with Greece and noted that he expected the main Greek effort to come from Narda toward Loros. He directed the 23rd Infantry Division to begin combat operations maintaining their blocking position. Furthermore, Esat ordered the Yanya Redif Division (then marching toward Beşpinar) to continue marching and, upon contact, to attack the Greeks. He ended the order by noting that his headquarters was still in the Yanya fortress.

In spite of the rain, mud, and darkness, Brigadier General Cevat, the commander of the 23rd Infantry Division, put his soldiers on the road into their defensive positions at 3:30 A.M. on October 19. By 9:30 A.M., the division was in position and ready for combat operations. From south to north, the 23rd Infantry Division deployed the 69th Infantry Regiment on its right (centered on Loros), the 67th Infantry Regiment in the center, and the 68th Infantry Regiment on the left. Two and a half of the three artillery batteries (ten guns) that accompanied the division were positioned behind the 67th and a half battery (two guns) was positioned behind the 69th. Although the Ottoman force appeared large, it contained only twenty-one hundred trained

infantrymen.26 By late afternoon, Greek patrols were probing the defenses, and the Ottoman artillery sporadically opened fire on them.

Esat now had his 23rd Infantry Division together on the west flank of the Greeks, and his Yanya Redif Division was marching toward their

northern position at the Kumçiadis Pass. Over the night of October 19–20, Esat issued his Operations Order Number 4,27 in which he ordered both divisions to attack. He indicated that the Greeks had only a small detachment at the Kumçiadis Pass and targeted it for attack. The 23rd Infantry Division would attack from the west and cut the Greek lines of retreat, while the Yanya Redif Division attacked through the pass and drove the Greeks back onto the Nizamiye division. Esat wanted the operation to commence on October 20 in the morning, and at 7 A.M. on October 20, 1912, the Yanya Redif Division arrived at the Kumçiadis Pass.

The Greeks appeared to be much stronger than they really were, and neither Ottoman division commander felt that a hasty attack would result in success. In reality, the Greeks were still very weak, but they were also receiving reinforcements in the form of the 3rd and 10th Evzon Battalions, which arrived in Narda about 6 A.M. on October 20 (but were unavailable from the front lines). That day, Esat moved his headquarters forward to Mişo Han (in the center of the 23rd Division's sector), and apparently he was unable to effectively influence his two divisional commanders to attack. That night, the chief of staff of the Yanya Redif Division went to the headquarters of the 23rd Infantry Division to coordinate offensive operations. A golden opportunity was thus missed by the Independent Yanya Corps to decisively destroy the Greek Army of Epirus.

On the following day, the Greeks moved the 1st Battalion of the 15th Infantry Regiment north to the Kumçiadis Pass to reinforce the 7th Evzon Battalion. Conditions that day were severe, and the ground was extremely muddy, hampering offensive combat. The two Ottoman infantry divisions continued to coordinate their operations, but did not attack. A new problem surfaced on this day as well: Incidents of sabo-tage were occurring in the corps area, especially around the Christian villages of Gardiki and Sadoviça.28

THE BATTLES OF KUMÇIADIS AND GRIBOVA

On the morning of October 22, 1912, the weather was clear and the front was quiet. The Ottoman artillery and heavy machine guns began to fire on the Greek lines. Both Ottoman divisions began to cautiously move forward. The Yanya Redif Division met resistance and immediately sent word that the Greeks held the high mountains and that forward progress was impossible. The 23rd Infantry Division also reported problems and indicated that its 68th Regiment was already retreating. That night Esat called in his divisional commanders for a meeting at his corps headquarters. Esat began by telling them that he

thought that the situation was critical. He outlined his thoughts to his commanders by presenting them with a course of action for future corps operations. He planned to pull the corps back and establish a new defensive area farther north. In order to accomplish this, Esat planned a preemptive spoiling attack that he hoped would disorganize the Greeks. This attack was planned to be a replay of the previous attack, with the Turks arranged in an inverted "L" converging on the Greeks. The night brought more rain and mud, and despite the poor conditions, Esat decided to stick to his plan.

On the morning of October 23, the chief of staff of the Yanya Redif Division issued his attack orders, and the 23rd Infantry Division issued similar orders. The Yanya Redif Division attack began in mid-morning and was composed of three Redif infantry battalions attacking the 3rd Battalion of the Greek 15th Infantry Regiment defending the Kumçiadis Pass. The attack was unusually successful, and by 2:30 P.M., the Greeks were in full retreat and the Turks took the pass. The Ottoman attack surged ahead for two kilometers, whereupon it was halted by the 1st Battalion of the Greek 15th Infantry Regiment. The Greek 7th Evzon Battalion was forced to retreat as well. By nightfall, the Turks were firmly in command of the Kumçiadis Pass.

The 23rd Infantry Division launched its supporting attack, consisting of four infantry battalions, very late in the day (at 6:50 P.M.). The attack was aimed at the village of Gribova (Grimbovon), which was in the very center of the Greek position. This attack was beaten back by the Greeks, who were able to divert troops from the stalled Yanya Division's attack, and by 11 P.M. the Turks were in retreat. The rain continued that night, making a planned night attack by the 23rd Infantry Division impossible. In the meantime, the Greeks reinforced their line with the newly arrived 10th Evzon Battalion.

Much had been accomplished in the day's fighting. The attack was successful beyond Esat's expectations, and success had come at a fairly cheap price: two officers and 120 men killed, and five officers and 120 men wounded.29 Unfortunately, Esat was unable to exploit his success because he had already begun to pull out elements of his corps for the new defensive area farther north. Although the battles were a tactical success, the Turks were unable to take advantage of the situation. The modern Turkish General Staff's official history

of the campaign attributes the overall failure to problems in planning, administration, and coordination.30 Furthermore, it identifies the soldiers from Southern Albania as having poor training and poor discipline. This explanation does not square with the evident success of the Yanya Redif Division's attack on the Kumçiadis Pass, nor does it explain why the 23rd Nizamiye Infantry Division failed to launch its attack at the same time as the Yanya division. Finally, this explanation does not address the

failure of Brigadier General Esat (who later became a war hero to the Turkish people) to aggressively supervise his division commanders. As evidenced by his success on October 23, Esat's battle plan was fundamentally sound. Had he pushed his subordinates hard on October 20 and 21, Esat might have won a similar decisive victory at the Kumçiadis Pass and then would have been in an ideal position to exploit his success. Instead, he was beaten by an inferior and ad hoc force. Esat's outstanding performance in later battles, including Gallipoli in 1915, however, indicates that he took his failures to heart and learned from them.

THE FALL OF PREVEZE

At 6:15 P.M. on October 24, the Independent Yanya Corps issued Operations Order Number 7, which began by explaining the loss of Alasonya in the VIII Provisional Corps area.31 In this order, the corps noted the danger of a flanking attack by advancing units of the Greek Army of Thessaly. Esat also gave orders to retreat on October 25 and directed that rear guards be established to delay the Greek pursuit. The corps began to pull out of its positions that morning, beginning at 7 A.M. The Greeks, however, were very slow to pursue the Turks and did not begin to move until October 26.

While the main body of the Independent Yanya Corps was fighting its battles near the Kumçiadis Pass, another small drama was playing itself out farther south, at the Ottoman fortress of Preveze. The port of Preveze on the Adriatic Sea had a small harbor and sat at the southern end of a narrow peninsula. The tiny fortress had seven coastal defense guns, ranging in size from 120mm to 210mm, and there were also a single 80mm gun and four 37mm guns, which in total were manned by 142 men. There were also about 350 Redif soldiers, home guards, and volunteers present in the fortress and two Ottoman Navy gunboats in the harbor. Additionally, under the mobilization and campaign plans, the fortress was assigned two Nizamiye infantry battalions as its garrison. However, Esat decided to reduce this requirement and only assigned the 1st Battalion of the 69th Infantry Regiment, which had 668 men, the mission to defend the port. The entire garrison was under the command of Artillery Major Asaf.32

As the Independent Yanya Corps retreated north, the Greeks were able to detach forces to seal off and isolate Prevze. On November 1, 1912, an irregular band *(çete)* of three hundred Cretan soldiers marched south from Loros and sealed off the peninsula. They were joined by another band of local Greek volunteers. Two companies of the Ottoman 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, were sufficient to hold

off these bands, while the third company remained in reserve. The Turks manned an old defensive line across the peninsula that dated to the Turco-Greek War of 1897. On November 2, the Greeks brought up the 1st Battalion of the 15th Infantry Regiment and designated it as the Preveze Detachment.33

On November 2, 1912, at noon, the Cretan irregulars began a diversionary attack on the Turkish lines. The Greek Preveze Detachment, supported by two batteries of field artillery, moved forward and began the main attack at 1 P.M. At 2 P.M., the Greek artillery began to lob shells into the port of Preveze for the psychological effect this would have on the defenders. At the same time, Greek warships began to fire on the Ottoman naval vessels moored in the harbor. The infantry companies of the Ottoman 69th Infantry regiment could not hold the line and were pushed back into the outskirts of the port. The next day, the Turks went to the consulates of the Great Powers located in Preveze and requested assistance in negotiating a surrender, which was quickly secured. About 810 Ottoman soldiers thus became prisoners of war of the Greeks.

The loss of Preveze was an embarrassment to Ottoman arms because the fortress had held out throughout the Turco-Greek War of 1897. In that war, however, the fortress had been garrisoned by five Nizamiye and Redif infantry battalions, well supported by artillery and machine guns. Furthermore the port was accessible to Ottoman shipping in that war as well. When Esat deliberately decided to cut the already inadequate garrison in half, he doomed the fortress to certain and rapid capture. He may have been better served by simply abandoning the port to the Greeks instead of throwing away one of the few battalions of trained troops.

THE BATTLE OF BEŞPINAR

Esat intended to form a new defensive line about ten kilometers north of the Kumçiadis Pass. At 10 A.M. on November 2, 1912, Esat's headquarters issued Operations Order Number 8, which established new lines just to the north of the village of Beşpinar.34 The 23rd Infantry Division was assigned the western sector and the

Yanya Redif Division was assigned the eastern sector. The Greeks pursued the Turks at a very leisurely pace and were reinforced by the Independent Cretan Infantry Regiment and the 2nd Gendarme Battalion. The 23rd Infantry Division reported that the Greeks had taken Beşpinar at 7:20 A.M. on November 3 and that they appeared somewhat disorganized.

This report galvanized Esat, who now determined to reverse the tide of battle. At 2:30 A.M. on November 4, 1912, the Independent Yanya

Corps issued Operations Order Number 9.35 In this order Esat outlined the tactical situation and ordered both his infantry divisions to advance south. The Yanya Redif Division was able to get its units moving at 5 A.M. Later that morning, three Redif battalions gained contact with, and attacked, the Greek 3rd Evzon Battalion near Beşpinar. The Greeks, who were deployed on high ground and supported by an artillery battery, held their positions. The 23rd Infantry Division's advance was led by a cavalry troop and employed the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Infantry Battalions of the 68th Infantry Regiment in column, marching south down the narrow Loros River Valley. At midday on November 4, the cavalry and the lead infantry battalion made contact with Greek cavalry outposts to the southwest of Beşpinar. The Greeks reinforced the cavalry with the 7th Evzon Battalion and an artillery battery and managed to hold the position. General Cevat attempted to outflank the Greeks by moving his 2nd and 3rd Infantry Battalions to the south. However, the Turks soon ran into the entrenched Greek 15th Infantry Battalion, which was supported by a battery of mountain artillery. Again the Turkish attack was halted, and by midnight, forward progress had ended.

The following day passed uneventfully with Esat making minor adjustments in his lines. On November 6, 1912, the tactical initiative passed to the Greeks, who launched attacks all along their lines. Esat's operations orders (Numbers 11 and 12) on November 6–7 reacted to the Greek attacks by moving his field artillery battalions to the center of his sector to support the Yanya Redif Division. At the same time, he pulled most of the 23rd Infantry Division back behind the Redif division. He did, however, reinforce the Redif division with the 2nd Infantry Battalion from each of his three active regiments (three battalions in all). Thus, the Yanya Redif Division on November 7 found itself fighting with nine Redif infantry battalions and three active infantry battalions. The Greeks continued to attack but were unable to break through the Ottoman lines. While this tactical move strengthened Esat's line, it shortened it as well, which allowed the longer Greek line to begin to envelop the Turks.

The Ottoman position began to unravel *(çözülme başladi)* on November 8 when the Greek 3rd Evzon Battalion began to turn the Turks' left wing. Fortunately for Esat, the weather was bad for the next three days, and this contributed to the Greek's inability to rapidly turn the Ottoman flank. On November 10, 1912, at 9:50 A.M., Esat issued Operations Order Number 13, which gave instructions to conduct another withdrawal to a new defensive line farther north.36 The Battle of Beşpinar was minor and inconclusive. It simply delayed the progress of the Greeks by a week. Yet again, Esat was defeated by a smaller force. The Ottoman after-action report attributed the Greeks' ability to make small detachments of troops appear to be much larger in size to be an important

factor in the unsatisfactory result of the battle.37 The Turks were also critical of their own leadership from top to bottom, which appeared to be inferior to the Greeks. The Independent Yanya Corps retreated north five kilometers and established a new defensive position on November 11 and 12 on the road leading to Yanya itself.

The Greeks received some unusual reinforcements on November 13 in the form of Italian General Ricciotti Garibaldi and the Foreign Volunteer Corps, which joined the Army of Epirus and occupied positions to the east of Yanya.38 Near this area, the Greeks already had crossed the frontier on November 9, 1912, and attacked a small Ottoman force at Meçova. After a bloody skirmish (First Meçova) the Greeks withdrew. Operations in the Meçova area continued throughout the period of November 18 to November 24 (Second Meçova) The Turks took a pounding in these fights, losing over 160 killed, 30 wounded, and 100 captured. The Greeks, on the other hand, lost 10 killed and 29 wounded.39 Most of the Ottoman troops involved were Jandarma and frontier guards, which may explain the lopsided casualties in the Greeks' favor. For the remainder of November 1912, the front in Epirus stabilized and was very quiet.

While the Greeks had been extremely successful in Thessaly, they were unable to make much headway in Epirus or to take Yanya. In early December 1912, as Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro brokered local armistices with the Turks, the Greeks steadfastly refused to consider such an action. The reason for this is usually ascribed to the idea that the Greeks had not achieved their entire strategic objective, namely, that Epirus had not yet been conquered.40 It is difficult to support this position, given the Greek strategy that

prioritized the seizure of Salonika at the expense of Yanya. It is evident that the Greek effort in Epirus was a secondary objective, or perhaps only a diversionary effort. In this sense the Greek strategy was wildly successful. However, it failed to deliver Epirus to them. In any case, the Greeks did not sign the December 1912 armistice and instead continued to fight.

THREE BATTLES IN EPIRUS

Both sides used the pause in early December 1912 to reinforce their forces in Epirus. The Western Army ordered the Vardar Army to detach the 19th Nizamiye Infantry Division, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Faik, and to send it to Yanya. It arrived on December 7 and was composed of two infantry regiments and a mountain artillery battery. Altogether, the 19th Infantry Division contained a total of 4,421 trained infantrymen. On the same day, the Vardar Army also released the 21st

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Nizamiye Infantry Division, containing 3,000 men and six artillery pieces, for operations with the Independent Yanya Corps.41 This action gutted the remaining combat strength of the Vardar Army; however, the armistice with Serbia took the pressure off that front and allowed the Western Army to shift forces south.

The Greeks had brought up a force of four regiments, including Garibaldi's foreign volunteers, to a position halfway between the frontier and the town of Yanya. Esat ordered the incoming 19th Infantry Division to move to contact with the Greek force and then to attack it. Supported by several Redif infantry battalions, the 19th Infantry Division attacked the Greeks on December 8. The attack stalled, but on the following day the Turks attacked again and pushed the Greeks out of their lines. On December 10, the Greeks were in retreat, and the Turks took the village of Konduvraki. The 19th Infantry Division followed up by maintaining the attack and taking the village of Drisko by nightfall on December 11. The combined Greek and foreign volunteer force was pushed back about five kilometers altogether. The Turks called these engagements the Battle of Konduvraki and the Battle of Drisko. These attacks were locally successful and were coordinated under the operational command of Colonel Vehip (brother of the Independent Yanya Corps commander, General Esat), who was the commander of the Yanya Fortified Area.42

Meanwhile, Esat had finalized his new defensive line to the south of Yanya and centered around the village of Pista. He maintained his two infantry divisions (the Yanya Redif Division and the 23rd Infantry Division) in a tightly concentrated mass, blocking the road to Yanya. The Army of Epirus was stronger now and had been reinforced by the 2nd Infantry Division, which was the first of three Greek infantry divisions to arrive in Epirus from the Salonika front. The Greeks attacked Esat's positions at 7 A.M. on December 12. The Greeks divided their army into two wings for this attack and attacked the Turks concentrically from three sides. Although Esat occupied a central interior position and maintained sizable reserves, the Greeks penetrated his flanks and center. By nightfall, Esat decided to retreat into the perimeter of the Yanya fortress. The fighting was costly: The Turks lost 129 killed and 113 wounded, and the Greeks lost 48 killed and 153 wounded.43 In the Battle of Pista, the casualties were once again lopsided in the Greeks' favor. On December 13, 1912, the Independent Yanya Corps retreated into the perimeter of the Yanya Fortified Area. Simultaneously, Vehip ordered the 19th Infantry Division and its supporting units in the Drisko area to withdraw into the perimeter as well. On this day also, the first elements of the Ottoman 21st Infantry Division were arriving in Yanya. The Greeks now closed on the fortress, and the siege of Yanya was about to begin.

THE MONTENEGRIN FRONT

Because of the mountainous nature of the terrain, there were really only two main avenues of approach leading out of Montenegro into Albania. The primary avenue (the southern route) led through the town of Işkodra (Scutari), and the secondary avenue (the northern route) led through the town of Ipek (Peć). Ottoman strategic thinking treated the Montenegrin frontier in a similar fashion as the Greek frontier by covering the avenues of approach with a combination of blocking forces and fortresses. However, because the Montenegrin Army was much smaller than the Greek Army, the Ottoman forces on the Montenegrin frontier were smaller in scale as well. The Montenegrin front with its associated campaign was the smallest of the active fronts facing the Ottoman Empire in 1912.

To block the northern avenue of approach, the Ottoman staffs planned to form the Ipek Detachment, composed of the 21st Nizamiye Infantry Division and the Pirzeren Redif Division. To block the southern avenue of approach, the Ottoman staffs built up the town of Işkodra into a fortified area and mobilized the Işkodra Corps to garrison the fortress. The Işkodra Corps was assigned the independent 24th Nizamiye Infantry Division and the Elbasan Redif Division. Additionally, the Turks planned to bring in reinforcements from Anatolia. However, this process would take up to sixty days. According to the mobilization timetables, upon mobilization and concentration, the Işkodra Corps would field 32,237 men, 6,385 animals, and 1,672

wagons.44
Due to the deteriorating diplomatic situation in the Balkans, the Ottoman General Staff ordered the limited mobilization of Elbasan Redif Division on September 15, 1912, and Brigadier General Mahmut Hayret Paşa was appointed to command the Işkodra and Ipek Forces Command.45 The Işkodra Corps was activated on September 18, 1912, under the command of Colonel Hasan Riza, and a Provisional Nizamiye Infantry Division was also activated at that time. On September 26, the headquarters of the Provisional Nizamiye Infantry Division was assigned the 1st Battalion, 51st Infantry Regiment; the 3rd Battalion, 50th Infantry Regiment; the 3rd Battalion, 53rd Infantry Regiment; and the 3rd Battalion, 54th Infantry Division; as well as several batteries of mountain artillery. These odd battalions had been detached from their parent infantry regiments and were assigned to the never-ending hunt for bandits and rebels that afflicted the Ottoman Army in the first decade of the twentieth century. It made sense militarily to retain them along the Montenegrin front instead of shipping them back to their parent units. The Işkodra Redif Division and the two Nizamiye infantry divisions (the 21st and the 24th) were mobilized on October 1, 1912,

with the bulk of the Ottoman Army. As elsewhere, the mobilization and concentration of forces proceeded slowly. However, the early partial mobilization of a portion of the local Ottoman forces ensured that the Montenegrin frontier was not overrun by the enemy in early October 1912. The second in command of the Işkodra Corps was an ambitious, but loyal, Albanian nationalist named Esat Paşa (Toptani).46

FIVE BATTLES IN ALBANIA

Tiny Montenegro was the first Balkan state to declare war on the Ottoman Empire, which it did on October 8, 1912. There had already been sporadic fighting along the frontier near Tuz (Tuza) as early as July, which by September 9 was rather heavy. More fighting broke out again on September 12–13. The next day the Turks rushed the 2nd Battalion, 71st Infantry Regiment, by boat across Lake Işkodra to reinforce the Tuz garrison.47 More Montenegrin attacks followed, but these subsided by September 20. The cost of these engagements to the Ottoman Army (which was still officially at peace) was not light: two officers and ninety-three men killed plus three officers and thirty-four men wounded.
The Montenegrin Army attacked in force on the night of October 8–9, 1912, in the vicinity of Tuz. Although the Montenegrin Army did not have a General Staff, King Nicholas acted as his own supreme commander and ordered the army into action. According to the Turks, the Montenegrins massed their 2nd and 3rd Infantry Divisions near Podgorica for the offensive aimed at Tuz.48 Altogether these two divisions contained about fifteen thousand men with forty artillery pieces. Montenegrin sources refer to this force as the Zeta Division, which was commanded by the heir apparent, Prince Danilo.49 Defending the town of Tuz and the frontier was a mixed force commanded by Colonel Halit, composed of the 1st Battalion, 70th Infantry Regiment; 1st and 2nd Battalions, the 72nd Infantry Regiment; Işkodra Redif Battalion; and several batteries of mountain artillery. The Ottoman positions were emplaced on the hills surrounding Tuz and were well constructed. The Montenegrins were repulsed by well-directed Turkish fire. Unfortunately for the Turks, however, the strong Tuz position was not supported by flanking formations and so was easily isolated. The following day, the Zeta Division drove south behind Colonel Halit's well-dug-in troops and, in fact, cut off the Turks from Işkodra. On October 11, the Montenegrins asked the Turks to surrender, a decision that Colonel Halit drew out over the next two days. Meanwhile, he asked for, and received, permission to retreat. However, he was isolated and held by much larger forces. Exasperated at Halit's failure to reply, the

Montenegrins attacked again on October 13 and by nightfall had completely surrounded Halit's force. Already sensing disaster, the demoralized Colonel Halit sent his representative to see the Montenegrins at noon that day He accepted the Montenegrin terms of surrender on October 14, 1912. Thus, the first Ottoman prisoners to be seized were captured by the Montenegrins, who claimed to have taken fifty officers and eight battalions of men.50 Modern Turkish official histories do not list the total number of captured, but it was likely not more than three thousand men. In any case, the Battle of Tuz was a less than auspicious beginning for the Işkodra Corps, and its defeat by Montenegro was an embarrassment for Ottoman arms.
To the south of Lake Işkodra, the Montenegrin Primorje Division (the 1st Infantry Division) concentrated along the frontier southeast of Bar. This division also crossed the border on October 8, 1912, and immediately encountered elements of an Ottoman detachment composed of three Nizamiye infantry battalions. The Montenegrins attempted a flanking maneuver but were held by Turkish platoons fighting from the high ground. On October 11, the Ottoman detachment commander launched a major counterattack, composed of the 2nd Battalion, 70th Infantry Regiment; the 1st Battalion, 71st Regiment; and the 24th Rifle Battalion. This counterattack was very successful and pushed the Montenegrin 1st Brigade back to its starting point. The

determined leadership of Major Saadettin was a major factor in this successful outcome; however, the victory came at the expense of the major's life. Altogether, in the Battle of Kranya (October 8–11, 1912) the Turks lost three officers and twenty-seven men killed plus forty-nine men wounded, whereas the Montenegrins lost over six hundred men.51

On the morning of October 29, 1912, the victors of Tuz began to move south toward Işkodra. They were opposed by Colonel Cemal, who commanded a provisional Ottoman detachment. This detachment was composed of the Provisional 1st Regiment (composed of the same Ottoman battalions that had won the Battle of Kranya) and also the Provisional 2nd Regiment (the 3rd Battalion, 70th Infantry Regiment and the 2nd Battalion, 71st Infantry Regiment). Additionally there were two Redif infantry battalions and an artillery section assigned to the force. The Işkodra Corps commander ordered Colonel Cemal to attack the oncoming Montenegrins.

Colonel Cemal ordered his artillery to begin preparatory fires at 5 A.M. on October 29, 1912. This was followed by infantry attacks from both provisional regiments shortly thereafter. By 12:30 P.M., the Turks had overrun the trenches of the Montenegrins' right flank and had also broken cleanly through the center and advanced about one thousand meters. Morale was sky-high among the Ottoman troops. Observing the attack was the corps commander's aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Celal,

who sent immediate reports to the corps headquarters. That night, encouraged by Esat Paşa (Toptani), Colonel Cemal determined to pursue the attack on the following day.

On October 30, 1912, the Provisional 2nd Regiment launched another attack on the enemy's left flank, which drove the Montenegrins back a thousand meters. The Montenegrin 3rd Infantry Division was discouraged by these determined Ottoman attacks, and on October 31 it began to retreat. The Battle of Müsellimkoy was costly for the battalions involved: The Turks lost five officers and 122 men killed plus eight officers and 286 men wounded (another 12 men were listed as missing).52

In early November the Montenegrin Primorje Division, which has been bloodied at Kranya, again began to work its way south toward the Adriatic Sea. The Turks responded by launching a counterattack on November 4–7, 1912, which attempted to blast the Montenegrins out of their positions on the Kakarik ridge. The Battle of Kakarik was unsuccessful for the Turks, and the enemy continued to hold the ridge. The Primorje Division continued its advance and attacked the Ottoman 2nd Battalion, 53rd Infantry Regiment, which was holding the approaches to Şingin on the Adriatic on November 18, 1912. The Turks retreated into Selimiye, where the 53rd Infantry Regiment conducted a two-day defense until the advancing Serb Drina Infantry Division (see Chapter 5) made the defense impossible. The Turks called this the Battle of Selimiye-Şingin.

By late November 1912, operations on the Montenegrin front came to a close. The Montenegrins, in combination with the Serbs, had isolated the fortress of Işkodra. Furthermore, they had taken the town of Ipek and won an important psychological victory over the Ottoman Empire. Despite their material deficiencies, the Montenegrins had proven to be heroic and relentless adversaries. The siege of Işkodra was about to begin.

NOTES

1. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, 2nci Kisim, Garp Ordusu, Yunan Cephesi Harekati (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 105.
2. Ibid., 126–128.
3. Ibid., 175–177.
4. Ibid., 189–191.
5. Ibid., Map 19.
6. Ibid., 206–207. See VIII Provisional Corps orders issued at 11 A.M. October 23, 1912.
7. Ibid., 208–209.
8. Ibid., 225.

9. Ibid., 261.
10. Ibid., 261.
11. Ibid., 268.
12. Ibid., 271–272. Dr. Richard Hall places the total casualties at a higher level; the total Ottoman killed and wounded were 1,960 and the total Greek losses were about 1,200. See Richard C.Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2000), 60.
13. Ibid., 262–263.
14. Turkish General Staff, *Yunan Cephesi Harekati,* 311–314.

15. Ibid., 316.
16. Ibid., 318–319.
17. Ibid., 322–323.
18. Ibid., 124.
19. Ibid., 132.
20. Ibid., 134.
21. Ibid., 136, Document 20 (Yanya Fortified Area Heavy Artillery Detachments)
22. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 63.
23. Turkish General Staff, *Yunan Cephesi Harekati,* 141.
24. Hellenic Army History Directorate, Army General Headquarters, "Hellenic Army Operations during the Balkan Wars," in Bela K.Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, eds., *East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 100.
25. Turkish General Staff, *Yunan Cephesi Harekati,* 403.
26. Ibid., 404.
27. Ibid., 406.
28. Ibid., 411.
29. Ibid., 421.
30. Ibid., 422–423.
31. Ibid., 423–424.
32. Ibid., 439–440.
33. Ibid., 441.
34. Ibid., 448–449.
35. Ibid., 454.
36. Ibid., 472.
37. Ibid., 474.
38. Hellenic Army History Directorate, "Hellenic Army Operations during the Balkan Wars," 104.
39. Turkish General Staff, *Yunan Cephesi Harekati,* 482–486. These casualty figures come from the official Turkish history (not the Greek history) but are, nevertheless, severely lopsided in favor of the Greeks.
40. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 70.
41. Turkish General Staff, *Yunan Cephesi Harekati,* 489.
42. Ibid., 492–498.
43. Ibid., 517.
44. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), Garp Ordusu Karadağ Cephesi, IIIncü Cilt, 3ncü Kisim (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 52–53.
45. Ismet Görgülü, *On Yillik Harbin Kadrosu 1912–1913, Balkan-Birinci Dünya ve Istiklal Harbi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurum Basimevi, 1993), 40.
46. Esat Paşa (Toptani) should not be confused with Brigadier General Esat, commander of the Yanya Corps. Esat (Toptani) was a classmate of Mustafa Kemal at the Ottoman War Academy.

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47. Turkish General Staff, *Karadağ Cephesi,* 66.
48. Ibid., Maps 4, 5.
49. Mitar Durišić, "Operations of the Montenegrin Army during the First Balkan War," in Bela K.Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, eds., *East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 127–128; Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 56.
50. Ibid., 129.
51. Turkish General Staff, *Karadağ Cephesi,* 92.
52. Ibid., 108.

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7

The Armistice and Military Politics

THE LONDON CONFERENCES

The most well-known and written about aspect of the historiography of the Balkan Wars is the diplomatic

history of the period, particularly as it affected the balance of power in Europe. In this regard, the diplomatic and political history of the first and second armistices has been widely covered by an imposing array of international historians.1 Therefore, this chapter will only briefly outline the diplomatic events that shaped this two-month period in the winter of 1912–1913. Instead, this chapter will focus more narrowly on Ottoman military politics as they affected the war.

The armistice engineered at Çatalca was concluded on December 3, 1912, and brought the fighting to a close in Thrace, Macedonia, and Albania. Only on the Greek front did hostilities continue, albeit at a very reduced level. The armistice would hold until February 3, 1913, allowing the combatants a two-month period of reconstitution (a doctrinal military term meaning to rest and rehabilitate one's forces) over the worst of the Balkan winter months. Every signatory of the armistice used the time to prepare and marshal forces for further combat operations.

While the parties concerned put the local armistice into place, diplomatic negotiations in London shifted into high gear. There were two levels of negotiations, each with different participants and different agendas, concurrently conducted during the armistice. Neither one was successful, however. The higher-level conference was opened by infor-mal discussions on December 12, 1912, and involved the ambassadors

of the Great Powers; it is known as the London Ambassador's Conference. The lower level conference, which directly involved representatives of the Ottoman government and the warring Balkan states and which convened on December 16, 1912, at St. James's Palace, might properly be called the "peace conference." The objective of the warring parties' peace conference was to conclude the war on mutually agreeable terms. The objective of the London Ambassador's Conference was to see to it that the peace settlement maintained the political and military interests of the Great Powers. In many ways, the London Ambassador's Conference was an attempt to use the reality of the Ottoman defeat to manage a mutually agreeable solution to the Eastern Question.

The St. James's Palace negotiations attracted the Ottoman ambassador in Paris, three former prime ministers (of Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro), and—oddly—the Greek prime minister, Eleutherios Venizelos. The presence of the Greek prime minister immediately provoked strong protests from Mustafa Reshid Paşa, the Ottoman representative, who pointed out that the Greeks were not signatories to the armistice and still waged war on the Ottoman Empire. This issue delayed the talks for about a week, until the Turks agreed to Venizelos's presence. Once negotiations got going, the Ottoman position revolved around the retention of Adrianople and the four islands at the mouth of the Dardanelles (Samothrace, Lemnos, Imbros, and Tenedos), which were regarded as essential for the defense of Constantinople. The Ottoman government recognized its untenable position regarding Macedonia and Albania and wrote the two regions off as diplomatically unobtainable objectives. This position was unacceptable to Bulgaria, which continued to hold Adrianople in a tight grip and now wanted the city, in belated recognition that it might not receive all of what it wanted in Macedonia. On January 1, 1913, the Ottoman representative outlined his government's final position, which granted the Bulgarians most of Adrianople but retained Thrace and the disputed Aegean islands. This was unacceptable to the Greeks and the Bulgarians, so discussions were suspended on January 6, 1913.2

Meanwhile, the ambassadors of Europe met in conference, presided over by Sir Edward Grey. The main issues were complex and involved the overlapping and conflicting interests of Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, and Great Britain. Initially, the main issues were Serbian access to the sea, Albania, and the disposition of the Aegean islands. However, other issues were soon brought in, such as the rectification of the Romanian border, control of the Turkish Straits, the occupation of the Sanjack of Novi Pazar, and the safeguarding of the rights of the various Christian denominations in the Balkans. The question of the proposed Albanian border soon brought Austria and Russia into dan-

gerously provocative, partial military mobilizations. However, the ending of productive negotiations by the warring parties on January 6 brought back some degree of cooperation. On January 17, 1913, the ambassadors issued a collective démarche to the Ottoman government, warning it not to resume hostilities and to accept the terms offered to it by the Balkan league. The petition was ignored, apparently, and six days later, Russia declared that if war resumed, it would not guarantee that it would remain neutral.3 Outside the Ottoman Empire, none of these warnings seemed to have any effect on the Turks; however, inside the empire, events were transpiring that rapidly destabilized the fragile Ottoman government. On January 17, the démarche was presented to the cabinet, which was disposed to accept it. However, desiring wider affirmation of the acceptance of the unfavorable conditions, the cabinet called the Grand Council (of religious, civil, judicial, and military dignitaries) to decide on a response. In a meeting on January 22, 1913, the council

decided, with an overwhelming vote of sixty-nine to one, to conclude peace along the lines proposed in London.4 Essentially, the Ottoman government was now set on a course of surrendering politically, economically, culturally, and militarily important possessions and cities to the enemy. This decision set in motion a coup d'état by the Young Turks the next day. The new government replied to the note on January 30, 1913, rejecting the proposals but counteroffering to cede the western half of Adrianople, providing it could retain the Aegean islands. This was immediately denounced by the Balkan states and led to the resumption of hostilities on February 3.5

OTTOMAN POLITICS

In November 1911, the Liberal Union Party controlled the Ottoman parliament. As a result of the Italian invasion of Libya, the parliament dissolved and several elections were held. In the May 1912 elections, a number of army officers formed a group called the Savior Officers or Group of Liberating Officers, which began to meddle in the political process. The resulting dissatisfaction from the unionists, who won the election, forced Mahmut Şevket Paşa to resign his post as minister of war on July 9, 1912. He was replaced by Nazim Paşa, head of the Military Council. The Ottoman grand vizier, Sait Paşa, resigned on July 16, 1912, but he remained on in a caretaker status. The unhappy Savior Officers now sent a manifesto, in part authored by Major General Hurşit Paşa (a member of the Military Council), demanding that Sait Paşa leave the government. Faced with a coup, Sait did depart and was suceeded by a retired general, Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Paşa, on July 21, 1912. Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Paşa was not particularly adept in managing

the affairs of state, but he appointed three former grand viziers as cabinet ministers. The new government operated independently of both the Young Turks and the Savior Officers, much to the irritation of both groups. The new government ended martial law and, in October 1912, passed provisional laws banning military interference and participation in politics.6 However, on October 15, 1912, faced with the unfolding Balkan War, Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Paşa arranged a peace with Italy that gave Libya to the Italians. This infuriated the Ottoman military, then fighting a fairly successful guerrilla war against the Italians; it now turned against the grand vizier. Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Paşa was forced to resign and was, in turn, succeeded by Kamil Paşa, a liberal who was in his eighties and not up to the job.

In the space of a year, the Ottoman state had had four governments, all of which were destabilized by various elements of the military. The trend toward military involvement in the Ottoman political process that began in 1909 continued to run unchecked. The Ottoman Empire's brief flirtation with parliamentary democracy was about to end.

THE RAID ON THE SUBLIME PORTE

The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), popularly known as the Young Turks, enjoyed wide support among the younger and educated officers in the Ottoman Armed Forces. As a group, the members of the CUP were men of talent and vision. However, they were not the only group committed to the modernization of the empire. There were liberal, unionist, peoples, democratic, and reform parties, all of which advanced the causes of Westernization and modernization. Why, then, was this particular group successful, and how did they come to dominate Ottoman politics from 1913 to 1918?

The military disasters of October and November 1912 were unprecedented in Ottoman history and were a source of great shame. The Ottoman war government under Grand Vizier Kamil Paşa and Minister of War (and Deputy Commander in Chief) Nazim Paşa appeared inept and ineffectual to everyone, including the CUP, the military, and the people of the empire. Instead of counterattacking the enemy, the government was negotiating what appeared to be a surrender of some of the empire's most important possessions. The London conferences and the resulting peace proposals were considered as further evidence of a bankrupt leadership. The collective note of January 17 hit the war government with the force of a bomb, and its response was to convene the Grand Council in order to rubber-stamp the unfavorable terms.

Three CUP men now organized a coup d'état. Although the CUP was dedicated to modernization, it had, over the previous few years, taken on strong overtones of nationalism in its party ideology. This was, perhaps, the key idea that separated it from the unionists, the reformers, the Muslim clerics, and the other Ottoman political parties. In the case of the CUP by 1913, this nationalism was characterized by a movement away from an Ottoman identity and toward a Turkish identity. When the Grand Council endorsed acquiescing to the collective démarche of January 17, the CUP was enraged. Beyond the humiliation to Ottoman arms, the loss of Adrianople and the Aegean islands represented an attack on the very center of the neo-Turkish identity. Many of the prominent CUP leaders were dispersed by the war, but in Constantinople in January 1913, the tides of fortune brought together three men of action.

Incensed by the Grand Council's vote, CUP members Staff Colonel Cemal, general inspector of the lines of communication; Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver, chief of staff of the X Corps; and Talat Paşa, former minister of the interior, met to plot the overthrow of the government. Fortune had brought them together in the capital, and they gathered about forty radical junior officers to support them. They were favored only by their audacity, their proximity to the center of government, and the incredibly weak will of the cabinet.7

On the afternoon of January 23, 1913, these three CUP men led a revolt that went down in history as the Raid on the Sublime Porte. At about 3 P.M., just as the cabinet was about to approve the reply to the collective démarche, the plotters, led by Enver and Talat, broke into the council chambers. Kamil Paşa was forced to resign immediately at gunpoint by Enver and Talat. At the same time, an element of the group went through the corridors and confronted Nazim Paşa in the Inner Hall of the Porte. Shooting broke out, and Nazim and his adjutant-major were gunned down. Sometimes it is reported that Enver himself actually shot the minister of war, but this is doubtful as, at the time, he was with Talat and the grand vizier. The three CUP men now had the handwritten resignation of the grand vizier and had, by either accident or deliberate intent, eliminated the head of the armed forces.

Enver immediately went to the sultan and confirmed the coup d'état. The sultan, upon Enver's recommendations, made the following immediate appointments: Mahmut Şevket Paşa as grand vizier, Talat Paşa as provisional minister of the interior, Ahmet Izzet Paşa as acting minister of war (Mahmut Şevket Paşa retained the ministerial portfolio for himself), and Cemal Paşa as commander of the Eastern Army (Çatalca Army). Immediate telegrams went out that night to all provincial officials and major military commands. The coup succeeded for a number of reasons. First, the CUP men involved were insiders with

access to the cabinet and were highly organized. Moreover, they were committed to the endeavor, even at the cost of violence. Second, the weak-willed cabinet itself was an artificial creation, with no real claim to legitimacy or power. Third, the country and its armed forces were predisposed to the continuance of the war to reclaim, at least, Adrianople and the Aegean islands. The CUP, in early 1913, represented popular opinion in the Thracian and western Anatolian heartland of the Ottoman Empire. Fourth, the men chose to install, not one of themselves as grand vizier, but rather, the respected Mahmut Şevket Paşa. Furthermore, they evidently precoordinated his appointment with him. Although not generally acknowledged as a factor in the coup, it is highly probable that Enver's commander, Hurşit Paşa (who was one of the members of the Savior Officers), was involved and was ready to lend the support of his X Corps. The X Corps was then actually stationed in Constantinople itself and could have ensured the success of the coup with military means, had that been necessary. Finally, and equally important, was the accident of history that brought Talat, Enver, and Cemal together in space and time.8

The new government immediately rejected the conditions of the collective démarche and began to plan for the renewal of hostilities. Although the actual Ottoman reply was not issued until January 30, 1913, plans were already under way to regain the operational initiative and relieve Adrianople. With the exception of Talat, who remained in the capital as minister of the interior, the main plotters departed quickly to army assignments that befitted their rank and education. Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver returned to his job as the chief of staff of the X Corps and, with Hurşit Paşa, planned and executed the Şarköy amphibious operation in February. Staff Colonel Cemal was reassigned to the command of a Redif infantry division in the Çatalca Army.

EFFECTS OF THE ARMISTICE

The armistice allowed the Ottoman Army fighting against the Bulgarians, Serbs, and Montenegrins a badly needed period of respite. Operationally, the army conducted an intensive retraining program during the armistice, which enabled the army to put the Redif back into the front lines. Logistically, the time was well used to bring forward troops, artillery, and supplies from deep within Anatolia. Probably the most important effect of the armistice, however, was the psychological change that the Ottoman Army underwent. After defeating the Bulgarians at Çatalca, the Turks needed time for the pride of that victory to sink down into the lowest levels of the army. By January 1913, the

Ottoman Army was psychologically ready, at all levels (at least in Thrace), to renew the offensive. It was a remarkable turnaround.

NOTES

1. The most recent (and readable) overview of the diplomatic history of the diplomacy of the period is Richard C.Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2000). Although dated, the standard works on the subject are Luigi Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914*

(translated and edited by Isabella M.Massey) (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), and Ernst Christian Helmreich, *The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars 1912–1913* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938).
2. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 70–72.
3. Helmreich, *The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars,* 261–263.
4. Ibid., 268.
5. Ibid., 269.
6. M.Niam Turfan, *Rise of the Young Turks: Politics, the Military and the Ottoman Collapse* (London: I.B. Tauris and Co., 2000), 194–198. See also William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military* (London: Routledge, 1994), 41–45.
7. Excellent descriptions of the times and the plot may be found in Stanford J.Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire, Volume 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 293–296; M.Niam Turfan, *Rise of the Young Turks,* 205–213; and William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military,* 41–44.
8. The author's personal view of the raid on the Sublime Porte is that it was a more or less spontaneous affair rather than the result of a deliberate conspiracy with a grand design to seize power. Absent the charismatic Enver, it is hard to imagine that the coup would have taken place.

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8
The Thracian Campaigns, 1913
THE REINS OF COMMAND
The reins of command of the Ottoman war machine changed with the assasination of Nazim Paşa on January 23, 1913. Mahmut Şevket Paşa was appointed by the CUP on the following day as both the new minister of war and the grand vizier. Nazim Paşa had been an extremely energetic war leader and had personally come forward to exercise direct command of the eastern field armies. With his death, for about a week, the Ottoman military was literally left without a leader. The incoming Mahmut Şevket Paşa was much less interested in playing an active command role and concerned himself with building a political consensus to continue the war. He was unable to devote the required time to the Ministry of War but was reluctant to relinquish the portfolio. Apparently comfortable with the notion that a single individual could function as both the minister of war and chief of staff, Mahmut Şevket Paşa found a novel solution. The chief of the Ottoman General Staff, Ferik Ahmet Izzet Paşa, had recently returned from an eighteen-month tour of duty in Yemen. Mahmut Şevket Paşa decided to appoint him as his acting minister of war, whereupon Ahmet Izzet (now wearing two hats) immediately assumed direct control of the war effort.1 Beginning on January 31, 1912, Ahmet Izzet Paşa began to send out orders as the acting commander in chief (Başkomutan Vekili). The death of the minister of war also created a vacancy in the command of the Çatalca Army, which was filled by Major General Ahmet Abuk Paşa.
There were no major changes in the organization of the Çatalca Army, which retained its basic configuration of three active corps in the line

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of battle and three provisional corps in reserve. Reinforcements continued to flow in, most of which were sent to the I, II, and III Corps, although the incoming Yozgat Redif Division was assigned to the Provisional 2nd Corps. This created great disparities in the strengths of the corps, especially because almost all the artillery was assigned to the active formations in contact with the Bulgarians. Table 8.1 shows the strength disparity between the six Ottoman corps in the Çatalca Army at the end of the first armistice. Additionally, there were no substantive changes to the Ottoman order of battle for the forces in the Adrianople fortress or in the Gallipoli Peninsula.
STRATEGIC PLANNING
Ahmet Izzet Paşa arrived from Yemen to find a mature strategic plan and a major concentration of Ottoman forces in progress. The Ottoman General Staff had not been idle during Ahmet Izzet's extended absence and had worked diligently throughout the armistice to build a plan that would reverse the tide of battle. The plan was audacious and true to the operational and strategic beliefs of the Ottoman General Staff, which stressed the importance of the encirclement battle.

Large numbers of trained formations were coming available for deployment to the combat zone from the distant Third Army in Caucasia. They began to deploy westward on November 22, 1912, but were too late to affect the early battles in Thrace. In early December 1912, as it became clear that the Çatalca Army was fully capable of defending the capital, the Ottoman General Staff began to contemplate the renewal of offensive operations with these fresh forces. In the order of the arrival of their last units, the major formations from the Third Army were the 31st Nizamiye Infantry Division, which met at

TABLE 8.1 Çatalca Army Strength, February 1, 1913

Corps	*Officers*	*Men*	*Rifles*	*Cannons*	*Machine Guns*
I Corps	835	27,987	21,142	83	12
II Corps	1,024	38,533	31,942	112	20
III Corps	1,325	35,767	25,404	146	39
1st Prov. Corps	400	14,503	10,915	0	0
2nd Prov. Corps	561	20,561	16,311	8	12
3rd Prov. Corps	374	21,010	18,946	0	0
Independent Cavalry Brigade	137	3,699	1,968	8	4

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 2nci Cilt, 2nci Kisim, 1nci Kitap, Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarkoy Çikmarmasi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 76–77.

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Izmit on December 28, 1912; the 4th Aşiret Cavalry Division, in Constantinople on January 4, 1913; the 32nd Nizamiye Infantry Division, in Bandirma on January 19, 1913; and the Mamuretülaziz Redif Infantry Division, in Constantinople on January 26, 1913.2 The Ottoman General Staff activated the Provisional X Corps on January 1, 1913, to command and control these formations. The staff also pulled back many smaller formations from temporary duties in Yemen. These included the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment; the 6th Rifle Battalion; the 1st Schneider Artillery Battalion; a Provisional Mountain Howitzer Battalion, most of the 2nd Schneider Artillery Battalion; and some corps engineer detachments. These formations were also assigned to the Provisional X Corps.3 Brigadier General Hurşit Paşa was appointed to command the Provisional X Corps, and serving as his corps chief of staff was Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver (later Enver Paşa). Additionally, the 30th Infantry Division had also arrived in Constantinople from the Third Army, but was scheduled to join the forces on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

The organization of these forces, after their long (one thousand kilometer) mid-winter journey through the harsh conditions of central Anatolia, went slowly. However, the staffs gave priority to the arriving units for medical and hospital care, and they were soon battle ready. Furthermore, each infantry division was assigned a local cavalry detachment, and the incoming battalions from Yemen were parceled out among the divisions as well. Altogether, the Provisional X Corps represented an extremely powerful and well-equipped striking force. The strategic problem was, therefore, where to deploy it, given that the entire frontage of the eastern Ottoman armies in contact at Çatalca and on the Gallipoli Peninsula amounted to about sixty kilometers. Moreover, these fronts were already highly congested with Ottoman troops, and they faced well-prepared Bulgarian formations. Additionally, the loss of Salonika and the blockade of the Greek Fleet prohibited the fresh Ottoman forces from being sent to the Western Army in Albania and Epirus.

In mid-December 1912, the Ottoman General Staff generated a creative and novel solution that attempted to seize (once again) the strategic and operational initiative. The Turks decided to attempt a full-scale, corps-level, amphibious invasion on the western shore of the Sea of Marmara. Simultaneously, the provisional corps on the Gallipoli Peninsula would attack north, while the Adrianople garrison and the Çatalca Army conducted diversionary attacks. The Turks had several advantages. First, they now had a surplus of forces in the eastern operational area. Second, they had maritime supremacy and a surplus of civilian shipping vessels in the Sea of Marmara. Third, they had a renewed sense of confidence in their war leaders and in their ability to successfully

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fight the Bulgarians. The Turks also had a strategic imperative working against them: the encircled, and steadily weakening, fortress city of Adrianople. Failure to relieve this historic city would deprive the Turks of sixty thousand fighting men and would free a combined Serbian-Bul-garian army for further operations in Thrace. There were disadvantages as well, mainly from the standpoint of planning, training, and executing a complex joint (army and navy) operation. The Turks had absolutely no experience or doctrine for such operations.

In concept, the daring Ottoman plan called for the Provisional X Corps to be hurled onto the shore near Şarköy, on the Marmara coast, where the Bulgarians were known to be weak. Once ashore, the corps would drive west and attack the rear of the Bulgarian Fourth Army and then invade the Gallipoli Peninsula along the Kavak cease-fire line. The Turks planned to turn the Bulgarian Fourth Army's position into a cauldron from which there was no escape. Once again, the aggressive Turks intended to decisively destroy their enemy through a campaign of encirclement and annihilation. Ahmet Izzet arrived to find the plan in its final stages and the formations poised to attack when the armistice collapsed.4 Once the Provisional X Corps and the Provisional Corps from the Gallipoli Army had crushed the Fourth Army, the combined Ottoman forces would be free to advance on either Adrianople or on Çatalca. Map 8.1 shows the initial plan and the possible follow-on operations. The powerful Çatalca Army played no role in this scheme save that of pinning the Bulgarian First and Third Armies in their Çatalca positions with local attacks.

THE BOLAYIR (BULAIR) BATTLE

During the armistice, the Turks established the Provisional Forces Command under Brigadier General Fahri for the defense of the Gallipoli Peninsula, the forces there having exceeded the command and control capacity of the original fortress command. Fahri's forces (as shown in Map 4.14) were divided into two provisional corps with distinct missions. The Çanakkale and Edremit Redif Divisions were assigned the mission to defend the peninsula from amphibious invasion, and the five-regiment Menderes Detachment was assigned the mission to defend the Asiatic Troad from amphibious attacks as well. The Afyon Redif Division lay in reserve at Eceabat. The Provisional Infantry Division (built around the regiments of the Trabzon Redif Division) and the 27th Nizamiye Infantry Division were assigned the mission to defend the neck of the peninsula at Bolayir. To the north of these divisions, the Kavak Detachment maintained the cease-fire line against the Bulgarians.

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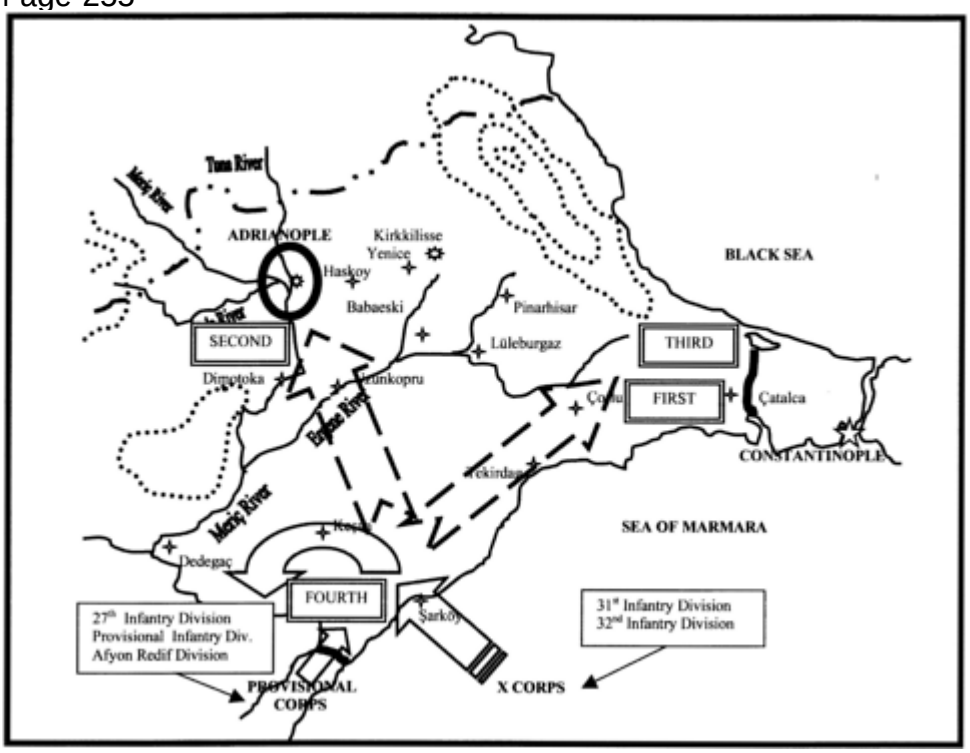


Map 8.1 Şarköy Operations Plan, February 8, 1913.

The Bulgarians had been very active on the Gallipoli front during the armistice. In mid-January, the Bulgarian General Staff activated the new Bulgarian Fourth Army at Malkara to coordinate operations along the extended Kavak line. The new army was a powerful force commanded by General Stiliyan Kovachev and was composed of 92,289 officers and men.5 As its major formations, the Fourth Army had the 7th Rila Infantry Division, the 2nd Trakya Infantry Division, the newly organized Macedonian-Thracian Volunteer Infantry Division (all three were the powerful Bulgarian three-brigade infantry divisions), and a Provisional Cavalry Division.6 The Fourth Army was concentrated about ten kilometers behind the Kavak cease-fire line, but was poised for action.

The armistice expired at 7 P.M. on February 3, 1913, and early in the morning the following day, the Bulgarian 7th Infantry Division began to move forward. At the same time, the other two Fourth Army divisions also began to move south. The thin Ottoman Kavak Detachment withdrew ahead of the Bulgarians in good order, although an errant infantry platoon had to be withdrawn by the Ottoman Navy after becoming pinned

against the sea. That day Şarköy fell, and on February 5, the Bulgarians crossed the Kavak River itself. The Turks withdrew into the safety of the Bolayir lines, but by February 6, the Bulgarian

Fourth Army was closed on the Turkish lines and artillery duels began on the neck of the peninsula.7

The Provisional Forces Command sent orders from its headquarters at Eceabat to the Bolayir front on February 5, 1913, that tasked the divisions in contact to begin planning for the conduct of an attack. Because of the secrecy of the impending amphibious attack (the troop transports were already marshaling in Constantinople and Bandirma), the chief of staff, Staff Major Ali Fethi, personally carried the orders north. However, on the morning of February 6, the provisional front commander reported that the enemy, strongly reinforced with artillery, had closed on his positions, thus closing a favorable window of opportunity of attack for the Turks.8 Instead of a clear approach to the Kavak cease-fire line, the Turks now faced a Bulgarian four-battalion infantry regiment backed by fourteen batteries of field artillery digging in across the neck of the peninsula. Nevertheless, because of the importance of the operation, the attack plan went forward but, by February 8, 1913, most of the Bulgarian 7th Infantry Division was in position.

The Turkish plan was simple and direct. The Provisional Infantry Division would attack on the left, with two infantry regiments abreast. The 27th Infantry Division would attack on the right, also with two infantry regiments abreast. These two infantry divisions were assigned to break through the Bulgarian 7th Infantry Division line. Assigned to follow up the assault force was a sizable second echelon reserve composed of the Afyon Redif Division (released from reserve duty at Eceabat) and the 30th Nizamiye Infantry Division (scheduled to arrive from Constantinople on February 9–10 at Gallipoli). The main Turkish defense line lay to the south of the village of Bolayir, and the attack regiments were assigned tactical assembly areas just to the north of the village. The Bulgarian lines were situated about two kilometers north of the assembly areas on two low hills. The attack was timed to coincide with the amphibious landings at Şarköy, and a special operations order (Table 8.2) was issued to the troops overnight on February 7–8, 1913.

The special order was received by the division commanders, and by 2 A.M. it was in the hands of the regimental and battalion commanders. Staff officers at all echelons were working on written orders to be issued to the troops by 2:30 A.M.9 The troop orders were tailored to specify what the individual soldier would need in order to fight the upcoming battle. The orders specified the soldier's battle loads as a rifle, 150 rounds of ammunition, a canteen, a small trench shovel, a bread haversack, and a ground cloth. This was designed to lighten the soldier's load, and the battalions were ordered to bring up the remainder of the gear by animal. Later in the night, the infantry division commanders met personally to discuss the coordination of operations. By 5:30 A.M. the divisions were already moving their regiments to their start lines.

TABLE 8.2 Special Operations Order, Provisional Force Command, February 7, 1913 (Summary)

1. Enemy forces are located to the north of the Koru Farm on Hills 128 and 240. These forces are composed of two infantry regiments, two field artillery batteries, and two mountain artillery batteries in newly dug positions. Further enemy forces, including artillery, are located near Şarköy.
2. Tomorrow morning, the Provisional X Corps will conduct an amphibious operation at Şarköy.
3. The Provisional Infantry Division and the 27th Infantry Division, the Karahisar Redif Regiment, and units of the Provisional Cavalry Regiment will attack tomorrow.
   a. The Provisional Infantry Division, with the Trabzon Redif Regiment and a mountain artillery battery attached, will attack to seize Hill 276 and the adjacent terrain to the coast [the center of the Bulgarian position].
   b. The 27th Infantry Division, with a field artillery battery attached, will attack to seize the hills southeast of Hill 276.
4. The Provisional Cavalry Regiment will guard the right flank of the 27th Infantry Division to the Sea of Marmara.
5. A general reserve, under the command of the Provisional Force Commander, will be composed of the Afyonkarahisar and Trabzon Redif Regiments and a mountain artillery battery, which will be positioned behind the Provisional Infantry Division.
6. The divisions will advance two kilometers together tomorrow at 8 A.M. and attack the enemy. During the advance to contact, the artillery will provide covering fire against the enemy positions.
7. The general reserve force will advance behind the attack forces.
8. Infantry division medical stations will coordinate with the Gallipoli [town] hospital for the evacuation of casualties.
9. The operation must continue until the objectives have been taken.

10. Tomorrow at 7 A.M., the headquarters of the Provisional Forces will be located with the Trabzon Regiment in the general reserve.

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 2nci Cilt, 2nci Kisim, 1nci Kitap, Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarkoy Çikmarmasi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 139–140.

The attack began at 8 A.M. as planned, and within thirty minutes, both division chiefs of staff had reported that immediate enemy opposition was negligible and the advance was continuing.

The defending Bulgarians were ready with two regiments facing the Turks: The 13th Infantry Regiment held the Aegean (western) side and the 22nd Infantry Regiment held the Sea of Marmara (eastern) side of the peninsula. These regiments comprised the 1st Brigade of the Rila

Division. In immediate reserve was the 3rd Brigade. Although the Turks had accurately portrayed the enemy infantry threat, they had seriously underestimated the Bulgarian artillery strength. Instead of four batteries of artillery (about sixteen guns), the Bulgarians had brought forward seventy-eight artillery pieces.10 Fourteen artillery batteries were located in direct support, directly behind the Bulgarians' defending infantry regiments. A further six batteries of the 9th Artillery Regiment were located to the rear, with the 3rd Brigade. Firing in support of their attacking infantry, the Ottoman Provisional Force had only nine batteries, containing thirty-six guns. Although the Turks had about double the infantry strength of the Bulgarians, they were decidedly inferior in fire support. Exaggerating the tactical problem was the terrain itself, which was mostly barren ground with little cover, thus offering the defending Bulgarians excellent fields of fire.

By 9:30 A.M. the Ottoman attack was in full swing. In the 27th Infantry Division sector, the 73rd and 79th Infantry regiments were shoulder to shoulder and attacking on a front of only eighteen hundred meters. In the adjacent Provisional Infantry Division sector, the 9th Rifle Regiment attacked on a narrow eight hundred-meter front. On the Aegean Sea coast, the Provisional Division's 8th Rifle Regiment attacked as well. The Ottoman regular regiments struggled forward through a hail of rifle and artillery fire, but they managed to close on the Bulgarian positions. Casualties were extremely heavy. Several of the Bulgarian artillery batteries were nearly overrun and had to pull back. The Turks threw in their reserve (the Trabzon Redif Regiment) to reinforce the attack of the 9th Rifle Regiment, which appeared to be verging on success in the center. However, the confused situation bogged down swiftly. Around noon, the Turks were spent, and in the early afternoon, the Bulgarians committed their brigade reserve, the 3rd Battalion of the 22nd Infantry Regiment. Fighting was heavy, and soon reports were pouring into the Ottoman Infantry Division headquarters that morale was broken and troops were retreating.11 The Turks had lost the battle, and by 6 P.M. that night, the Provisional Force acknowledged its failure.

Casualties had been catastrophic in the two attacking Ottoman infantry divisions, reflecting the desperate nature of the struggle. The official Turkish General Staff History of the campaign (written in 1993) lists neither the total number of attacking men nor the total casualties. Richard C.Hall lists the Ottoman losses as 6,000 killed and up to 18,000 wounded.12 This would seem to be on the high side, as the total strength of the five Ottoman infantry regiments and supporting arms involved in the attack was around fifteen thousand men. Bulgarian casualties were listed as 114 killed and 416 wounded. These numbers seem on the low side, as the Turks nearly overran a number of Bulgarian artillery batteries, indicating a major presence within the enemy lines. The battle

presaged future battles on the Gallipoli Peninsula itself and on a host of other World War I fronts. Direct frontal assaults on entrenched infantry possessing machine guns and modern artillery were doomed to fail, with excessively high casualty rates.

The original plan conceived by the Ottoman General Staff was not designed to have a deliberate frontal assault conducted on the Bulgarians defending hills in the narrowest part of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Ottoman plan envisioned a general advance from the Kavak cease-fire line by a strong force of up to four infantry divisions. However, the rapidly moving Bulgarian Fourth Army rolled back the Kavak Detachment in several days, which put the Bulgarian 7th Infantry Division at the narrow neck of the peninsula like a cork in a bottle. Ideally, the Turks would have begun moving simultaneously, but the attack of the Provisional Force was directly tied to the timing of the Şarköy invasion. Thus, the Bulgarians occupied, nearly unopposed, the most defensible ground in the area, and unfortunately for the Turks, they made the most of it.

THE ŞARKÖY AMPHIBIOUS INVASION

The Provisional X Corps staff began planning the Şarköy amphibious invasion on January 7, 1913, under

conditions of extreme secrecy, after receiving an operational directive assigning the mission to it.13 The operation fell under the direct authority of the Ottoman minister of war (and later, the chief of staff), and the corps staff received its mission and planning directives directly from the Ottoman General Staff. The operational directive specified the embarkation ports for the incoming Third Army formations from Caucasia and furthermore assigned specific ships to transport the force (see Table 8.3).

As can be seen from the loading directive, the Turks planned to land their infantry and some of their artillery as the 1st Echelon. The remainder of the artillery and the cavalry regiment were designated as the 1st Echelon reserve. The 2nd Echelon was composed of half the Redif division and the ammunition trains. Finally, the cavalry division was withheld as the 3rd Echelon reserve. The operational directive was also quite specific about a number of preparatory measures that the Provisional X Corps had to accomplish prior to embarkation.14 All the formations were directed to lighten up (a process of discarding heavy, and sometimes unnecessary, gear and equipment). Officers were directed to personally inspect every soldier's haversack. The transport wagons of the regiments were ordered to be placed into storage. Soldiers were ordered to carry five day's worth of hard biscuits and a reserve of one day's biscuits. As no fresh bread would be taken, the biscuits would go

TABLE 8.3 Loading Directive, Provisional X Corps, January 7, 1913

Formation	*Port of Embarkation*	*Ships*	*Loading Day*	*Debarkation Echelon*
31st Infantry Division	Izmit Drince	*Gülcemal* *Seyyar* *10 Temmuz Mahmut Paşa*	1	1st
32nd Infantry Division	Bandirma	*Güzel Girit* *Tahir* *Kizilirmak* *Manosis* *Pertikopis* *Necat*	1	1st
Mamuretülaziz Redif Division	Haydarpaşa	*Kembiriç* *Iskaramanta* *Izmir* *Mürefte* *Nilüfer*	1	1st (5 battalions) 2nd (4 battalions)
30th Field Artillery Regiment	Derince	*Plevne* *Millet* *Heybeli*	1	1st
Independent Schneider Artillery Battalion	Constantinople	*Selamet*	1	1st
Mountain Howitzer Battalions (2)	Constantinople	*Mithatpaşa*	1	1st reserve
5th Cavalry Regiment	Constantinople	*Karadeniz*	1	1st reserve
Aşiret Cavalry Division	Üsküdar Haydarpaşa	*Akdeniz* *Bezmialem*	1	3rd reserve
Trains and Ammunition Columns	Constantinople Haydarpaşa	*Gülcemal* *Seyyar* *10 Temmuz*	5, 6, 7	2nd reserve

Source: Türkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 2nci Cilt, 2nci Kisim, 1nci Kitap, Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarkoy Çikmarmasi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 192–193.

into the soldier's bread sacks. Their basic load was specified as a cloak, a blanket, a weapon, ammunition, a trench shovel, and a half-tent. The corps staff was also directed to procure ten thousand sandbags and an equal number of half-tents. Furthermore, the corps was directed to bring itself up to strength in medical detachments and communications detachments (including telephone, wireless, and heliographs). The in-

fantry divisions were also to procure huge stores of provisions; for example, the 31st Infantry Division was

ordered to bring 120,000 kilograms of hard biscuits, 2,100 boxes of rifle ammunition, and 8,112 field artillery shells (the other two divisions had similar requirements).
After conducting load-planning exercises, the Provisional X Corps staff determined that additional shipping was necessary, especially as many of the ships were capable of handling only passengers (and not wagons and equipment). Ferryboats capable of rolling wagons (and artillery) on and off rapidly were deemed necessary. Furthermore, barges were thought necessary in order to land troops on the beach. Therefore, the following additional ships were commandeered for the first echelon: 31st Infantry Division and 30th Artillery Regiment, two ferryboats and five barges; 32nd Infantry Division, three ferryboats and nine barges; Mamuretülaziz Redif Division, three ferryboats and nine barges.
Logistical planning featured heavily in the preparations of the assault, and the Ottoman naval staff also participated in these endeavors. Of special concern for the naval staff were the numbers, lengths, and capacities of the embarkation piers necessary for loading the ships rapidly. Naval officers were sent out to the ports to quietly investigate these facilities. To further expedite the planning and coordination of this extremely difficult enterprise, the Ministry of War formed two special commissions to assist and to cut through the bureaucratic red tape endemic in the Ottoman Empire.
With the operation cloaked in secrecy, the Ottoman commanders attempted to provide some kind of appropriate training for their men without revealing the true nature of the operation. There were limited training exercises for the junior officers and staffs, but full-scale landing exercises were not permitted. As it was envisioned that many of the ships would disembark directly onto piers (which were to be seized intact), the troops did practice loading and unloading on the wharves and piers of their embarkation points. Progress was made in the efficient loading and compressing of the troops in their ships; for example, a company required nine hundred square meters of space, but with practice, could reduce this to seven hundred square meters.15 Tactical training emphasized the bayonet assault. Frequent tactical maneuvers brought readiness to a high point as battalion and company commanders grew familiar with their men under field conditions.
On January 12, 1913, the Turks learned that the Bulgarians were strengthening their thin coastal forces along the Sea of Marmara. This was not the only bad news that the Provisional X Corps received. On January 17, 1913, the Mamuretülaziz Redif Division reported that cholera had broken out in its ranks and one battalion had already sent the majority of its men to the hospital. Soon, over twenty-five hundred

soldiers were sick with the disease. However, mission planning and troop training continued. On January 29, the corps chief of staff, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver, arrived by torpedo boat at Erdik to observe the training of the 32nd Infantry Division. He carried the news that the armistice with the Bulgarians was in imminent danger of collapsing. Because of this situation, the naval staff began to move the transport ships to the ports of embarkation on January 31. The primary staff officers of the corps also moved to the port areas to ensure that the loading went as planned. Bad weather delayed the arrival of several of the ships, but by February 1, 1913, loading began. Rehearsals had ensured that battalions could load within thirty minutes and disembark within forty-five.
Unfortunately for the Turks, the weather did not cooperate and storms moved in, causing the Ottoman General Staff to delay the operations. Most of the troops were already aboard their transports, some of which had departed port before being turned back. Conditions on the jam-packed transports were horrible, compounded by the bad weather, and the staff waited for the storms to break. Finally, on February 3, 1913, the skies cleared somewhat, but the troops were in no condition to conduct landing operations. Reluctantly, the decision was made to move the soldiers off the ships temporarily for a brief rest on land and then to reembark them. Some battalions of the 31st Infantry Division had been on ships for over forty-seven hours.16 Other battalions, on ships that had departed already and then put in to the nearest port, found themselves in unfamiliar, tiny ports such as Karamürsel. In an attempt to salvage the faltering operation, on the evening of February 4, 1913, the Ottoman General Staff, in consultation with the Provisional X Corps staff, ordered a major revision of the transportation and loading plan. This recognized the realities of the scattered shipping and reallocated the transport ships (readers may wish to compare the Loading Directive listed in Table 8.3 to the actual loading of the ships). As finally loaded, the Provisional X Corps boarded the following ships: 31st Infantry Division and 30th Field Artillery Regiment, *Karadeniz, Akdeniz, Mithatpaşa, Marmara, Bahricedit,* and *Millet;* 32nd Infantry Division; *Gülcemal, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, Seyyar,* and *Despina;* 95th Infantry Regiment and 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, *Kembiriç;* 1st Schneider Artillery Battalion, *Necat;* Provisional Mountain Howitzer Battalion, *Guzel Girit;* 2nd Schneider Artillery Battalion, *10 Temmuz;* Mamuretülaziz Redif Division, *Tahir, Iskaramanfa,* and *Trikopis* (moreover, this division quaran-tined all cholera patients and brought them along separately on the *Izmir, Dafni,* and *Heybeli*); X Corps Engineer Company, *Baslangic;* 5th Cavalry Regiment, *Hilal*.17 The healthy men from the Mamuretülaziz

Redif Division were led by their commander, Colonel (Albay) Nuri, and were designated as the Albay Nuri Detachment.
On the night of February 5–6, 1913, the troops began to reload the ships. Commanders reissued orders and attempted to rectify such matters as the fact that many of the troops had already consumed three of the five days' of iron (emergency) rations that they carried. The continuing cholera outbreak in the Mamuretülaziz Redif Division so worried the Ottoman General Staff that the division was withheld from the initial phase of the operation at the very last minute. Nonetheless, the total embarked force was still formidable, as shown in Table 8.4.
The Ottoman General Staff issued orders to the Çatalca Army on February 6, 1913, to conduct a supporting attack that evening at Büyük Çekmece with the I Corps (supported by five batteries of field artillery and two batteries of mountain artillery). Similar orders went out at the same time to the Ottoman forces on Gallipoli. The attacks were linked to the timing of the amphibious invasion and were scheduled for the morning of February 8. In the temporary headquarters of the Provisional X Corps in Selimiye Barracks in Üsküdar, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver prepared the final situation reports for the corps.18 On the evening of February 6, Enver sent Staff Major Tevfik by special torpedo boat to Gallipoli to conduct direct coordination with General Fahri, the Provisional Force commander. As the corps reported itself properly loaded and ready to sail, Enver set the departure time for 6 P.M. the following day.
The assembled force sailed from separate ports at different hours of the day. Most of the 31st Infantry Division, departing from Izmit, sailed at 6 P.M. on February 7. Half the 32nd Infantry Division, sailing from

TABLE 8.4 Provisional X Corps, Embarked Strength

Formation	*Officers and Men*		*Animals*	*Rifles*	*Machine Guns*	*Artillery*	*Ammunition Boxes*
	Trained	*Untrained*					
31st and 32nd Inf. Divisions	15,741	1,304	2,098	14,817	16	0	2,718
5th Cavalry Regiment	506	0	534	420	0	0	31
Artillery Force	2,111	13	1,068	N/A	0	48	20,772
Engineer and Support	180	3	44	168	0	0	21
Total	18,538	1,320	3,744	15,405	16	48	23,542

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 2nci Cilt, 2nci Kisim, 1nci Kitap, Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarkoy Çikmarmasi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 202.

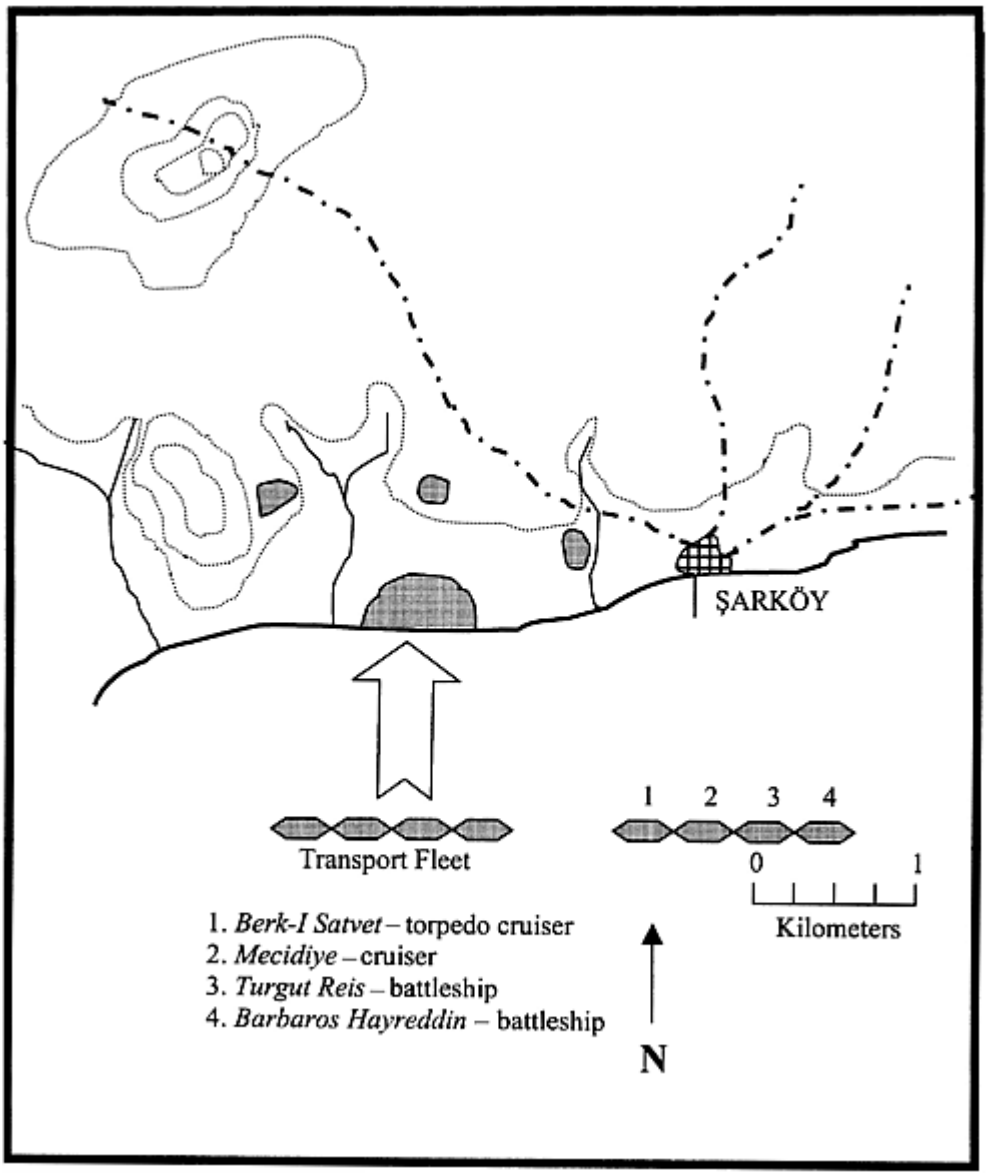
Bandirma, departed at 10 P.M., and the other half, departing from Erdek, sailed at 12:01 A.M. on February 8. The Provisional X Corps headquarters, the cavalry, the engineers, and the 2nd Schneider Artillery Battalion sailed from Haydarpaşa at 6 P.M., on February 7, 1913. Brigadier General Pertev, chief of operations for the Ottoman General Staff, arrived at Haydarpaşa at 3 P.M. to wish the corps commander luck and to send off the troops. Morale was very high among the troops, and there was a tremendous wave of enthusiasm. Brigadier General Hurşit Paşa and the X Corps staff boarded the steamer *Nilüfer* at 7 P.M. and proceeded up the Bosporus past the Dolmabahçe Palace before turning about and heading out into the Sea of Marmara. Once afloat, Hurşit Paşa received his final orders by wireless from the Ottoman General Staff, authorizing him to attack on the following morning.19 The *Nilüfer* arrived at its station to the southeast of Şarköy at 3 A.M. on February 8, and at 5 A.M., the torpedoboat *Yarhisar* arrived, carrying Lieutenant Hamdi, the Ottoman Naval Staff's liaison officer.
The weather on Friday morning, February 8, 1913, was very windy, making the seas very choppy but within the limits necessary to land the force. The Ottoman troop transports were mostly in position by dawn and were ready to conduct landings. Unfortunately, the Ottoman battleships and cruisers required for naval gunfire support failed to arrive on schedule. There was a frantic exchange of wireless signals as Lieutenant Hamdi sought to determine the whereabouts of the errant Ottoman Navy.20 Finally, at 8 A.M., Hamdi learned from the Provisional Force commander at Bolayir that the battleship *Barbaros* was steaming by. By 9 A.M. the Ottoman attack at Bolayir was in full progress, and the noise of the battle was clearly heard by the landing force aboard the ships off Şarköy. At the same time, the Ottoman battle squadron designated as the fire support element steamed into view and began to fire on the Bulgarians. The battle squadron was composed of the battleships *Barbaros Hayreddin* and *Turgut Reis* (each with six 280mm, six 105mm, and six 88mm guns), the cruiser *Mecidiye* (two 150mm, eight 120mm, and six 37mm guns), and the torpedo cruiser *Berk-i Satvet* (two 105mm, six 57mm, and two 37mm guns). Firing continued as the transport ships fell in line behind the armored ships and began to prepare to disembark the troops.
At 10 A.M., the battle line lay just one thousand meters off the coast south of Şarköy, with forty-meter

intervals between ships. The assault echelon of the 32nd Infantry Division, composed of two battalions of the 95th Infantry Regiment, the 32nd Rifle Battalion, and a machine-gun company under the command of Major Cemal, and was carried in the *Gülcemal, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, Millet, Dispina,* and *Seyyar.* The landings began at 11 A.M., and Staff Major Mümtaz, the corps liaison officer, accompanied the assault echelon and urged it to make haste. The troops

were ferried from the ships to the shore on pontoons that could be beached on the sandy, pebbled beach.21 The Bulgarian defense force was small (estimated to be several infantry companies and a single gun) and had withdrawn into the village of Şarköy earlier, leaving the Turks to conduct an unopposed landing. By 11:30 A.M., a company of the 3rd Battalion, 95th Infantry Regiment, with two machine guns was ashore and had seized a small beachhead. The company commander immediately pushed three combat outposts one thousand meters into the interior, seizing the high ground dominating the beach. He covered the outpost, moving toward the village of Şarköy with his two machine guns. By noon, the Turks were established inside a perimeter with a radius of one thousand meters (see Map 8.2).

In the early afternoon, the small ferryboats and barges began to ferry in the remainder of the assault echelon, and by 4 P.M. the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 95th Infantry Regiment, the 1st Company of the 32nd Rifle Battalion, and a machine-gun company were ashore and advancing on the Bulgarians in Şarköy. An hour later the remainder of the rifle battalion was ashore and the corps commander ordered the force to take Şarköy in order to ensure the use of the piers located there. Major Cemal launched his attack at 5:30 P.M. with his 1st Battalion and the 9th and 12th Companies of the 3rd Battalion, 95th Infantry Regiment. The Bulgarians were dug in in the village and covered the intervening three hundred meters of open ground with their rifles. Cemal's attack was covered by naval gunfire, which engaged the enemy artillery.22 Nevertheless, the attack failed, leaving the Turks finished for the night as darkness fell. Major Cemal's report of 9 P.M. to his division commander confirmed that the advance was stalled.23

Darkness brought no relief to the force at any level. Unable to bring the horses, wagons, and artillery ashore until a pier had been taken, the Ottoman engineers worked throughout the night to build a temporary pier in the center of the beachhead. The temporary pier was about thirty meters long, enabling small ships to dock, and was operational by the morning of February 9, 1913.24 Additionally, that night, more troops were off-loaded and sent ashore. These forces were the 2nd Battalion, 96th Infantry Regiment; the 31st Rifle Battalion; and several companies of the 93rd Infantry Regiment. At the corps level, Hurşit Paşa dispatched a report at 9:10 P.M. to Pertev Paşa (who remained at Haydarpaşa, waiting for news), which explained his situation and urgently requested information about the success of the supporting Bolayir attack.25 He was disappointed to receive a report in return that outlined, in very pessimistic terms, the failure of General Fahri Paşa's attack. He was assured, however, that, difficult as it might be, Fahri's two divisions would launch another attack on the following morning. On the basis of this information, Hurşit Paşa decided to continue to



Map 8.2 Şarköy Invasion, February 8, 1913

off-load his force and renew the assault. Later that night, Ahmet Izzet Paşa, the chief of the Ottoman General Staff, ordered the Albay Nuri Detachment (the healthy men of the Mamuretülaziz Redif Division were already on ships and waiting to be brought ashore at Şarköy) to be diverted to Gallipoli to reinforce Fahri Paşa.

At 6:30 A.M., February 9, 1913, the 95th Infantry Regiment began its attack on the village of Şarköy. The Bulgarians had been reinforced overnight, and the village now held two battalions of Christian volun-

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teers from the captured Ottoman cities of Üsküp and Salonika. The 95th began an envelopment attack, pressing its 1st Battalion from the west and with its 3rd Battalion enveloping the village from the north. The Turks broke into the village itself and prevailed in the house-to-house fighting that followed. At a cost of fifteen dead and thirty-one wounded, the Turks held the town by noon. The Bulgarians retreated to the north, but not before destroying the critical piers at Şarköy.

In the midst of the fighting, Hurşit Paşa received a message from the Ottoman General Staff at 8 A.M., which fully described the devestating defeat that had been inflicted on the Provisional Force at Bolayir.26 The report mentioned the huge casualties and the fact that morale among the survivors was destroyed completely. Finally, Hurşit Paşa was informed that the general staff had ordered Fahri Paşa to call off further attacks. The corps chief of staff, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver, departed the beachhead by torpedo boat for Gallipoli at 1 P.M. He would return at 7 P.M. confirming, after staff discussions with Staff Major Fethi and Staff Major Mustafa Kemal, the full scope of the debacle.

Nevertheless, by midday, both infantry division headquarters and the corps headquarters were ashore. The 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment; the 1st Battalion, 92nd Infantry Regiment; the 3rd Battalion, 94th

Infantry Regiment; and two more machine-gun companies came ashore. The 1st Schneider Artillery Battalion began to off-load in the late afternoon. By 10 P.M., the Provisional X Corps had nine infantry battalions, two rifle battalions, and two machine-gun companies in the beach-head.27 Every battalion had also brought ashore twelve animals and twenty cases of ammunition. Over the course of the day, the Turks pushed one kilometer farther out to the northeast of Şarköy and almost two kilometers inland to the southwest. As yet, the Turks had not brought any field artillery ashore, but the battle squadron continued to remain at its station to render fire support as needed.

The Bulgarian Fourth Army was not idle during this period and rapidly began to concentrate against the Provisional X Corps. The three brigades of the Macedonian-Thracian Volunteer Infantry Division were moving on the village of Şarköy from the northeast, and the three brigades of the 2nd Infantry Division were moving toward the beachhead. Even the 7th Infantry Division, then holding the line at Bolayir, sent its 50th Infantry Regiment and an artillery battalion north. Later, the 7th would dispatch an additional battalion of the 26th Infantry Regiment north as well. The advance guards of these forces began to make contact with the outposts of the Provisional X Corps on the night of February 9–10, 1913. Ottoman intelligence was unusually accurate in portraying this threat. Ahmet Izzet Paşa sent a message to Hurşit Paşa during the night defining the opposition as three enemy divisions containing fifty thousand men with two hundred cannons.28

Hurşit Paşa was now faced with a rather alarming situation brought about by unexpected problems. Not only had the supporting attack at Bolayir failed disastrously, but the situation there had so deteriorated that the Ottoman General Staff had sent Hurşit Paşa's own Albay Nuri Detachment to Gallipoli. Furthermore, the General Staff estimated the threat against his now-depleted corps of some seventeen thousand men to be fifty thousand Bulgarian infantry Moreover, although Hurşit Paşa had gotten most of his infantry off-loaded onto the beachhead, his artillery, ammunition trains, and cavalry remained on board the transports, offshore. Opinions on the staff of the Provisional X Corps were mixed, with Enver pressing for offensive action while Hurşit Paşa himself considered caution and withdrawal.29 Throughout the night, Ahmet Izzet Paşa, Fahri Paşa, and Hurşit Paşa exchanged wireless and telegraph messages. Finally, Fahri Paşa sent a telegraph message directly to Mahmut Şevket Paşa urging that the Sarköy operation be terminated immediately due to the acute danger facing his command. In Haydarpaşa, at 12:15 A.M. on February 10, 1913, Ahmet Izzet Paşa made up his mind to begin the immediate evacuation of the Provisional X Corps and sent messages to all concerned confirming this. On the Şarköy beachhead, the unloading artillery was turned around and began to reembark starting at 1:30 A.M. that day.

The first early morning reports (at 6:30 A.M. from the 7th Company of the 96th Infantry Regiment at Arapli) from the Ottoman scouts and outposts beyond the Şarköy beachhead perimeter indicated that strong Bulgarian forces were indeed approaching. However, the energetic Provisional X Corps staff, led by Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver, had drawn up a collapsing perimeter scheme designed to pull the entire force back to the temporary pier built on the second day. From there, covered by the guns of the battle squadron, the ferryboats and barges could reembark the troops and move them to the waiting transports. The corps staff went out to personally check the execution of Enver's plan. Enver himself went to the right flank (32nd Infantry Division sector) and Staff Major Mümtaz went to the left flank (31st Infantry Division sector). Staff Major Ali Ihsan went to the critical temporary pier to assist in the loading efforts.

The first units to embark were the three battalions of the 91st, 92nd, and 94th Infantry Regiments and the 31st Rifle Battalion, which were then in reserve (see Map 8.3). At 10 A.M. the outposts and pickets withdrew inside the perimeter, which still included the village of Şarköy. Beginning at 10:30 A.M. and lasting until noon, Enver collapsed the right flank (abandoning Şarköy to the Bulgarians) by pulling back the 3rd Battalion, 95th Infantry Regiment, and the 32nd Rifle Battalion one thousand meters to form an interior defensive line.30 Then the 1st

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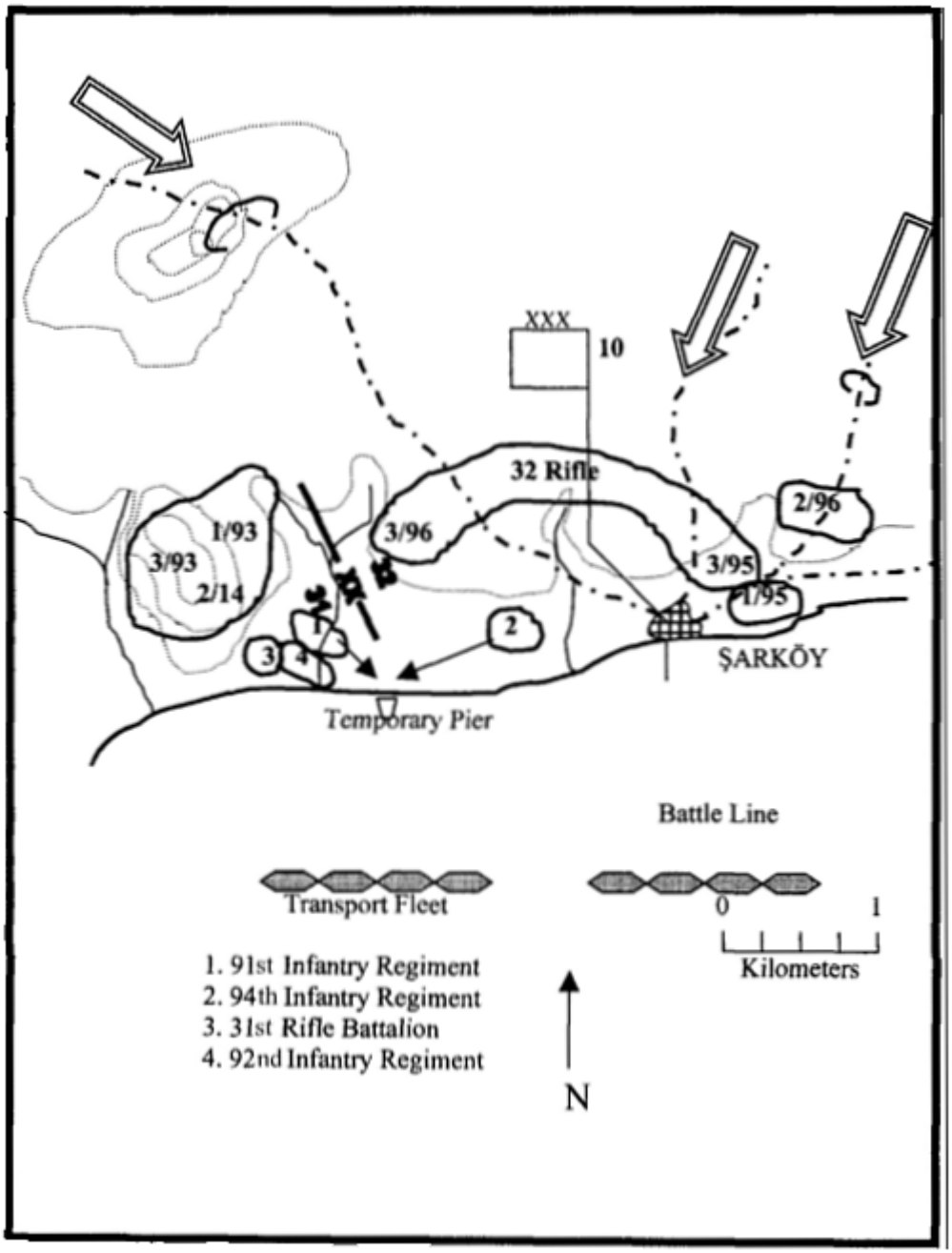

Map 8.3 Şarköy Invasion, February 10, 1913.

Battalion, 95th Infantry Regiment, and the 2nd Battalion, 96th Infantry Regiment leapfrogged through them and went straight to the pier. There, the 1st of the 95th established a final defensive perimeter, while the 2nd of the 96th reembarked. In the western sector, the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, performed the same maneuver. As the oncom-

ing Bulgarians appeared on the hillcrests overlooking the shrinking beachhead, the waiting transports drew farther offshore.

By mid-afternoon, the Bulgarians had closed on the remaining formations of the Provisional X Corps. The Ottoman beachhead now had a radius of barely one thousand meters from its epicenter at the temporary pier. To lend effective naval gunfire support, the Ottoman battle squadron split into two components to support both flanks of the corps. In the west, supporting the left flank, were the cruisers *Berk-i Satvek* and *Mecidiye,* and in the east, supporting the right flank, were the battleships *Turgut Reis* and *Barbaros.* On the left flank, the Turks deployed the 1st and 3rd Battalions, 93rd Infantry Regiment, and on the right flank they deployed the 3rd Battalion, 95th Infantry Regiment; the 3rd Battalion, 96th Infantry Regiment; and the 32nd Rifle Battalion. Encouraged by the frenzied Ottoman evacuation, the Bulgarians pressed the attack, which immediately drew naval gunfire from the Ottoman cruisers and battleships.

Under the cover of the naval gunfire, Enver again collapsed the perimeter and formed a tight, three-battalion perimeter consisting of the 1st Battalion, 93rd Infantry Regiment, on the left; the 3rd Battalion, 96th Infantry Regiment, in the center; and the 32nd Rifle Battalion on the right. The two excess infantry battalions marched to the pier and were reembarked by 8 P.M. As darkness fell, the searchlights of the Ottoman battle squadron illuminated the enemy positions, aiding the Ottoman final defense.31 Outmatched by the heavy naval guns of the Ottoman fleet, the Bulgarians took up hasty defensive positions and let the Turks slip away into the night. At 10:30 P.M., the three infantry battalions on the perimeter fell back into the final defensive perimeter held by the 1st Battalion, 95th Infantry Regiment, immediately surrounding the temporary pier and successfully reembarked. Later that night, this final infantry battalion began to evacuate as well. By 3:30 A.M. on February 11, the Provisional X Corps had completely evacuated the Şarköy beachhead except for thirty animals that were left behind. Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver was one of the final men to evacuate the pier.32 Within the hour, the transport fleet was enroute for the port of Gallipoli.

Casualties had been extremely light. On February 10, the Provisional X Corps lost only eight men killed and thirty-four wounded. The total operation had lasted just three days and involved no major fighting. The Ottoman fleet provided excellent naval gunfire support, which was critical in enabling the evacuation to continue despite the approaching Bulgarians. The total expenditure of naval shells by ship for the period February 8–10, 1913, was: *Turgut Res,* 225 105mm and 202 88mm shells; *Barbaros,* 250 105mm and 180 88mm shells; *Mecidiye,* 22 150mm and 156 120mm shells; *Berk-i Satvet,* 84 105mm shells. Although the official

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Turkish General Staff campaign history notes that the battleships fired 280mm shrapnel shells on February 10, the Turkish General Staff's naval history states otherwise.33 The total naval expenditure for the battle was 1,119 shells, most of which were 105mm and 88mm. Again, as at Çatalca and, as would be seen later, at the Dardanelles in 1915, the appearance of the awsome spectacle of naval gunfire was sometimes perceived as being greater in extent than it really was.

As a strategic concept, the Şarköy amphibious invasion had much to offer the Ottoman war effort. The logistics and planning of the operation, considering the level of difficulty, went remarkably well. Moreover, considering that the Turks had never practiced or rehearsed this type of operation in peacetime, the mere fact that they would attempt it was incredible. That the Turks actually conducted a successful amphibious landing at the exact point of their choosing speaks to the high level of planning and efficiency involved. The Ottoman command team was actively engaged in the direct supervision of every aspect of the operation. Especially noteworthy was the energetic presence of Enver and the staff of the Provisional X Corps during each critical phase of the operation. The liaison between the army and the navy was remarkably efficient and was marked by continuous dialogue. Enver's superb handling of the tactical compression of the corps by collapsing the perimeter was instrumental in ensuring the orderly evacuation of the troops and equipment. Enver's actions, combined with an effective naval gunfire support and illumination plan, saved the final battalions of the Provisional X Corps from certain capture.

Perhaps, had the weather cooperated and the operation had gone off as scheduled a week earlier, the Turks might have caught the Bulgarian Fourth Army off-guard as it advanced on the Kavak cease-fire line. From start to finish, the operation was tightly controlled from the top by Ahmet Izzet Paşa and was always tied to the success of Fahri Paşa's attack at Bolayir. The Şarköy amphibious operation was Ahmet Izzet Paşa's first exposure to the realities of high command in modern war. His experience in Yemen had not prepared him for this level of command, and his presence at the radio station in Haydarpaşa indicates his concern. In operational terms, the plan miscarried because there was no allowance for the failure of Fahri Paşa's attack and no contingency plan to deal with it. This failure was greatly exaggerated by the strength of the Bulgarian Fourth Army advancing on the Ottoman beachhead and by the incredible cost of Fahri Paşa's casualties at Bolayir on February 8.

Given what historians know today about the difficulties involved in enlarging, and advancing out of, a recently seized beachhead without adequate port facilities, the Şarköy amphibious operation could be

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considered an unusually well planned and well orchestrated affair. That it failed speaks mainly to the late start and to the failure of the supporting operation at Bolayir. The Turks would never again attempt to exploit their naval dominance in the Sea of Marmara during the Balkan Wars.

SUPPORTING OPERATIONS AT ÇATALCA

Throughout the armistice, work continued on the fortifications in the Çatalca Lines. Trenches were widened and deepened, and the strong points received more earth on the bombproof roofs. The three active corps in

contact received the lion's share of the incoming replacements and reinforcements. The centralized artillery groupings that had been so successful at the First Battle of Çatalca were retained and enlarged. By mid-January 1913, even the cholera epidemic was under control, and the army was seized with a renewed sense of confidence. Anticipating a renewal of hostilities, the Çatalca Army staff began to work on a plan to regain the initiative. Earlier that month, the Çatalca Army received directives from the Ottoman General Staff outlining the strategic concept that ultimately resulted in the Şarköy invasion. In the proposed operation, the Çatalca Army would play a major role in tying down the Bulgarian First and Third Armies, while the decisive blow fell elsewhere.

On the mornng of February 3, 1913, immediately after the termination of the armistice, the Ottoman acting commander in chief, Ahmet Izzet Paşa; the Çatalca Army commander, Major General Ahmet Abuk Paşa; and the III Corps commander, Brigadier General Veli Paşa, met to coordinate the offensive operation (the phrase used in the Turkish General Staff history is "to prepare parallel orders between themselves and the divisions tasked for the battle").34 The operation had the bless-ing of Mahmut Çevket Paşa, who felt that the Bulgarians were in an exposed position of weakness and that the Ottoman Army was in a favorable position to defeat decisively a major portion of their army. Warning orders went out to the corps headquarters at 12:10 P.M., directing them to begin preparing their ammunition trains and animals for movement to the front lines.

As finally written, the Çatalca Army's plan was quite simple. The hard-hitting Ottoman III Corps, in the north, would execute a feint attack. The III Corps had the reputation as the army's premier corps and would rationally be expected to lead the offensive. To further deceive the Bulgarians, highly visible preparations involving the 8th Cavalry Regiment were ordered in the III Corps sector near the Terkos Lake. Additionally, deliberate weapons firing was ordered and some phony

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orders were placed in sectors where the Bulgarian officers were known to speak Turkish.35 The main attack was to be delivered on the opposite side of the peninsula in the I Corps sector, near Büyük Çekmece.

Over the course of the next several days, the Çatalca Army was alerted that the attack was to be timed for February 8, 1913, to coincide with the Bolayir and Şarkoy attacks. The Ottoman I Corps brought its artillery forward to cover the attack and designated units of the 2nd Infantry (Nizamiye) Division for the assault. The assault force was designated as the Çekmece Detachment and was composed of the 1st Rifle Regiment and the 3rd, 5th, and 6th Infantry Regiments. The detachment also had an engineer company, a heavy machine-gun company, and two batteries of quick-firing artillery under its command. On the night of February 7–8, 1913, the Rifle Regiment and the 3rd Infantry Regiment moved into assembly areas near the eastern end of the bridge into Büyük Çekmece. At 2 A.M., a small force of Laz volunteers (ninety men from Lazistan) under the command of Staff Major Halil embarked on two torpedo boats at Karaburun in Constantinople with the objective of outflanking the Bulgarians by landing on the coast behind them. Early the next morning, in a coup de main, the volunteers stormed ashore without artillery fire and, during a three-hour firefight, lost forty men killed. Simultaneously, the Ottoman Çekmece Detachment stormed Büyük Çekmece and its critical bridge and pushed the Bulgarians eastward to the hills overlooking the town. About noon, the 3rd Infantry Regiment executed a surprise bayonet attack and, at a cost of fifty-six men dead and forty-three men wounded, seized the Muratbey Tepesi (Muratbey Hill) three kilometers east of Büyük Çekmece. The Turks rapidly followed up their success by pushing the 1st Rifle Regiment and the 6th Infantry Regiment east along the road to Kumburgaz. These regiments advanced almost five kilometers by dark. In the meantime, the Çekmece Detachment brought up the 5th Infantry Regiment as its reserve. The detachment's attack had been unusually successful and resulted in a one-day gain of about six kilometers of ground. Initially Bulgarian resistance was strong, but later in the day it diminished. Moreover, the Turks had turned the flank of the first echelon Bulgarian 10th Infantry Division.

On February 9, 1913, the entire Çatalca Army began a general attack with its three active corps. Every infantry division led its attack with an advance detachment of one or two infantry battalions. Expecting serious Bulgarian resistance, the Turks were surprised to find themselves overrunning the enemy trenches with ease, facing only small Bulgarian detachments charged with slowing the Ottoman advance. Both the II and III Corps advanced several kilometers on a broad front. The I Corps pushed its 3rd Infantry Division and the 4th Infantry Regiment ahead to link up with the Çekmece Detachment, which continued to advance.

The 3rd Infantry Division's assault carried it forward about five kilometers, as the Çekmece Detachment's 1st Rifle Regiment and 6th Infantry Regiment pushed over the Kartal Tepesi, driving forward about three kilometers. The Bulgarian 48th Infantry Regiment was nearly encircled by these forces and narrowly escaped

entrapment. The following day brought the same result, with the Bulgarians retreating deliberately to fall back on prepared positions.
Unknown to the Turks, the Bulgarians, who were weakened by cholera and concerned that an Ottoman amphibious invasion might endan-ger their armies, had already decided to pull back to more defensible positions. By February 12, 1913, the Bulgarian First and Third Armies had occupied a new defensive line that was much less vulnerable than their original Çatalca positions. In the north, the Bulgarians withdrew about fifteen kilometers, and in the south their total withdrawal was over twenty kilometers. Instead of lying in the valley under the watchful eyes of the Çatalca Army in the heights to the east, the Bulgarians now held the high ground. In a reversal of roles, the Ottoman Army now lay in the valley looking west. Furthermore, the Turks were now out in the open instead of in their carefully prepared defensive works. Several more days passed before the Bulgarians realized that the Ottoman offensive was over, and by February 15, the front had again stabilized. Although the Turks would launch several smaller divisional attacks in the following week, tactical operations on the Çatalca front were generally over.
The Bulgarians had suffered heavy casualties and had given up about twenty kilometers of ground.36 But at the end of the Ottoman offensive, they still held the Çatalca Army in check. The battle could be characterized at the tactical level as somewhat of an Ottoman victory, but at the strategic level, the results were inconclusive. The Turks never massed their forces and instead relied on deception and surprise to set the favorable conditions for a limited offensive. The offensive was never intended to be a knockout blow against the Bulgarians; it was simply designed to pin the First and Third Armies in situ while the Ottoman main effort came through Bolayir and Şarköy.

THE SIEGE OF ADRIANOPLE

Within the encircled fortress city of Adrianople, conditions were getting worse by the day. In early December 1912, the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish contractors who delivered most of the provisions began to demand hard currency in exchange for their goods. However, after fifty days of war, the fortress was already drawing on credit from the three

major banks in the city (the Ottoman Bank, the Salonika Bank, and the Deutsche Bank), and consequently, much of the additional available, contract-procured provisions were unavailable.37 On December 15, 1912, Mehmet Sükrü Paşa was forced to implement the rationing of provisions for his soldiers. The bread ration dropped from 960 grams to 750 grams of bread per man per day. Additionally, the daily cheese ration was reduced to 50 grams per man per day and salt was in short supply. To make matters worse, typhoid and cholera broke out in the city on December 18.
A ciphered telegram arrived on December 26 from Nazim Paşa noting that the Bulgarians were building a road to bypass the fortress. Two days later, by special agreement, a Bulgarian train was admitted through the Ottoman control points. The Turks noted that the train contained Russian and Czechoslovakian volunteers bound for the front. In a reciprocal gesture, the Bulgarians allowed two train cars of medicine through their control points on January 3, 1913, but did not allow a further ten cars of flour later on January 14.38 The news of Nazim Paşa's assassination on January 23 took the garrision by surprise, but Mehmet Sükrü Paşa sent a telegram to the new head of the Ottoman government, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, three days later. This telegram explained the de-bilitated condition of the command and urged the government to relieve the city without delay. In a reply on January 29, 1913, the Ottoman high command notified Mehmet Sükrü Paşa that he was promoted to the rank of First Ferik (lieutenant general). This news was followed the next day by a message, from the recently returned Ahmet Izzet Paşa, that the armistice was about to break down and that hostilities would recommence at 7 P.M. on February 3. Therefore, on the morning of February 2, the troops in the fortress were ordered to a high state of readiness and were ordered to stand to in their defenses. There was no word or reply from Constantinople regarding the question of relief.
The Bulgarian artillery began to bombard the city at 8 P.M. on February 3, 1913. The firing continued all night, and about 450 shells (mostly 120mm and 150mm) landed in the civilian sections of Adrianople, deliberately targeting the morale of the civilian population.39 Twenty civilians were killed, another twenty were wounded, and fifty-three were left homeless by the destruction. Several fires broke out in the Sultan Selim neighborhood on February 4, but they were kept under control and finally extinguished. The bombardment continued night and day. On February 6, a Bulgarian airplane overflew the city and dropped propaganda leaflets, in Turkish, French, and Bulgarian, that urged the Turks to surrender. Also on that day, sixteen fires broke out, one of which destroyed the Taşlik Mosque; twenty-two people were killed, and fifty-three were wounded. The city hospital came under fire as well, forcing the medical staff to use a local school as a temporary

medical facility. The morale of the troops and the residents of the city, especially that of the Greek inhabitants, significantly dropped as a result of these bombardments.40
Mehmet Sükrü Paşa decided to attempt to raise morale by conducting a local counterattack toward the known location of a nest of Bulgarian artillery batteries firing into the city. He sent Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ali Şefik, the fortress's eastern front commander, a warning order to plan an attack. This attack, which was nearly simultaneous in time with the strategic offensives at Bolayir, Şarköy, and Çatalca, was purely a local tactical initiative to relieve pressure on the beleaguered inhabitants, and was set for February 9, 1913. Although Mehmet Sükrü Paşa's attack appears today to be part of the larger strategic plan, it was not. Mehmet Sükrü Paşa's detailed operations order of 7 P.M. February 8, identified only local objectives in the northeast quadrant of the fortress's perimeter.41 The operations order orchestrated the advance of two regimental-strength columns that would attack at 6 A.M. on the following morning. As in the Adrianople fortress's previous orders, Mehmet Sükrü Paşa's staff was very thorough in the coordination of fire support, logistics, and signal support. Altogether, the attack was supported by the heavy artillery of four adjacent strong points and two regiments of field artillery. The eastern front commander exercised tactical control and positioned himself at the strong point in the center of the two columns.
The Ottoman artillery began preparatory firing at 5 A.M. on February 9. The infantry, with bayonets fixed, crossed the line of departure ten minutes later in very muddy conditions. The Bulgarian wire and trenches channeled the Turks into the enemy's fields of fire. Nevertheless, the columns surged onward and broke into the forward trench lines of the 2nd Brigade of the Bulgarian 8th Infantry Division. The Ottoman left column was composed of the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, and the Üzünköprü and Çorlu Redif Battalions. The stronger right column was composed of the 10th Rifle Battalion; the 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment; the 3rd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment; and a battalion of Redif volunteers. Fighting raged in the Bulgarian trenches, but a strong counterattack by the Bulgarian 10th Infantry Regiment at 7 A.M. on the right column ended the Turkish attack and decided the day. Shortly thereafter, the failed attack was called off and the Turks began to retreat. The retreat was covered by the fortress artillery batteries in the four strong points that supported the attack. Casualties had been extremely heavy: one officer and sixty men were dead, four officers and 450 men were wounded, and 78 men were missing.42
That night the Bulgarians opened up on the Ottoman positions with intense artillery and rifle fire. Unsure of the enemy's intentions, another

Ottoman attack was ordered for the following day. These attacks were limited to company-level advances designed to spoil whatever the Bulgarians were planning. The attacks were costly and served no good purpose. A battalion-level night attack was attempted at 1:50 A.M. on February 11, 1913, but also failed. This two-day series of attacks cost the Turks an additional 23 men killed, 224 men wounded, and 33 men missing (for a three-day total of almost 900 men). Bulgarian casualties for the same period were also heavy: one officer and 78 men killed, three officers and five 573 men wounded, and 23 men missing.43 This bloody series of small engagements is unnamed in the modern Turkish official histories. In any case, the Ottoman reverses and heavy casualties failed completely to restore the morale of the encircled garrison.
The bombardment had a secondary effect caused by the intentional Bulgarian shelling of the section of the city housing the consulates of the major powers. In doing so, General Ivanov, the Bulgarian Second Army commander, hoped to provoke a diplomatic reaction that would speed up the surrender of Adrianople.44 As expected, the consulates lodged protests with the Turks, who ignored their pleas. Instead, Mehmet Sükrü Paşa recommended that the unarmed and noncombatant consulate staffs and associated foreign nationals evacuate the city. Many took advantage of this suggestion and departed under a truce allowing them to cross into the Bulgarian lines. Thereafter, Europe's awareness of conditions in the city (a significant source of Bulgarian intelligence) considerably diminished. The Bulgarian artillery firing continued unabated, and on February 13, seventeen batteries of Serbian artillery arrived to reinforce the Bulgarians, twenty-four pieces of which were 120mm and 150mm how-itzers.45 This powerful reinforcement was a major addition to the Serbo-Bulgar ring of forces that encircled the city. The artillery firing continued, and although it did heavy damage to the city itself, it did little damage to the Ottoman fortifications. On February 2, a Bulgarian airplane, whose motor had quit, came down on top of the Kafkas strong point and was found to have a Russian pilot. The pilot was interned but revealed that not only were Russian pilots flying for the Bulgarians, there were French and Italian pilots flying combat missions as well.46 Ottoman air activity was limited to the launching of hydrogen observation balloons and the occasional firing of antiaircraft guns at the Bulgarian aircraft.
On March 5, 1913, Mahmut Şevket Paşa sent a ciphered wireless message to Mehmet Sükrü Paşa explaining that peace negotiations had reopened and to hold out until April 2.47 Adequate rations were beginning to

become a real problem for the garrison, as the bread ration fell to 450 grams per man per day. Also on March 5, the garrison reported that it had killed and eaten 1, 037 of its original 2.661 military draft

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animals.48 (Although the garrison lacked bread, salt, and cheese, it apparently did not lack meat.) Nevertheless, by March 12, Mehmet Sükrü Paşa felt compelled to report that, due to the weakened condition of his command, offensive operations were no longer possible. He did, however, note that demonstration operations were still possible. Two days later, Ahmet İzzet Paşa sent Mehmet Sükrü Paşa a secret message asking whether it might be possible to evacuate the regimental colors *(alay sancaklar)* by balloon.49 The Bulgarian and Serbian bombardment was now in its thirty-sixth day and showed no sign of stopping. Civilian casualties, after the initial days, were comparatively light: 43 killed, 72 wounded, 837 left homeless; there were also twenty-five serious fires. On March 15, 1913, the Ottoman garrison released the Bulgarian prisoners that it had captured in the preceeding months. Conditions within the beleaguered fortress were clearly devolving into an unfavorable situation.

Conditions within the Bulgarian and Serbian lines were not favorable, either. The snowy winter had been very harsh, and the treeless plains surrounding Adrianople offered little cover or firewood for the allied soldiers. Furthermore, inactivity and disease had sapped the infantry's will to fight, and morale had eroded badly. While the Serb artillery supported the Bulgarian bombardment, Bulgarian logistics could not support the Serb formations and rations, fodder, and firewood had to be brought in all the way from Serbia itself.50 This decline in the fighting capability of the army alarmed the Bulgarian commander of the field armies, General Savov, who was also under pressure to end the siege and capture the city. On March 20, Savov decided to attempt to storm the fortress and so informed General Ivanov. General Nikola Ivanov's staff had already been working on such a plan and, in short order, issued an operations order to the Second Army divisions at 11:30 P.M. on March 23, 1913.

The main Bulgarian attack would be delivered in the eastern sector of the fortress by the Bulgarian 3rd and 4th Infantry Divisions, supported by the 2nd Brigade of the 8th Infantry Division and the 11th Infantry Division. A diversionary attack in the south by the remainder of the 8th Infantry Division was planned to draw the Ottoman reserves away from the main attack. The Bulgarians began their attack on March 24 at 1 P.M. with a general artillery barrage on the Ottoman positions. Under the cover of the artillery fire, the infantry moved forward to their assembly areas.

At 3 A.M. the following morning the Bulgarian infantry attacked in the south. The southern perimeter (southern front command) was the responsibility of the Ottoman 11th Infantry Division and the Gümülcine Redif Division, which manned the lines with ten infantry battalions and kept twelve infantry battalions in reserve. A recent history of the war

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notes that this attack surprised the Turks and that they rushed their reinforcements to this threatened sector across the single bridge over the Meriç River, depriving themselves of vital reinforcements in the decisive eastern sector later.51 Although fighting raged all day in the southern sector, the modern Turkish histories do not record this and note that the line was held with no external reinforcements.52 In the west, a supporting Serbian attack by the Timok Infantry Division began at 4 A.M. on March 25 as well against the Ottoman western front command (the 10th Infantry Division and the Edirne Redif Division). This attack was initially succesful but was beaten back quite quickly by the local Ottoman reserves.

The powerful main effort began at 3:50 A.M. on March 25, 1913, on the Ottoman eastern front command as the Bulgarian infantry crossed their lines of departure. In some sectors of the Turkish lines, barking dogs alerted the defenders, who began to fire into the darkness.53 The oncoming Bulgarians advanced, bayonets fixed, with their characteristic élan and determination, and by 4:30 A.M. the armies were locked in combat in the Ottoman forward trenches. The Demirkapi strong point, held by the 2nd Battalion, Kirklareli Redif Regiment, was taken by encirclement at 4:55 A.M., and an Ottoman counterattack failed to retake the position. This critical breakthrough enabled the rapidly moving Bulgarian 11th Infantry Division to seize the initiative by sending its 2nd Battalion, 54th Infantry Regiment, almost three kilometers into the Ottoman rear. The other Bulgarian brigades were not as successful but managed to push the Turks back across the entire eastern front. The critical eastern front command was not as strong as the two other fortress commands and was composed of a provisional infantry division with seven Redif infantry battalions and three Nizamiye infantry battalions. The eastern front reserve was committed unsuccessfully to try and halt the exploiting Bulgarian 11th Infantry Division. After the failed counterattack, the remainder of the provisional division was ordered to withdraw into the line of forts that surrounded Adrianople. In the hasty retreat, the Turks lost twenty-two artillery pieces and seven machine guns.54

As darkness closed, the Turks consolidated their defenses, but the aggressive Bulgarians renewed the artillery firing at 11:30 P.M. and promptly followed ten minutes later with a night infantry attack in the northeastern sector. In the confused fighting, the Bulgarians gained the upper hand, and at 1:50 A.M. on March 26, 1913, they entered the Bağlarönü strong point, which was held by the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment. This strong point was one of the new, second-form fortifications in the city's perimeter, and its loss created a real chink in the armor of the fortress. Encouraged by their success, the Bulgarians renewed their attacks on the strong points adjacent to Bağlarönü at 4:30

A.M. and, within several hours, the Cevizlik, Ayvasbaba, and Taş Ocak strong points were in danger of capture. The seizure of Bağlarönü proved to be tantamount to a can opener inserted into the defenses of Adrianople.

The Ottoman situation on the morning of March 26 verged on the hopeless. In an 8 A.M. attack at Çörek Köyü, a Bulgarian bayonet attack accounted for fifteen hundred Ottoman casualties. The southern and western fronts were ordered to pull back to the second-form ring of strong points to consolidate and enable the Turks to create fresh reserves. By 9:30 A.M. and 10 A.M. respectively, this was accomplished in a deliberate and orderly tactical withdrawal. However, in the rapidly disintegrating eastern sector, the Bulgarian attacks were unstoppable, and some of the Ottoman strong points simply surrendered without resistance.

At last convinced that the situation was truly lost, Mehmet Sükrü Paşa sent Captain Eyyüp and two other officers to meet with the Bulgarians.55 The captain managed to find a Bulgarian lieutenant in the confusion and brought him to see the fortress commandant, Colonel Ismail Paşa. By 9:45 A.M., preliminary negotiations for the surrender of the fortress were underway; however, shortly therefater Ismail Paşa lost contact with Mehmet Sükrü Paşa. At 10:30 A.M. Bulgarian Guards cavalry, under the command of Colonel Marholef, entered the city's outskirts. The cavalry made its way to the Kiyik strong point, where its commander learned that Mehmet Sükrü Paşa had returned from observing the collapsing eastern front and was headed back to his headquarters at the Hazirlik strong point, to the west of the city. The cavalry made its way through the city to the strong point, which was held by 250 Ottoman riflemen. Colonel Marholef sent two lieutenants under a guarantee of safe passage to meet with Mehmet Sükrü Paşa's envoys. As a result, the Bulgarians sent an automobile to bring Mehmet Sükrü Paşa back to the Kiyik strong point, where he could meet with General Ivanov. After discussing the terms of surrender through translators, Mehmet Sükrü Paşa surrendered his command at 1:30 P.M. on March 26, 1913.56

The next day, the Bulgarian king, Ferdinand, staged a triumphal entry into Adrianople. However, that afternoon, following the military ceremonies, King Ferdinand returned Mehmet Sükrü Paşa's sword to him. On March 28, the Bulgarians put Mehmet Sükrü Paşa, his generals, his General Staff officers, and his personal staff on board a train and sent them to Sofia. The captured soldiers and officers were collected over the next several days and sent to a large prisoner of war camp at Sarayiçi, an island in the Tunca River. The prisoners were allowed to bring their overcoats and blankets, but were not permitted to bring rations. It took

the Bulgarians almost a week to establish a logistical system capable of handling such large numbers of prisoners and, in the meantime, cholera, dysentery, and other contagious diseases broke out in the camp. The Bulgarians treated some of the men on a temporary and sporadic basis, and as a result, many of those who had survived five months of siege died in captivity.57

The Turks began the war with 61,250 officers and men in the Adrianople fortress complex (see Chapter 4). The modern Turkish General Staff history notes that 13,000 men were killed and 28,500 survived captiv-ity.58 However these numbers leave almost 20,000 men unaccounted for. Richard Hall noted that 15,000 Turks were killed and 60,000 went into captivity.59 Bulgarian losses for the entire Adrianople campaign were set at 18,282.60 In any case, the surrender of the Adrianople fortress was a major disaster for the Turks. Inevitably, the fortress would have been starved into submission. In the climactic assault of March 25–26, the Bulgarians alone lost 1,591 men killed and 9,558 men wounded in combat operations. Hall points out that these were unnecessary casualties brought about by the aggressive national pride of Bulgaria. He further notes that the bypassed city's strategic value was nil and that it verged on starvation and surrender in late March 1913. The modern Turkish histories agree that the defender's will to fight would have collapsed by early April, and the Ottoman General Staff had more or less written off the fortress by that time as well. Ultimately, the Bulgarian political and psychological fixa-tion on Adrianople distracted them from either forging a diplomatic settlement or planning a military solution to the ever-growing, interre-lated problem of Macedonia. Indeed, while the Bulgarians were occupied in Thrace, the Greeks, the Montenegrins, and the Serbs polished off the Turks and neatly divided most of Macedonia among themselves. This left the

Bulgarians with Adrianople (for which they had not gone to war), but without much of the Macedonian lands that they coveted (for which they had). The Turks were left with yet another heroic legacy of embattled defenders fighting to the last instead of meekly surrendering to avoid starvation.

The world took note of the siege but may have misunderstood the lessons. The French military attaché in Sofia, Major Marthal, reported, "The final taking of Adrianople is all to the glory of the artillery, as a weapon."61 Other international observers felt the same and reported similar analyses about the importance of the Bulgarian and Serbian artillery. However, it must be noted that the artillery never destroyed the fighting capabilities of the earth-and-concrete Ottoman strong point system. Certainly the Bulgarian artillery performed great services in the final assaults, but its bombardments at the tactical level were brief and were followed immediately by infantry assaults. The pivotal tactical

action during the final battle was the seizure of the Bağlarönü strong point in a determined night attack by infantry. The loss of the Bağlarönü strong point enabled the Bulgarian infantry to pry open the Ottoman defenses by attacking the adjacent strong points from their flanks. World War I would confirm the European military community's operational attachment to artillery, partly perhaps because of the false lessons that it drew from battles like Adrianople.

OPERATIONS ON THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA

In the wake of the disastrous Bolayir attack on the Gallipoli Peninsula, the Ottoman General Staff determined to immediately reinforce Fahri Paşa's forces. On February 11, 1913, the General Staff issued orders to the II Provisional Reserve Corps, the 30th Nizamiye Infantry Division, and the Samsun Redif Division to prepare for shipment to Gallipoli. The Colonel Nuri Detachment was already debarking there, and these two additional infantry divisions would help restore the balance of forces on the peninsula. There remained the question, however, of how to ship the reinforcements there, as all the available transport ships were engaged in moving the Provisional X Corps.

After the aborted Şarköy amphibious operation was canceled, the Provisional X Corps put out to sea in its transports. On the night of February 11–12, 1913, Ahmet Izzet Paşa, from his field headquarters at Hadimköy on the Çatalca Lines, dispatched new orders to Hurşit Paşa that ordered his corps to the Gallipoli Peninsula and to Çanakkale. Once this was accomplished, the transports would report to Constantinople to bring the 30th Infantry Division to Gallipoli. However, Ahmet Izzet Paşa's orders also specified a critical change in the command arrangements by placing Major General Hurşit Paşa in overall command of the Gallipoli Peninsula.62 A recent biography of Atatürk attributes the change of command to the loss of confidence in Fahri Paşa, due to his defeat at Bolayir and to political infighting between Fahri Paşa and his chief of staff, Fethi, and Hurşit Paşa and his chief of staff, Enver.63 There is probably some truth to this, as Enver was a member of the inner circle of Young Turks who had seized power in January. In any case, Hurşit Paşa was appointed as Gallipoli General Forces commander (Gelibolu Kuva-i Umumiye Komutani) on February 12, 1913 (Fahri Paşa was the commander of the Provisional Force Command and was also commander of the Straits Command). Special orders regarding his assignment were sent to Hurşit Paşa from Pertev Paşa, which explained that he still retained direct command of the Provisional X Corps in addition to his new responsibilities. Apparently worried about the ramifications of reliev-

ing Fahri Paşa, Pertev Paşa immediately took ship for Gallipoli himself to ensure that the change of command went smoothly. That day he held discussions with all concerned at Gallipoli and stated that he wanted all forces off-loaded within seventy-two hours. He also confirmed the desire of the general staff to renew the offensive once the reinforcing three and a half infantry divisions were on the ground in the peninsula. Pertev Paşa returned to Constantinople at 1 P.M. the following day (February 13), leaving behind him three powerful personalities (Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver, Staff Major Mustafa Kemal, and Staff Major Fethi) to squabble about who ought to be the operations officer *(harekat şubesi müdürü)* for the newly designated Gallipoli General Forces Com-mand.64 Naturally, Enver, who was the ranking officer and Hurşit Paşa's chief of staff, won the position.

The change of command did not go well. Over the next several days, Mustafa Kemal authored a memorandum, cosigned by Fethi, to Mahmut Şevket Paşa that recommended transferring the Provisional X Corps to the Çatalca Lines to lead a relief of Adrianople.65 Fahri Paşa was also unhappy with his now reduced role, which continued to shrink. With advice from the General Staff, Hurşit Paşa revised the internal command and control arrangements of his new command on February 17, 1913. The new arrangement was based on organizationally sound principles centered on missions assigned by the General Staff. Ahmet Izzet Paşa believed that a combined Bulgarian land attack and Greek amphibious attack was in the offing, and the new

arrangements reflected this view. First, the greatly reinforced Provisional Force at Bolayir was redesignated as the Bolayir Corps and tasked to defend the neck of the peninsula. Second the Straits Command was redesignated as the Maydos Corps and tasked to defend the Dardanelles, the lower Gallipoli peninsula, and the Asian Troad. Finally, the now-debarked X Corps was given the mission of general reserve and had its 32nd Infantry Division at Gallipoli and its 31st Infantry Division at Çanakkale (in Asia). The new Maydos Corps command was offered to Brigadier General Mehmet Ali, who accepted. The new Bolayir Corps command was offered to Fahri Paşa, who declined to accept the position but was still exercising command over the provisional force and the Straits Command.

Unable to ignore the growing crisis in command on the Gallipoli Peninsula, Mahmut Şevket Paşa took leave of his duties as head of state and took ship to Gallipoli on February 20. Finding only Enver and X Corps chief of staff Staff Major Sabih physically present at the new headquarters, Mahmut Şevket Paşa reboarded the yacht *Ertugrul* (taking Enver with him) and sailed to Ecabat at 1 P.M. that day. Arriving there that evening, he summoned Hurşit Paşa, who had arrived at the Maydos Corps headquarters, to the yacht, where he confirmed the new

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command arrangements personally (Table 8.5 shows the new command arrangement).66 Later that night, Fahri Paşa was relieved of his duties. Furthermore, Mustafa Kemal was confirmed as the chief of staff of the Bolayir Corps.

Thus, over a period of one week, the entire strategic posture and command and control arrangements for the Gallipoli Peninsula were turned upside down. The old commander was relieved and a new commander and four additional infantry divisions had arrived. A crisis in command had only been averted by the direct intervention of the Ottoman head of state. Therefore, it must have come as somewhat of a surprise when, on February 22, 1913, a ciphered directive arrived from Ahmet Izzet Paşa that ordered the X Corps and the 31st Infantry Division to return to Constantinople.67 Moreover, a mountain artillery battalion, a field artillery battalion, and the 5th Cavalry Regiment were ordered to return as well. The returning forces were ordered to concentrate in the coastal village of Yeşilköy (San Stefano). The 32nd Infantry Division was left on the peninsula and remained in reserve. Apparently, the wisdom of Mustafa Kemal's memorandum had reached Ahmet Izzet Paşa, who was now determined to reopen offensive operations on the Çatalca front in March with the participation of the X Corps. On February 26, most of the 31st Infantry Division departed and the corps headquarters left that night. Movement was quick, and the last formation departed, the next day at 2:10 P.M. Of course this rapid about-face in operational posture left the peninsula without a commander. Fortunately for the Turks, the much abused Fahri Paşa had not yet departed and was reactivated to command the Gallipoli General Forces Command. For the remainder of the First Balkan War, the Gallipoli Peninsula would revert to a strategic backwa-ter within which little action occurred.

TABLE 8.5 Gallipoli General Forces Command, February 20, 1913

Maydos Corps	*Provisional X Corps*	*Bolayir Corps*	*Incoming Forces*
Edremit Redif Division	31st Infantry Division	27th Infantry Division	Provisional II Corps
Afyon Redif Division	32nd Infantry Division	30th Infantry Division	Samsun Redif Division
Çanakkale Redif Division		Provisional Nizamiye Infantry Division	
Menderes Detachment		Colonel Nuri Detachment	

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 2nci Cilt, 2nci Kisim, 1nci Kitap,* Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarkoy Çikmarmasi (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 37.

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THE SECOND BATTLE OF ÇATALCA

At the same time that General Savov ordered General Ivanov's Second Army to take Adrianople, he also ordered the First and Third Armies to retake the ground lost at Çatalca. The Ottoman attacks in February had drawn their army out of its commanding defensive line on the Çatalca ridge and left it somewhat exposed. The Çatalca Army continued local attacks during the period of March 16–19, 1913, again making some progress along the Sea of Marmara, but forfeiting the advantage of the good defensive ground that it previously had held. In the I Corps sector, the 2nd Infantry Division pushed the Bulgarians back along the coast road, and the II Corps took, and then pushed beyond, the village of Çatalca itself. Small, but pitched, battles were fought between individual formations of the opposing armies. On March 18, 1913, the 1st Rifle Regiment attacked a regiment of the Bulgarian 1st Infantry Division, which resulted in two officers and 53 men killed, twenty-six officers and 398 men wounded. The corresponding Bulgarian casualties were 72 men

killed, and seven officers and 482 men wounded.68 These levels of losses in a single day were very serious for the regiments involved and represented casualty rates of over 15 percent.

As the Çatalca Army advanced in March, Ahmet Abuk Paşa was reluctant to totally abandon the impregnable Çatalca line. The army now changed its defensive posture to accommodate this forward movement. The infantry divisions did not completely abandon their assigned positions within the system of fortified trenches and strong points that comprised the Çatalca Defensive Zone. Instead, as the assault elements pushed back the Bulgarians, the frontline infantry divisions of the II and III Corps also pushed out regimental groups that loosely held the forward line with a series of outposts and company-sized positions. Thus, the northern Ottoman corps uniformly pushed the front line about ten kilometers west. However, in the southern sector, the I Corps pushed the entire 2nd and 4th Infantry Divisions and the Independent Cavalry Brigade forward over twenty kilometers from their main defensive line position. This created a vulnerable Ottoman salient in the south, inviting a Bulgarian attack.

On March 25, the Bulgarian Army went over to the offensive at 5:45 A.M. with artillery preparations on the forward Ottoman positions. Fifteen minutes later, the Ottoman artillery began to respond with counterbattery fires. The Turks had deliberately not moved very many guns forward of the main defensive zone, so their artillery was greatly outnumbered. Moreover, although the great concentration of artillery on the Çatalca ridge could cover the forward edge of the Ottoman positions, it could not reach the Bulgarian batteries themselves. There-

fore, the great tactical artillery advantage that the Turks held in the First Battle of Çatalca was forfeited. The Bulgarians mounted another general frontal attack along the length of the front. The Bulgarian First Army's main effort employed the two-brigade 1st Infantry Division, reinforced by the 1st Brigade of the 6th Infantry Division, and was aimed at the Ottoman southern salient in the I Corps sector. A cavalry brigade provided security for the division's southern flank. The Bulgarian Third Army's main effort was provided by the 9th Infantry Division in the center and was supported by the 5th Infantry Division in the north. Once again, as in November, the Bulgarians launched an offensive with only half their available infantry strength.

The battle was not dramatic in any sense. The Bulgarians pushed along the front and drove the thin Ottoman line back uniformly about a kilometer. In the southern salient, the 2nd Infantry Division had pulled back about five kilometers to two hills west of Büyük Çekmece, called the Kartal Tepe and Muratbey Tepe. There the Turks formed a line to defend what they called the Büyük Çekmece bridgehead.69 The bridgehead was vital to future offensive operations because it put the forward edge of the Turkish positions to the west of the Büyük Çekmece Lake. The I Corps headquarters moved forward from Büyük Çekmece to the small village of Mimar Sinan, which was adjacent to the corps reserve (the 4th Infantry Division).

Although willing to give ground in the north and center of the peninsula, the Turks were determined to hold the Büyük Çekmece bridgehead in the south. Ahmet Izzet Paşa moved his field headquarters from Constantinople back to the Sanjack Tepe and colocated it with the Çatalca Army headquarters to observe the battle. He also released the newly arriving X Corps headquarters and its 31st Infantry Division to the Çatalca Army.70 These forces had been moved up from the Gallipoli Peninsula after the Şarköy invasion and were fresh and rested. Additionally, the Çatalca Army recognized that as the I Corps was compresssed into the bridgehead, it would not be able to maintain contact with its northern neighbor, the II Corps. Therefore, Ahmet Abuk Paşa ordered the III Provisional Reserve Corps, commanded by Izzat Fuat, forward into the line of battle to take up the I Corps's former positions. He also detached the 3rd Infantry Division from the II Corps and assigned it to the III Provisional Reserve Corps. Thus, as darkness fell, the III Provisional Reserve Corps was moving the 3rd Infantry Division and the Yozgat Redif Division forward to secure the open flank of the II Corps.

On the morning of March 25, the X Corps headquarters was operational in the coastal village of Yeşilkoy (San Stefano) and Hurşit Paşa was in contact with the I Corps staff. After consultations with the I Corps and the Çatalca Army, he decided to bring his incoming

31st Infantry Division directly into Büyük Çekmece. That day, Hurşit Paşa moved his headquarters forward, and by evening, both the corps headquarters and the infantry division were colocated in Büyük Çekmece and ready for combat operations.71 During the course of the day, the Bulgarians did not aggressively press their offensive and the front remained stabilized. That night Ahmet Abuk Paşa ordered a reorganization of his southern forces. He decided to split the bridgehead into two sectors of responsibility, and he assigned the I Corps the right flank (the northern sector) and the X Corps the left flank (the southern sector). This would allow a two-division front for the defense of the bridgehead. In order to provide the forces necessary for this,

the Çatalca Army detached the 4th Infantry Division from the I Corps and reassigned it to the X Corps. To replace the 4th Division as the I Corps reserve, the Çatalca Army ordered the Fatih Redif Division forward and attached it to the I Corps. That night, feeling concerned about the issue of command and control in such a small operational area, Ahmet Abuk Paşa decided to form a Left Wing *(sol kanad)* and appointed Hurşit Paşa to exercise command over both the I and X Corps. Table 8.6 shows the Çatalca Army's rapidly changing order of battle on March 25, 1913.

The revised command arrangements for the Çatalca Army show a greatly increased willingness to integrate the Redif formations into the line of battle. The original Çatalca Army's order of battle of November 1912 (refer to Chapter 4) fielded three active army corps that contained

TABLE 8.6 Ottoman Order of Battle, Çatalca Army, March 25, 1913

LEFT WING

X Corps	I Corps	III Provisional	II Corps	III Corps
4, 31 Infantry Div.	2 Infantry Div.	Reserve Corps	5, 12 Infantry Div.	7, 8, 9 Infantry Div.
Amasya Redif Div.	Fatih Redif Div.	3 Infantry Div.	Ankara Redif Div.	
Independent Cavalry Brigade		Yozgat Redif Div.		

I Provisional Reserve Corps	II Provisional Reserve Corps	Incoming from Gallipoli
29 Infantry Division	Selimiye, Aydin, Samsun Redif Divisions	Mamuretülaziz Redif Div.
Ergli, Kayseri Redif Divisions		

Çatalca Fortified Area and Artillery Command
Right Wing Artillery Area Command
Center Area Artillery Command
Left Wing Artillery Area Command

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), 2nci Cilt, 2nci Kisim, 1nci Kitap, Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarkoy Çikmarmasi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 310–320.

only active (Nizamiye) infantry divisions. After the disasters of Kirklareli and Lüleburgaz, the Redif infantry divisions were relegated to the second-line Provisional Reserve Corps. However, as a result of the intensive winter training program conducted during the armistice, the Ottoman General Staff now felt that the reservists were fit to stand in the line of battle. This was a much-needed addition to the combat capability of the Çatalca Army and allowed it to begin to field a larger number of army corps in battle. This reorganization was one of the first real signs that the winter training and rehabilitation program had been successful.

On March 26, 1913, the 4th Infantry Division went forward and assumed the positions of the 6th Infantry Regiment and the 1st Rifle Regiment centered on Kartal Tepe, allowing these regiments to deploy north into the 2nd Infantry Division sector (now centered on Muratbey Tepe). That morning, Ahmet Izzet Paşa drove by automobile from Hadimköy to Büyük Çekmece for a personal view of the new front.72 He also directed the naval staff to send a liaison officer to Mimar Sinan to coordinate naval gunfire from the fleet. At the army level, Ahmet Abuk Paşa, who was concerned about the southern salient, released the Amasya Redif Division and ordered it forward to Büyük Çekmece. The Turks now had four infantry divisions in the bridgehead and one immediately behind it.

The Bulgarian attacks continued, but by the end of the day they had made little progress along the length of the front. The 2nd Brigade of the Bulgarian 1st Infantry Division mounted a hasty attack on the newly formed Left Wing's defensive line, but failed. This was partially due to the effects of the 280mm and 105mm naval gunfire support from the *Barbaras Hayreddin* and the *Turgut Reis* (escorted by the *Berk-i Satvet, Yarhisar,* and *Demirhisar*), which had arrived off Kumburgaz at 1 P.M. and immediately began to pound the enemy.73

Over the course of March 27–28, 1913, the Bulgarians continued to press with renewed attacks along the entire front, slowly pushing the Turks back to the east. On March 28, in the bridgehead, Hurşit Paşa pushed his 31st Infantry Division forward to reserve positions immediately behind the 4th Infantry Division. He also moved the now colocated headquarters group (the Left Wing command group, the I Corps headquarters, and the X Corps headquarters) forward to Mimar Sinan. In the I Corps sector, the Fatih Redif Division moved closer to the front lines as well. The next day, the 91st and 92nd Infantry Regiments of the 31st Infantry Division, supported by five batteries of field artillery, attacked through the lines of the 4th Infantry Division and took the adjacent Bulgarian positions on Üç Tepeler (the Three Hills). Over the same period, the 2nd Infantry Division repelled a Bulgarian attack on the Muratbey Tepe.

Encouraged by these successes, Hurşit Paşa and his chief of staff, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver, decided on the evening of March 29 to launch a pursuit operation *(takip harekete)* on the following morning. Working rapidly, the corps staffs sent out orders and coordination measures that night. Conceptually, all uncommitted reserves would be brought forward, including the newly arrived Independent Cavalry Brigade, and launched into a massive attack on the 2nd Brigade of the Bulgarian 1st Infantry Division. The III Provisional Reserve Corps was ordered to support the Left Wing's pursuit operation with a flanking attack. Written operations orders were in the hands of the troops by 10:45 A.M. on March 30. The Ottoman field artillery began to fire at ranges of thirty-two hundred meters at 1:15 P.M., supported by the fires of the battleship *Barbaras Hayreddin* and the torpedo boat *Pek-i Şevket*.74 The infantry followed shortly thereafter. These short, but powerful, attacks were quite effective and broke the enemy line. The Bulgarians were forced to withdraw about fifteen hundred meters by nightfall.

Over the course of the night, the Turks brought a volunteer detachment of seventeen hundred men into the bridgehead by ship. The detachment was put ashore from ferryboats at Çöplüce (modern Güzelce) and was immediately marched east by the coast road to Kumburgaz. The volunteers were brought forward into the line early in the morning, and at 11 A.M. on March 31, 1913, the X Corps launched a powerful, all-or-nothing attack in their sector. This attack was composed of the regimental-sized volunteer detachment, the 91st and 93rd Infantry Regiments, and the 4th Rifle Battalion. In the adjacent I Corps sector, the 6th Infantry Regiment launched a supporting attack. However, by this late date, the Bulgarians had brought the 1st brigade of the 1st Infantry Division on line with the 2nd Brigade, thereby doubling their forces in contact with the enemy. The Ottoman attack was beaten back with little difficulty, and by 5:30 P.M., the reports of failure were trickling into the Ottoman corps headquarters. The pursuit operations had failed at a cost (in both Ottoman corps) of four officers killed, ten officers wounded, and one officer captured, plus 127 men killed, 471 wounded, and 123 men missing. Additionally, fifty-three draft animals were killed and fifty-seven were wounded.75

Minor combat continued as both sides launched local attacks that attempted to secure some local advantage. By April 3, 1913, the series of battles known as the Second Battle of Çatalca was over. The Turks had been pushed back into the valley below the Çatalca ridge line, but they had expanded their bridgehead along the Sea of Marmara. The operation was costly to both sides, but to no good strategic or operational purpose. The Bulgarians lost almost three thousand men, and the Turks probably lost as many. Ahmet Izzet Paşa retained an intense interest in the security of the Büyük Çekmece bridgehead and

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continued to demand reports directly from Hurşit Paşa.76 Over the course of the next several days, the Ottoman corps were notified that a second armistice was likely. In the bridgehead, the Turks turned to the messy task of cleaning up the dead and the debris of war. On April 8, the 4th Infantry Division collected and buried 303 dead Bulgarians in its sector. On the same day, the 2nd Infantry Division collected up and buried 133 more.77 Prisoner of war lists were exchanged that resulted in the status of twenty-two Turks being reclassified from dead to prisoner of war. The next day, the cavalry regiments were sent to neighboring farms to graze their horses. April 15, 1913, marked the conclusion at Çatalca of the second armistice, which brought to a close active combat operations in Thrace.

The Second Battle of Çatalca showcased the growing Ottoman capability to reorganize corps and divisions rapidly under combat conditions. The overnight creation of the Left Wing and the rapid regrouping of formations to support the pursuit operation indicated a high degree of standardization and common thinking at the operational level. Although the problem with offensive operations continued at the tactical levels, this presaged the oncoming tactical dynamic of 1914 rather than demonstrated any particular weakness in the Ottoman Army. The coordination between the army and navy continued at a fairly high level of efficiency as well. Most important, the Ottoman Army proved conclu-sively that it could stand in the field successfully (as opposed to defending the almost impregnable Çatalca position) against the Bulgarian Army.

NOTES

1. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 2nci Kisim 1nci Kitap, Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarköy Çikmarmasi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 99–100.
2. Ibid., 189. The Mamuretülaziz Redif Infantry Division, commanded by Colonel Nuri, is referred to as the Harput Redif Infantry Division by Ismet Görgülü in *On Yillik Harbin Kadrosu 1912–1922* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kuruk Basimevi, 1993), 31.
3. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 190.
4. Ibid., 187–189.
5. Richard C.Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2000),

80–81.
6. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* Chart 4.
7. Ibid., 125–127.
8. Ibid., 129.
9. Ibid., 140–141.
10. *Hall, The Balkan Wars,* 80–81.
11. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 170–174.
12. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 81.
13. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 192.

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14. Ibid., 193.
15. Ibid., 197.
16. Ibid., 200.
17. Ibid., 200.
18. Ibid., 202–203. Selimiye Barracks was the site of Florence Nightingale's hospital during the Crimean War. Today the barracks is the headquarters of the Turkish First Army, and the Florence Nightingale tower houses both the army's library and a small museum dedicated to the "Lady of the Lamp."
19. Ibid., 206–207.
20. Ibid., 212. For an excellent, although brief, English-language chronology of the unfolding operation, see Bernd Langensiepen and Ahmet Güleryüz, *The Ottoman Steam Navy, 1828–1923* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1995), 25.
21. Ibid., 214.
22. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), VIInci Cilt, Osmanli Deniz Harekati, 1912–1913* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 208.
23. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve,* 218–219.
24. Ibid., 218.
25. Ibid., 219.
26. Ibid., 226.
27. Ibid., 230–231.
28. Ibid., 233–234.
29. Ibid., 236.
30. Ibid., Maps 33, 34.
31. Ibid., Map 36.
32. Ibid., 242–243.
33. Turkish General Staff, *Osmanli Deniz Harekati,* 208–209.
34. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 281.
35. Ibid., 282.
36. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 82.
37. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 3ncü Kisim, Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 262.
38. Ibid., 262–263.
39. Ibid., 273.
40. Ibid., 274.
41. Ibid., 277–278.
42. Ibid., 278–279.
43. Ibid., 284–285.
44. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 87.
45. Ibid.
46. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler,* 286.
47. Ibid., 288.
48. Ibid., 463. For breakfast the Ottoman troops were fed vinegar and flour soup three days a week and cheese on the other four days.
49. Ibid., 288.
50. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 88.
51. Ibid.
52. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler,* 310.
53. Ibid., 302.

54. Ibid., 305–306.
55. Ibid., 334.

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56. Ibid., 338.
57. Ibid., 339.
58. Ibid., 471.
59. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 90.
60. Ibid., 90.
61. Ibid., 89.
62. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 244.
63. Andrew Mango, *Atatürk, The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey,* Woodstock, New York: The Overlook Press, 1999), 118.
64. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 246–247.
65. Mango, *Atatürk, The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey,* 119.
66. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 261–262.
67. Ibid., 263.
68. Ibid, 308.
69. Ibid., 319.
70. Ibid., 316. For reasons not explained in the modern Turkish General Staff campaign histories, the X Corps headquarters was temporarily designated as the Provisional X Corps during the Şarköy amphibious operation. When it was returned to the control of a designated field army headquarters (in this case, the Çatalca Army), the headquarters was again called the X Corps.
71. Ibid., 316–317.
72. Ibid., 318.
73. Turkish General Staff, *Osmanli Deniz Harekati,* 218–219.
74. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 319 and Map 46.
75. Ibid., 349–350.
76. Ibid., 355–356.
77. Ibid., 357.

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9
The Western Theater: Greece and Albania, 1913
THE FIRST BATTLE OF YANYA (JANINA)
In the absence of an armistice with Greece, combat operations continued in Epirus in December 1912 and January 1913. By December 13, 1912, Esat Paşa's Independent Yanya Corps had withdrawn into a defensive ring just outside the perimeter forts of the Yanya fortress. The Greek Army of Epirus, now reinforced with the 2nd Infantry Division and expecting further reinforcements, continued to press and harry the Turks. On that same day, the commander of the Army of Epirus ordered a continuation of offensive operations with the objective of encircling the Bijan Fort (called the Bizani Fort in Greek sources), which was considered the key to the fortress. The Bijan Fort was the strongest defensive work in the chain of forts surrounding the city, and it controlled the avenue of approach from Loros (see Map 9.1).
The Greeks planned to use the newly arrived Greek 2nd Infantry Division to attack and capture the Manulasa Tepe (Manoliasa Hill), which was located to the southwest of the Bijan Fort. Simultaneously, an ad hoc collection of independent formations, which the Greeks designated as Joint Detachment A, attacked toward Hill 987 and the village of Lüzeç (located to the southeast of the fort).1 They formed and tasked a smaller Joint Detachment B to hold the line between the two encircling forces.
Battalions from the Pirmedi, Avalonya, and Malakas Redif Infantry Regiments lightly held the Ottoman line. Behind the forward forces, however, were the newly arrived 21st Infantry Division, the 19th and 23rd Infantry Divisions, and the Yanya Redif Infantry Division.

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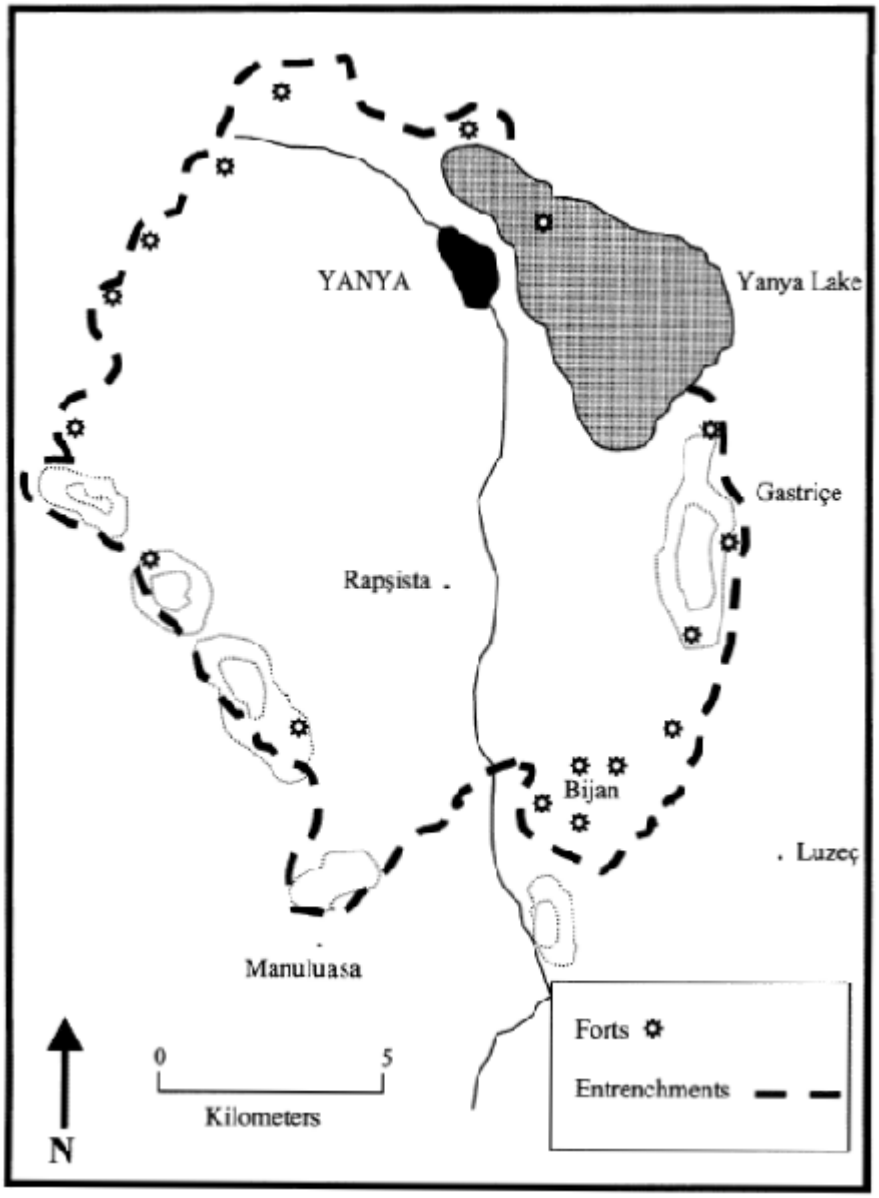

Map 9.1 The Yanya Fortress, December 1912.

Moreover, the powerful artillery of the Bijan Fort covered, and supported, the forward line of Ottoman troops.2

The Greeks launched their attacks on December 14, beginning about 8:30 in the morning. The Greek 2nd Infantry Division attacked the Redif infantry on the Manulasa Tepe. After fierce fighting, the less

well disciplined reservists broke, and the Greeks took the hill at 2:30 P.M. To the east, the simultaneous attack by Joint Detachment A also succeeded in seizing its initial objectives. That night, at 8 P.M. Esat Paşa's Independent Yanya Corps headquarters issued its Operations Order Number 15 to Brigadier General Cavit Paşa's 21st Infantry Division.3 The operations order noted that a Greek infantry regiment and an artillery battery had occupied the Manulasa position, and it directed Cevat's division to counterattack and retake the hill. On the morning of December 15, Cavit Paşa attacked with his 61st and 68th Infantry Regiments. The Turks were successful, and by 2:30 P.M. they had ejected the Greeks and reoccupied the positions. Meanwhile, Cavit Paşa took control of the Pirmedi Redif Infantry Battalion and deployed it on his right flank to prevent an ongoing encirclement by Greek volunteer bands. The Turks called this fight the Battle of Manulasa. They lost 60 men killed and 150 wounded. The Greeks lost 33 dead and 325 wounded. However, the Greek official history lists a casualty rate of about half these numbers.4

On the same day, the Greek Joint Detachment A conducted another attack in an attempt to capture the Bijan Fort. However, after slight gains, it bogged down against the Ottoman 67th and 69th Infantry Regiments (23rd Infantry Division). At 9:30 P.M. that night (December 15), the Independent Yanya Corps issued Operations Order Number 16.5 Although this operations order identified the attack of the Greek detachment

as an important threat to the integrity of the Ottoman position, the corps ordered a continued defense of the eastern flank of the Bijan Fort instead of the more conventional, counterattack response. However, this order also directed the activation of the Provisional 1st Infantry Division under the command of Colonel Fethi, which was composed of the 31st and 59th Infantry Regiments.6 The newly organized provisional division was ordered forward the following day.

On December 16, the Army of Epirus again ordered continued offensive operations on both flanks. The reinforced Turks held their lines against these attacks, partly because the very foggy conditions made Greek command and control difficult. That night, Esat Paşa decided to mount an attack to push the Greeks away from the proximity of the Bijan Fort. During the night, he reorganized his order of battle by activating the Provisional 2nd Infantry Division under the command of Colonel Hüsnü. The colonel was the commander of the Ottoman 18th Infantry Division, which had been parceled out in small groups during the campaign. The 18th had five battalions in Işkodra, its artillery was attached to another division, and its rifle battalion was in Leskovikte. This left Colonel Hüsnü with only three battalions of troops. Therefore, Esat cobbled together a second provisional division of the 61st, 62nd,

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and 63rd Infantry Regiments; a provisional infantry regiment; and a battery of mountain artillery for Colonel Hüsnü to command.7 Esat then sent his new Provisional 2nd Infantry Division forward to relieve Cavit's 21st Infantry Division in the forward line. That night the 21st began to pull back to Rapşista. Esat then sent his Provisional 1st Infantry Division to reinforce the line on the east flank of the Bijan Fort. Despite the continuance of the foggy conditions on the morning of December 17, the Ottoman artillery opened fire along the length of the front. The Greek artillery immediately began to return fire. Colonel Hüsnü's division was now in place and launched an immediate attack. Although bearing the designation *provisional,* his command was composed largely of Nizamiye regiments, which successfully pushed the Greek 2nd Infantry Division back several kilometers.

Esat Paşa was now determined to exploit the tactical advantage he had gained by bringing almost all his mobile troops to the decisive area surrounding the Bijan Fort, and he decided to launch an offensive to gain the initiative. His concept was blunt: His divisions on both flanks would simply attack the Greeks in front of their positions. In the center, where very little action had occurred over the past several days, the Yanya Redif Division would attack as well. Early on December 18, 1912, Esat Paşa's attack began. From west to east, he attacked with the Provisional 2nd Division, the Yanya Redif Division, the Provisional 1st Division, and the 19th Infantry Division. The attacks quickly overran the forward enemy positions, but by midday, determined Greek counterattacks had pushed the Turks back to their starting positions. The attacks were expensive to the Turks; for example, out of 1,150 men in the Avalonya Redif Regiment, only 400 remained fit for action by nightfall.8 Nevertheless, Esat Paşa decided to continue his attacks.

Early on December 19, the artillery of the Bijan and Gastriçe Forts began to pound the Greek positions. Shortly thereafter, the divisional artilleries joined in. Then Esat repeated the infantry attacks from the previous day, with predictably dismal results. The Turks made initial progress, but again, determined Greek counterattacks ejected the Turks, by 6 P.M. that night. The 19th Infantry Division was particularly hard hit and lost 250 men killed (including two captains and four lieutenants) and over 300 men wounded. That night, Esat Paşa brought the 13th Infantry Division down from Yanya to reinforce his reserve and he decided, once again, to attack the Greeks.

On the morning of December 20 at 7 A.M., the artillery from the Bijan Fort began to pound the Greeks, and the Ottoman infantry went over the top an hour later. The Turks again quickly gained entry into the Greeks positions and were once again hit by counterattacks, at 11 A.M. Again the Turks failed in their attempt to carry the Greek positions. The

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day had been as spectacularly unsuccessful as the two previous days, but as night fell, Esat again decided to continue his offensive, using the newly arrived 13th Infantry Division. At 9:44 P.M., he issued Independent Yanya Corps Operations Order 19 (see Table 9.1).

Again Esat began with artillery and followed an hour later with infantry attacks. He launched the 13th Infantry Division through the Provisional 1st Division sector. They gained the Greek trenches and encountered the usual counterattack. However, on this day, the determined Turks repelled the Greeks, kept pushing, and broke the Greeks' lines. In the west, the Provisional 2nd Infantry Division swept up and over the Manulasa Tepe (about two kilometers altogether). In the east, the Provisional 1st Infantry Division and the 13th and 19th Infantry Divisions pushed the Greeks back over one kilometer. All day long, jubilant reports from the front poured into Esat's headquarters.9 That night, the aggressive Esat decided to continue his attacks and

issued Operations Order Number 19 at 10 P.M.10 This order essentially re-

TABLE 9.1 Independent Yanya Corps Operations Order Number 19, December 20, 1912 (Summary)

1. From Oliçka to the Narda River the enemy has retreated from the corps front. We have the 13th Infantry Division in reserve at Kocolos.
2. Tomorrow (December 21, 1912) the corps will continue the attack.
3. The Provisional 2nd Infantry will advance and will attack the enemy to their front. The corps will send Staff Captain Vecihi to the division command post tonight.
4. The Yanya Redif Division will also advance and will guard the left flank of the Provisional 2nd Division.
5. Units in the center, near the Bijan Fort, will stage a demonstration attack.
6. The 13th Infantry Division will come forward tomorrow toward Lüçez not later that 6:50 A.M. tomorrow and will prepare to attack not later than 8:20 A.M. (on December 21). It will receive its final orders then.
7. Tonight and tomorrow morning the 13th Infantry Division will send its machine-gun company, [plus] three artillery and one mountain artillery batteries forward to support the Provisional 1st Infantry Division and the 19th Infantry Division.
8. Tomorrow the 19th Infantry Division will continue to attack.
9. During the operation, the corps commander will be at the headquarters of the 13th Infantry Division.
10. During the night, all corps formations will make all necessary preparations for the attack.

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, 2nci Kisim, Garp Ordusu, Vardar Ordusu, Yunan Cephesi Harekati (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 551–553.

peated his tactical plan contained in Operations Order Number 18, except that he positioned himself at the Bijan Fort.

On December 22, 1912, the Independent Yanya Corps launched its final attacks of the year on the Greek Army of Epirus. This time, Esat's attacks were mildly successful and pushed the Greeks back another kilometer. The Turks captured quantities of ammunition and supplies, hundreds of rifles, a machine gun, and two artillery pieces. By nightfall, Esat's troops had pushed the Greeks well off the high-ground positions threatening the Bijan Fort, which they had occupied in the second week of December. The immediate threat to the Bijan Fort was ended.

Esat Paşa had won an important defensive victory, which would (cumulatively) become known as the First Battle of Yanya. This was accomplished at some cost in casualties to the Turks. In the battle, Esat demonstrated great determination to persevere to victory and often positioned himself within a kilometer of the front. He also demonstrated a growing ability to react quickly to unfolding events and to move troops rapidly around on the battlefield. In this battle, he experienced little of the trouble in coordinating attacks that he had experienced in November. During the battle, he brought the bulk of his mobile forces to the decisive point and succeeded in getting all of them into the fight. It was an admirable performance. However, the battle was costly to the Independent Yanya Corps, and strength returns over the next several days showed greatly depleted formations (Table 9.2 shows the strength of the corps on December 23, 1912).

TABLE 9.2 Independent Yanya Corps Strength, December 23, 1912

Formation	*Officers*	*Men*
Provisional 1st Division	78	1,419
Provisional 2nd Division	122	4,162
13th Infantry Division	166	3,785
19th Infantry Division	50*	2,400*
23rd Infantry Division	158	7,119
Yanya Redif Division	101	5,322
Fortress Area Command	57	1,632
Total	732	25,839

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, 2nci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu, Yunan Cephesi Harekati (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 560–561.

* Estimated.

THE BATTLES OF DRISTINIK AND AYDONAT

There was very little significant activity on either side over the 1913 New Year. The Turks reorganized their order of battle somewhat. Esat organized the Provisional 3rd Infantry Division from elements of the 13th and 19th Infantry Divisions and gave it to the chief of staff of the 19th Infantry Division, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Faik. He also attached some additional forces to the 13th Infantry Division and redesignated it as the Galip Paşa Detachment (after its commander, Brigadier General Galip Paşa). While these changes did not add force structure, they eased the command and control problem by placing the Manulasa Tepe position under a single commander (Galip Paşa) and the Lüzeç position under another, single commander (Colonel Faik).11

The Army of Epirus, in the meantime, received substantial reinforcements from the Army of Thessaly. On December 12, 1912, the Greek 4th Infantry Division embarked on ships at Salonika bound for Preveze. This division arrived on the Yanya front on December 27, containing 228 officers and 10,068 men. On January 4, 1913, the Greek 6th Infantry Division departed Salonika and arrived at Preveze on January 9. The 6th Infantry Division contained 110 officers, 7,400 men, and 1,800 draft animals. Within a week, this division had closed on the Yanya front as well. The Greek high command also sent the 7th Infantry Regiment by ship from the newly captured Aegean island of Chios (four infantry battalions, a mountain artillery battery, and four machine guns, which altogether comprised some 4,500 troops) to Preveze on January 13.12 These forces gave the Greeks a substantial numerical advantage over the Independent Yanya Corps by mid-January 1913.

There were two small-scale battles in early January 1913. The first occurred just to the north of Yanya Lake on January 5–6, 1913, and is known as the Battle of Dristinik. A battalion-sized detachment of some one thousand men under Captain Bekir attacked a Greek force that included some Greek marines. The results were inconclusive, and each side suffered minimal losses. To the south along the Adriatic Sea, a mixed Greek force attacked the thinly held Ottoman lines on January 6 with the objective of driving north and possibly flanking Yanya. The battle lasted several days, but by January 15, the Greek offensive died out in front of the village of Aydonat (which gave its name to the battle). The Greeks gained several kilometers of ground, but to no appreciable purpose.

By the middle of January, there had been no major changes in the tactical situation along the Greek front. However, at the strategic level, the reinforced Greek Army of Epirus now had a substantial margin of superiority over the Turks. The Greeks now had about forty thousand men on hand, armed with eighty-one pieces of field and mountain

artillery. The Greeks had also brought forward two mixed heavy artillery batteries with a total of twelve 105mm and 155mm heavy field guns.13 Esat Paşa's force remained largely unchanged from the strength returns of December 23 (about twenty-seven thousand men).

THE SECOND BATTLE OF YANYA

Orders to resume the offensive went out from the headquarters of the Army of Epirus on January 2, 1913.14 The proposed operation was uninspired and simply concentrated the newly arrived reinforcements from Salonika into the existing positions from which they would attack frontally. The Turks had observed the increasing numbers that were being brought against them and were expecting a major attack, but for days on end, the front was unusually quiet. Finally on the morning of January 20 at 8 A.M., the Greeks began preparatory artillery fires, which lasted until 11:30 A.M. According to the Greek official history, these preparatory fires completely neutralized the Turkish gun batteries in the Bijan Fort.15 The Greek infantry attacks immediately followed the lull in firing across the length of the front. The Greek main effort was directed against Esat's Provisional 3rd Infantry Division by the Greek 6th Infantry Division and the reorganized Epirus Infantry Division (composed of a Cretan infantry regiment, the 15th Infantry Regiment, and three battalions of Evzones). Ottoman firing resumed, and many of the field artillery batteries ran short of shells; however, the well dug in, and ready, Turks repulsed the Greeks with little difficulty. By 3:30 P.M., the Greek offensive stalled to a halt.

That night, Esat held a commander's conference at the headquarters of the Yanya Redif Infantry Division on Yeşil Tepe (Green Hill). He was convinced that the Greek attack would continue in the morning and concerned that the Greeks would again achieve artillery fire superiority. Finally, Esat speculated that the enemy was attempting to encircle Yanya. He ended the conference by issuing orders to his commanders to stand fast at all costs.

On the morning of January 22, the Greeks began to advance at 8 A.M., without the benefit of a sustained artillery preparation. The Ottoman Galip Paşa Detachment and the Redif formations held their positions on the Manulasa Tepe and in the center, respectively. However, in the eastern Lüzeç position, the 3rd Provisional Infantry Division was en-countering difficulty in holding back the Greek Epirus and 6th Infantry Divisions. As the Greeks overcame Turkish resistance, Colonel Faik's regiments (the 31st, 38th, and 57th Infantry Regiments) began to fall back toward the village of Lüzeç, where they briefly formed a defensive line to halt the enemy onslaught. They failed and continued to retreat

into the hardened fortifications of the Bijan Fort itself. The Greek advance in the east was extremely successful, and by nightfall the Greeks were back in the positions they had last held on December 15, 1912. The other flanking attacks by the Greek 2nd and 4th Infantry Divisions failed, leaving the western half of the front unchanged.

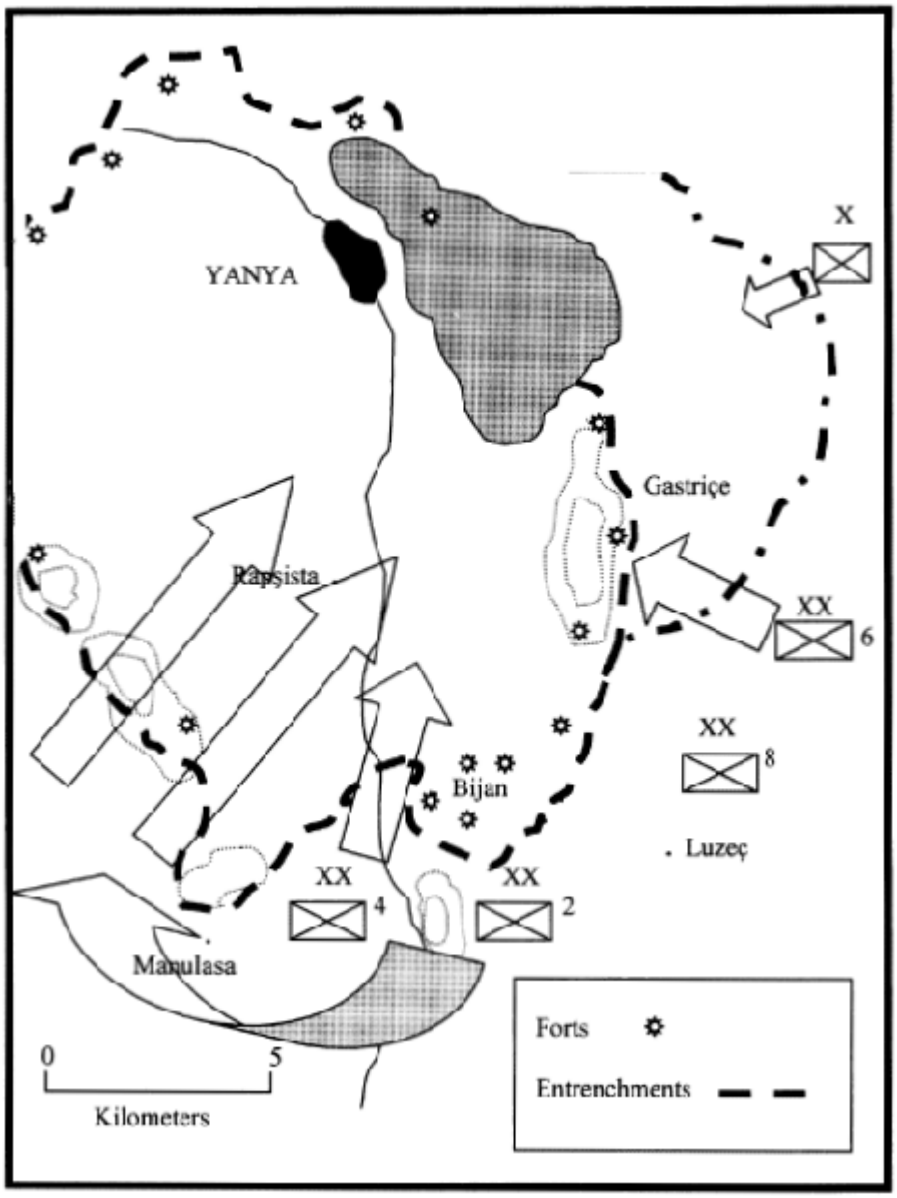
On the following day, the weather deteriorated and the Army of Epirus called off further attacks. The Turkish histories do not thoroughly explain the collapse of the Provisional 3rd Infantry Division and the loss of the Lüzeç position. It is likely, however, that the absence of a three-hour artillery preparation fooled the Turks. Certainly, Esat was expecting them to repeat their performance on January 24. This probably allowed the Greek infantry to close significantly on the Turkish positions before the Turks were aware that the main attack was in progress. At the tactical level, it could be maintained that, although Esat lost some ground, the Turks won the Second Battle of Yanya. The large superiority in men that the Greeks assembled over the New Year period did not prove to be decisive. They would have to bring up more troops to take Yanya.

Finally, in late January 1913, renewed conflict erupted along the Adriatic front near Aydonat. The small Ottoman coastal group launched a counterattack on the Greeks on January 23, in what the Turks would call the Battle of Çamlik. The battle lasted until January 27 and resulted in the Greeks being pushed back about ten kilometers. The battle restored the ground that the Turks lost in the Battle of Aydonat. The Ottoman casualties were very light.

THE FALL OF YANYA (THIRD BATTLE OF YANYA)

The Yanya front was very quiet during the period of late January through early March 1913. The Greeks contented themselves with bringing up more troops, while the Turks hardened their defenses. The Greeks formed the new Metsovo Joint Brigade from regiments of the 1st Infantry Division and sent it to Yanya. They also redesignated the Epirus Infantry Division as the 8th Infantry Division. Additionally, the Greek general staff sent forward more artillery battalions. Throughout the month of February, the Greeks maintained a constant, but sporadic, shelling of the Ottoman forts and also continued the planning process for a final attack on the Yanya fortress. Map 9.2 shows the situation in early March 1913.

At 7 A.M. on March 4, 1913, the Greek divisional artilleries began firing preparations at the Ottoman forts, and one hour later, the heavy artillery of the Army of Epirus joined in. In this day-long bombardment, the Greeks expended about 150 rounds per gun. The return fires of the



Map 9.2 The Third Battle of Yanya, March 5–6, 1913.
Turkish artillery were not particularly effective as many of the field guns were down to ten rounds of ammunition. Eleven officers and fifty-three men were killed in the Bijan Fort in these bombardments. The main Greek attack was not aimed directly at the Bijan Fort. Rather, the Greeks intended to overrun the Manulasa Tepe position with an assault

column from the 4th Infantry Division, while two other columns (from the 2nd and 4th Infantry Divisions) drove through the western perimeter of the Yanya fortress. The 6th and 8th Infantry Divisions would simultaneously attack the eastern side of the Bijan Fort from the Lüzeç area. In order to deceive Esat further, the Metsovo Joint Brigade would launch a diversionary attack to the north of Yanya Lake.
The next day, in clear weather, the Greek artillery renewed their firing and the assault columns began to make their way forward. By 7:30 A.M., the Third Column had breached the Ottoman lines in the western sector at Çuka. The final battle and encirclement had begun. The Greek First Column began its attack on the 2nd Provisional Infantry Division at 9:30 A.M. The Turks understood what was at stake and fired off hundreds of rounds of ammunition.16 However, by noon, the aggressive Greeks were inside the Manulasa position and were poised to exploit their success. By 2:30 P.M., the Greeks had broken into the Ottoman defensive perimeter in five separate locations. Esat Paşa's reserves were centrally positioned near Rapşista, but because of the collapsing perimeter, he had to maintain them in place to stop the Greeks from cutting off his forward elements. Thus, instead of mounting counterattacks as planned, Esat's reserves were pinned in place in a defensive role. The Turks, weakened by months of isolation, were unable to halt the well-planned Greek attacks, and by 4 P.M. the three columns had cut off, and isolated, the Bijan and Gastriçe Forts. As darkness

fell on March 5, the Ottoman artillery within the isolated forts ceased firing. Throughout the night, the Ottoman infantry began to pull out through gaps in the porous Greek encirclement.
That night, many of the Turkish defenders resolved to surrender, and at dawn the following morning, white flags were observed flying in many of the Ottoman positions. In the city itself, Esat attempted to pull out as many troops, artillery pieces, and wagons as possible, hoping to send them north. He was successful in getting out thousands of sick and injured soldiers from the fortress hospital.17 Most of the Galip Paşa Detachment escaped the encirclement. During the day of March 6, the victorious Greeks steadily compressed the remaining pockets of Turks into smaller areas. At 7 P.M., Esat sent his corps surgeon, Doctor Lieutenant Colonel Süleyman Numan, to the foreign consulates in the city (Austrian, French, Romanian, and Russian) to seek help in negotiating a surrender. The consulate officers wrote a letter appealing to the Greeks to stop the senseless destruction, which they gave to two Ottoman officers to carry to the Greek lines. These officers, accompanied by the Bishop of Dodana, reached the outposts of the 9th Evezone Battalion at 11:30 P.M. The officers were taken to the Greek army headquarters, where terms were quickly put in place. At 4 A.M. on March 6, 1913, a tentative surrender letter was signed. The Greek Cavalry Regiment

entered the city at 9 A.M. that day and received the surrender of the Turks. The Third Battle of Yanya was over, although special surrender instructions had to be relayed to the defenders of the Bijan and Gastriçe Forts, who stoutly maintained resistance to the last. The actual protocol was signed at 12:30 and contained only two paragraphs, which stated that the Yanya Fortified Area and all its troops were surrendered as prisoners of war.
The Greek victory was total and at very slight cost: 284 dead in the three assault columns.18 In the final battle of Yanya, the Turks lost about 2,800 men dead and had about 8,600 men collected up as prisoners. The remainder escaped the cauldron and fled into Albania. The battle was yet another disaster for Ottoman arms. Over 26,000 men were lost to the army, as well as 108 artillery pieces and the entire logistical facility of the Yanya Fortified Area. Moreover, the 13th, 19th, 21st, and 23rd Nizamiye Divisions and the Yanya Redif Division were stricken from the Ottoman divisional order of battle.
During the five weeks before the Third Battle of Yanya, the Greeks grew steadily stronger while the Turks grew weaker. It was not the Greek superiority in numbers that won the day; rather, it was solid planning and staff work by the Army of Epirus. The multicolumn assault on separate axes was well coordinated and executed. Esat was unable to commit his reserves in a timely fashion because of the nearly simultaneous enemy breakthroughs in his lines. Although defeated, Esat Paşa's able defense of the city and fortress of Yanya was an inspiration to the people of the Ottoman Empire. After the war, Esat would return to a hero's welcome.
For the remainder of March 1913, the Greeks pushed north along the coast and northwest from Yanya. Ottoman opposition was dispirited and ineffective. By the third week of March, the Greeks had cleared the province of Epirus of Turks and were advancing on Pirmedi. The Turks slowly pulled back into Albania.

THE MONTENEGRIN FRONT

A telegraph message on the night of December 4–5, 1912, confirming the armistice from the Western Army, found Ferik Mahmut Hayret Paşa in Berat. The following day, he dispatched a message to Işkodra and also sent Staff Captain Avni to ensure that the details were satisfactorily settled. On December 6, the Turks sent a steamer under a white flag across the Işkodra Lake to a meeting with Montenegrin officers about the details of the cease-fire. Additionally, the Turks notified the German and French consulates and requested their assistance in helping to secure a halt to hostilities. The consulates sent letters to the local

Montenegrin authorities and commanders explaining that their country had signed the armistice agreement on December 4.19
Unfortunately, certain elements of the Montenegrin Army failed to observe the armistice, so the fighting continued in some sectors of the front. The modern Turkish official history notes that two battles were fought during the armistice. The first was a drawn-out affair that lasted from December 3 until December 28 and was called the Battle of Yamurta Tepe (Egg Hill). The 3rd Company, 3rd Battalion, 71st Infantry Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Fehmi, occupied a strong point on the hill. He had several artillery pieces with him and had fortified the position. The Montenegrins repeatedly attacked his position, and Lieutenant Fehmi was reinforced with fifty Nizamiye and Redif soldiers and several machine guns. A final enemy attack strongly supported with artillery attempted to encircle Fehmi's command, but failed. Eventually, the Montenegrins quit their assaults, and a company under Lieutenant Mustafa relieved Fehmi's company.20
In another violation of the armistice, the Ottoman group in Pistuli, reported on the night of December 14–15,

1912, that there was suspi-cious enemy activity near Zadrima.21 This group was a part of the force facing the Serbs to the south (who had driven to the Adriatic Sea and isolated Işkodra). The Ottoman detachment was commanded by Jandarma Major Rifit and was composed of the 2nd Battalion, 54th Infantry Regiment; a company of the 3rd Battalion, 50th Infantry Regiment; and a company from the Elbasan Redif Battalion. It appeared to Major Rifit that the Serbs were trying to secure the commanding positions on hills overlooking his positions, in violation of the cease-fire. These reports prompted Colonel Cemal, the detachment commander, to send his command (the 70th Infantry Regiment and the 24th Rifle Battalion) as immediate reinforcements. Arriving in Pistuli on December 16, 1912, Cemal threw his force up and over the dominating hills that the Serbian Army was attempting to secure. The Serbs rapidly withdrew, and there was little gunfire. Cemal's men continued to push east, and that night they encountered entrenched Serb positions. Now incensed by what he considered provocative enemy actions, Colonel Cemal decided to attack the enemy. In very foggy conditions, at 9:40 A.M. on December 17, the troops of the Ottoman 2nd Battalion, 70th Infantry Regiment, attacked troops of the Serb Army's 5th and 6th Infantry Regiments.

The Battle of Zadrima now began in earnest. Within short order, the Turks broke into the Serb trenches and took fifteen prisoners. The battle intensified as the mists and fog cleared, and Lieutenant Bakir (the leader of the assault element) was cut down and killed by enemy machine-gun fire. By 12:10 P.M., the Turks were in possession of the Serb positions, and Colonel Cemal decided to end his pursuit. The battle was costly to

the assaulting battalion. The Turks lost one officer killed and one wounded plus twenty-three men killed and seventy-two wounded.22 The Turks claimed to have killed and wounded a total of eight hundred Serbs (which seems unlikely).

In a report to the Ottoman chief of staff on December 27, 1912, the Işkodra commander, Colonel Hasan Riza noted that the situation was "extremely favorable."23 Hasan Riza explained about the cease-fire violations and also happily reported that he had not only repelled the Serbs but also had inflicted large numbers of casualties on them. This news was not well received in Constantinople, however, and the General Staff chastised Mahmut Hayret Paşa for allowing the cease-fire to disintegrate. There were other incidents as well that involved ex-changes of fire near Kir and Ova on December 16 and December 24–25, respectively.

To mediate this deteriorating situation, the Turks continued to press the local consulates in Işkodra to assist in helping to stabilize the cease-fire. However, minor incidents continued to occur throughout the armistice. Perhaps the most serious breach of the cease-fire happened very close to the end of the first armistice, on January 30, 1913. The commander of the Işkodra garrison, Colonel Hasan Riza, went out to personally conduct discussions with Albanian Muslim and Catholic religious leaders. By the time he returned (6:45 P.M.), it was past nightfall and extremely dark. On the way back to the corps headquarters, the colonel and his aide had scarcely traveled 150 meters along the road when three men approached them. Shots rang out from the men, whose identity was unknown, and Hasan Riza fell, mortally wounded.24 He was taken back to a nearby mosque, where he died at 2 A.M. on January 31. The Turkish official history does not identify the perpetrators. Esat Paşa now took over as the Işkodra commander. He notified the Western Army headquarters to lodge a formal protest through channels, but these events were overcome by the termination of the armistice several days later.

FIRST OFFENSIVE AGAINST IŞKODRA

The armistice collapsed on February 3, 1913, and hostilities resumed immediately. The Serbs and the Montenegrins had decided during the armistice to mount a coordinated, multifront offensive against Işkodra, with the objective of capturing the town. There were several small battles, the first occurring from February 5 through February 7 at Barbaluş, when a Serb force met and attacked the Ottoman 54th Infantry Regiment in an inconclusive engagement. This occurred near the coast and was merely a diversion. The second small battle occurred at Birdiça, a fortified hilltop just to the south of the town of Işkodra, on February

9. In a night attack, at 1:30 A.M., the Serbs attacked the Birdiça strong point on the Işkodra perimeter. The vicious attack was delivered with the bayonet and accompanied by shouting, "Hurrah for King Peter!" In a two-hour battle, the Serbs occupied redoubt numbers 7 and 8. At 5:30 A.M., the strong-point commander gave counterattack orders to the Ottoman 2nd Battalion, 54th Infantry Regiment, which carried out the assault immediately.25 Although the Serbs (from the 5th and 6th Infantry Regiments of the Drina Infantry Division) were initially successful, apparently they failed to organize themselves to receive a counterattack (the doctrinal term for this act is *consolidation on the objective*). The Turks swept over them and pushed them completely back to their original positions. Serb casualties were significant. The Turks claimed to have killed almost 1,400 Serbs and furthermore to have captured 428 men and three thousand rifles, at a cost to

themselves of 41 dead and 64 wounded.26 Although these claims may seem fanciful, such a lopsided claim of victory appears nowhere else in the thousands of pages of historical text concerning the Balkan Wars published by the Turkish General Staff. However, Richard Hall, who noted 1,800 Serb casualties, confirms these losses.27 Needless to say, the Turks held the field at the end of the day, and they attributed their smashing victory to the poor quality of the Serb reservists, who comprised the bulk of the regiments. In any case, the attempt to seize the Birdiça strong point was merely a supporting attack. The Turks call these twin battles the Battle of Barbaluş and the Battle of Beltoya.

THE BATTLE OF BARDANYOLT (BARDANJOLT)

At 7 P.M. on February 6, 1913, Serb artillery began to pound the Ottoman Bardanyolt Tepeleri (Hills) position, which was located directly east of the town of Işkodra. The bombardment continued throughout the night. This was the main attack and was delivered by five Serb and Montenegrin infantry brigades. It was supported by the diversionary and supporting attacks at Barbaluş and Beltoya. The Bardanyolt Hills position was heavily fortified with six mutually supporting and interlocking strong points. A seventh strong point was located fifteen hundred meters northwest and was isolated. Defending the complex were about seventeen hundred Turks from battalions of the 53rd, 54th, 70th, and 71st Infantry Regiments.28 They were well stocked with ammunition and had machine guns and artillery as well.

On February 7 at 9:30 A.M., the Serbian artillery "lifted and shifted" its bombardment to the Matruş Tepe (the isolated, northernmost hill in the defensive complex). Fifteen minutes later, the Serb infantry went

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over the top and rapidly crossed the gap to the Ottoman entrenchments. The hill was defended by the 4th Company, 1st Battalion, 53rd Infantry Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Mehmet Tevfik. Three full battalions of the Montenegrin 9th Hacic Infantry Brigade attacked the lieutenant's tiny command and soon had ejected the Turks from the hill. As the company retreated, it was covered by machine-gun fire from the Nişanci Tepe strong point.

Shortly thereafter, the remainder of the Serb and Montenegrin infantry battalions (fifteen in all) began assaults on the four forward Ottoman strong points located on Nişanci Tepe, Sivri Tepe, Kanli Tepe, and Süngü Tepe. There were supporting platoon positions on Berat Tepe and Kücük Yeşil Tepe, which also came under attack. The Serbs and Montenegrins overran the weak platoon positions quickly but ran into trouble assaulting the heavily fortified strong points. The Turkish machine guns were particularly well-sited and took a heavy toll on the enemy infantry.29 By 12:30 P.M., the battle was raging at the edges of the Turkish positions and the Serbs had broken into the Nişanci Tepe strong point. The Ottoman platoon defending Berat Tepe was forced onto the adjacent Bayrak Tepe, which also fell, at 3:30 P.M. Making matters worse, the Serbs now began to exploit the open flank caused by the fall of the Matruş Tepe position earlier that day. The Ottoman reserve, the 3rd Battalion, 53rd Infantry Regiment, was committed to stopping this flanking attack, which threatened to envelop the Turkish left flank. This left only a single company of the 2nd Battalion, 71st Infantry Regiment, in reserve. This formation was retained in case of a rupture of the forward lines. Thus, the forward defenders were forced to fight defensive battles for which there were no reserves available to conduct counterattacks in accordance with Ottoman tactical principles.

Fighting drew to a close at 6 P.M. as darkness closed in on the trenches. Later that night, at 7:30 P.M., the Serbs renewed the assault with a two-company night attack, which continued for about three hours. This assault failed, but the Serbs kept up artillery fire for the remainder of the night, especially with their howitzers, which were very effective against the Turkish trenches.30 Troop returns that night indicated that the Turks had lost about two hundred men killed in the day's fighting. The fairly light casualties disguised the loss of the Matruş Tepe and the danger at the Nişanci Tepe strong point, which was still contested by the enemy.

The new Ottoman commander, Esat Paşa, was extremely concerned about the possibility of a Serb encirclement from the recently captured Matruş Tepe position. During the night of February 7–8, he ordered that his troops retake the position at all costs. Furthermore, he ordered that the Nişanci Tepe be cleared of the enemy as well.

On February 8, the Turks attempted to counterattack with all six of their infantry battalions against the eighteen opposing Serb and Montenegrin battalions. Esat Paşa was extremely anxious throughout the day and continually bombarded his commanders with requests for situation reports.31 He sent two of his staff officers, Staff Captain Asim and Staff Captain Şerif, to organize and conduct the attack on Nişanci Tepe using the Berat Redif Battalion and a company of Nizamiye infantry. He also directed the strong-point commander to support the counterattack with all available artillery. In a bitter battle, in which Captain Şerif was wounded, they

retook the position. The fierce Ottoman attacks took the wind out of the Serb troops, and although the counterattacks retook the Nişanci Tepe strong point, they failed to retake the strong point at Matruş Tepe strong point. Casualties were extremely heavy on both sides, and later that night, both sides launched costly night attacks.

The following day (February 9), the aggressive Serbs launched attacks aimed at demolishing Ottoman resistance. Their overwhelming numerical superiority finally took its toll on the weakened Turkish forces. A massive Serb attack hit all four forward Ottoman strong points. In the Nişanci Tepe strong point, Captain Asim was killed and resistance collapsed. In sequence, the other Ottoman strong points fell as well. The defeated Turks began to pull back behind their sole remaining uncommitted reserve, the 1st Company, 24th Rifle Battalion, located in a strong point on Yassi Tepe. This company delivered covering fire long enough for the surviving Turks to break contact and fall back on supplementary positions fifteen hundred meters to their rear. Finally, the 1st Company abandoned its position and withdrew as well. The Battle of Bardanyolt was over.

Tactically, the battle was an Ottoman defeat. The Bardanyolt Hills position was mostly lost, and with it, 1,330 men. The Serbs and Montenegrins lost even more: about four thousand men (this is Hall's figure, which is taken from Serb sources).32 Although the Turks were forced back, they had fallen back on a second successive strong position. Faced with this, the exhausted Serbs and Montenegrins decide to suspend offensive operations. The Battle of Bardanyolt would turn out to be the largest enemy attack on Işkodra during the war.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF TRABOŞ

Yet another Montenegrin attack began on the Ottoman positions on Traboş ridge (to the east of Işkodra and overlooking Işkodra Lake) on February 7, 1913. The Turks held a strong point on the ridge that was

built on the Fesat Tepe (one of three hilltops on the ridge itself). The Montenegrins held the western half of the ridge, and the Ottomans held the eastern half. Between the two forces was an Ottoman platoon position on the Pusu Tepe. At 5 A.M., the Montenegrins began attacking the Pusu Tepe position from their own positions on the next adjacent hilltop. The Montenegrins put three infantry battalions into the fight, which should have been sufficient to overcome the Ottoman infantry company on the Pusu Tepe. However, Montenegrin artillery support was meager, and by 7:30 A.M., the Ottoman artillery was pounding the attackers. Fighting was fierce, but by noon the Montenegrins were inside the Turkish trenches. The Turks sent forward extra men and a company from a rifle battalion. As night fell, the opposing troops were intermixed in the darkness.

The next day, the Turks launched a counterattack with the 2nd Battalion, 71st Infantry Regiment. Machine-gun fire was especially heavy, and the fighting seesawed back and forth. Night attacks continued throughout the night of February 8–9 with no side gaining an advantage. Finally, at 4 A.M. on February 9, the Ottoman area commander gave the order to the 3rd Company of the 1st Battalion and the 4th Company of the 2nd Battalion, 70th Infantry Regiment, to conduct a bayonet assault to restore the position. The companies went forward at 8:10 A.M. and, after difficult fighting, took the Pusu Tepe. Ottoman casualties were concentrated in two battalions and were heavy: three officers and 126 men killed, and thirteen officers and 484 wounded.33 The Turks called this the Battle of Pusu Tepe or the First Battle of Traboş. The Montenegrins attributed their defeat to their lack of adequate artillery support; however, the intensity of the Ottoman infantry counterattacks certainly played a crucial role in the reoccupation of the Pusu Tepe position.

THE SECOND BATTLE OF TRABOŞ

The remainder of February 1913 was very quiet, as both sides returned to their trenches to lick their wounds. The Montenegrins now asked the Serbs for assistance, and on February 13, the Serbs dispatched a formidable force of thirty thousand men with artillery to assist the Montenegrins. This force assembled very slowly, and movement into the operational theater proceeded at an astonishingly slow pace. By mid-March, some Serb artillery had arrived, but very few troops were present. The month of March 1913 passed quietly as well, with the Serbs and Montenegrins pressing for the surrender of Esat Paşa's force. Esat refused (although he did maintain an active correspondence with them through the offices of the local consulates) and the seige went on, but

the force ratios now were against the Turks. By late March, there were 40,00 Serb and Montenegrin infantry arrayed against 12,500 Ottoman infantry Given the strength of the Ottoman strong-point system, on the high ground, this differential was serious but not fatal. However, the enemy now brought up powerful artillery, which had the potential to tip the tactical balance against the Turks. By late March, the Turks had only 85

artillery pieces (many of which were fixed or semimobile), against which the allies could pit 140 mobile artillery pieces.34

On March 29, with the prospect of a second armistice on the horizon, the Montenegrins decided to conduct a final attack on the Traboş Tepe position. Moreover, the Great Powers had issued a collective note to the Montenegrin government to end the siege and withdraw from the area. This event was a bit of Austrian-inspired diplomacy designed to include Işkodra in the new Albania (rather than in the new Montenegro), and it prompted the Montenegrins to make a last-minute effort to take the town.35 The attack began at 9:30 A.M. on March 30, with artillery preparation fire directed against the Ottoman strong point on the hill. The artillery preparations included both Montenegrin and Serbian artillery, with heavy fire from 150mm howitzers. The scale of the Montenegrin attack was three times as large as the February attack and employed the entire Primorje Infantry Division. The Montenegrins planned to send the 1st and 2nd Brigades of the division along the crest of the ridge against the Pusu Tepe, while the 3rd Brigade attacked uphill against the flank of the Traboş Tepe strong point. On the ridge itself, the Turks held the position with the 2nd Battalion, 70th Infantry Regiment, the 3rd battalion, 71st Infantry Regiment; and a detachment from the 24th Rifle Battalion.

The allied artillery pounded the Pusu Tepe position until 2 P.M., when it stopped and the two brigades began to advance. A special wire-cutting detachment of eight hundred veteran volunteers led the Montenegrin attack.36 The Montenegrins successfully broke through the wire and into the first Ottoman trenches, but they were unable to penetrate any farther into the second line. The enemy artillery firing on the Fesat Tepe continued until 3:37 P.M., when it lifted. The third Montenegrin infantry brigade began to move forward at 3:50 P.M. Moving uphill against withering Ottoman fires, the brigade was easily repulsed and was in retreat by 7 P.M. As night fell, the Montenegrins remained in possession of most of Pusu Tepe and, content with this gain, held on to the Ottoman trenches that they had taken. Casualties were light: the Turks lost one officer and 60 men killed, four officers and 209 men injured. The attacking Montenegrins lost fifteen officers and over 600 men killed or wounded.37 The Second Battle of Traboş was inconclusive; it turned out to be the final battle on the Montenegrin front.

THE SURRENDER OF IŞKODRA

Having received warnings from the Great Powers over supporting the Montenegrins in Albania, Serbia decided to withdraw from the area. Consequently, the Serbs began to pull their infantry forces home on April 10. As the Serbs departed, the Montenegrins took over their allies' artillery pieces and continued the siege. Meanwhile, the navies of the Great Powers imposed a naval blockade and threatened to intervene militarily. In the fortress and the town, the Turks were running out of food, munitions, and medical supplies. As supplies dwindled and rationing was imposed, sickness and malnutrition took hold and began to kill both soldiers and civilians. On April 20, Esat Paşa decided to explore surrendering his force and sent emissaries to discuss terms. Language difficulties perplexed the two sides, and the negotiations were carried on through translators; however, the agreement was written down in Ottoman script. On the following day, Montenegrin negotiators crossed Işkodra Lake by steamboat to open direct talks with Esat Paşa. The surrender protocol was finalized on April 22 by the Montenegrins. However, the Turks were still unhappy with the final written document, especially with some of the provisions for the surrender of the weaponry and artillery, and Esat refused to sign it. Again the negotiating teams struggled through the night to arrive at a mutually agreeable document. Finally, Esat was satisfied with the final surrender protocol. He signed it on April 23, 1913, ending the siege of Işkodra.

The terms of surrender were not very generous, and they reflected the frustration and inability of the Montenegrins to take the town. There were fifteen clauses to the document.38 The Turks agreed to leave their weapons and equipment and any military equipment used by the local population. The military animals were to be turned over to the Montenegrins, and the Ottoman prisoners (after being organized and processed by the Montenegrins) were to be turned over to the Serbs. The Montenegrins agreed to assist the Ottoman medical services and ensure that the Ottoman wounded (then in the hospital) were well cared for. The local officials, police, and Jandarma were to maintain control until relieved by proper Montenegrin authority. The Turks agreed to turn over intact all machine guns and artillery in the fortress. Finally, the surrender of the surrounding strong points was scheduled: Traboş and Kücük Bardanyolt at 8 A.M. that day, and on April 24, Fesat Tepe at 11 A.M., the remainder of Bardanyolt at 1 P.M., and the remaining positions at 3 P.M. Montenegrin troops entered the city on the evening of April 24, 1913. Within days, the Turks, with Esat at their head, were on the road and marching toward Tirana, where they would temporarily go into camps.

They left behind 1,220 men, too ill to travel, who remained in the hospitals and medical facilities of the

fortress.

VARDAR ARMY OPERATIONS IN SOUTHERN ALBANIA

The situation of the Western Army and its subordinate Vardar Army in southern Albania remained stable throughout the first armistice, February, and well into early March 1913. However, the fall of Yanya, on March 6, destabilized this quiet theater. In the wake of the fall of the fortress, remnants of the Independent Yanya Corps escaped encirclement and withdrew northwest into Albania. These survivors were led by Galip Paşa and Colonel Fethi Bey and included troops of the 68th Infantry Regiment and the 23rd Rifle Battalion. As they withdrew, they acted as a magnet for the Greek Army, and thus drew the enemy into Albania. The Western Army detached further troops from the VI Corps and sent them to reinforce Galip and Fethi, who now commanded independent detachments.

Two small battles were fought to delay the Greek Army of Epirus while the headquarters of the Vardar Army and the Western Army moved toward the Adriatic coast. The first was the Battle of Ergiri Artçi on March 15–16. In this battle, the Fethi Bey Detachment bought just enough time to ensure that the adjacent Galip Paşa Detachment was able to escape encirclement. On the following day, a small force under Ragip Bey fought off another Greek advance at the Battle of Kilasora. This battle allowed both Galip's and Fethi's detachments to withdraw from a Greek pocket. By March 19, Galip and Fethi had successfully withdrawn to the town of Müzakare. However, relentless Greek pressure kept pushing them north.

On the Vardar Army's northern front, Cavit Paşa's VI Corps maintained a defensive position facing the Serbs. On March 19, his chief of staff sent reports to the Vardar Army noting increased Serb activity. The overall strategic posture of the Vardar Army was terrible and reflected five months of isolation without resupply. The strength of the Vardar Army is shown in Table 9.3.

Cavit's VI headquarters was located in Loşne, but maintained its front twenty kilometers north (halfway to Elbasan). The V Corps maintained its headquarters in Berat, guarding the western center of the Vardar Army's position. As can be seen from Table 9.2, the Vardar Army regarded the northern and southern fronts as the most pressing danger to its strategic position.

A Serb cavalry force of 150 men began to move on March 22, 1913, with a view toward cutting the Loşne-Berat telegraph line. This force

TABLE 9.3 Vardar Army Strength, March 23, 1913

				Remaining Ammunition (on hand)	
Formation	*Infantry*	*Artillery*	*Machine Guns*	*Rounds per Rifle*	*Rounds per Cannon*
Galip Paşa Detachment	4,318	7	10	87	38
V Corps	2,094	2	0	78	15
VI Corps	3,784	3	11	62	49

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 389.

Note: There were an additional 443 artillery rounds available in the Vardar Army ammunition trains.

The Fethi Bey Detachment is included in the Galip Paşa Detachment.

was repulsed by troops of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Rifle Regiment. Three days later, Serb infantry began to push south against the VI Corps's left flank, and on March 26, the Battle of Malagat was fought by a small Ottoman detachment under Cafer Tayyar Bey. The small force was unable to hold the 5,000 attacking Serbs and withdrew toward Loşne. By early April, the Serbs were advancing again on a broad front. Cavit Paşa was determined to prevent their advance and deployed his VI Corps to the north of Loşne on April 5, 1913. Cavit deployed six infantry battalions on a ten-kilometer front, which, in their weakened condition, was an impossible mission. In a day-long battle, the VI Corps was forced to retreat, and on April 6, four Serb battalions entered Loşne. The VI Corps continued its retreat and employed small detachments armed with machine guns to delay the Serbs. The Battle of Loşne would prove to be the last battle of the war. Several days later, Berat fell as well, and the Vardar Army was compressed into a small perimeter, scarcely eighty kilometers by eighty kilometers in size.

Fate now intervened to save the Vardar Army from certain destruction. Neither Serbia nor Greece had serious territorial intentions in Albania. Under tremendous pressure from the Great Powers, Serbia halted its advance, and shortly thereafter, so did Greece. Both enemy armies began to pull back by mid-April. The war in the western theater was finally over.

NOTES

1. Hellenic Army General Staff, *A Concise History of the Balkan Wars 1912–1913* (Athens: Army History Directorate, 1998), 180.
2. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913) IIIncü Cilt, 2nci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu, Yunan*

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Cephesi Harekati (Ikinci Baski) (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 535 and Map 61.
3. Ibid., 534–535. The full text of the order may be found on these pages.
4. Hellenic Army General Staff, *A Concise History of the Balkan Wars,* 181.
5. Turkish General Staff, *Yunan Cephesi Harekati,* 537–538.
6. Ibid., Chart 13.
7. Ibid., Charts 14 and 15.
8. Ibid., 546.
9. Ibid., 550–551.
10. Ibid., 557.
11. Ibid., 577.
12. Ibid., 578.
13. Ibid., 594.
14. Hellenic Army General Staff, *A Concise History of the Balkan Wars,* 186.
15. Ibid., 189.
16. Turkish General Staff, *Yunan Cephesi Harekati,* 660–661.
17. Ibid., 665.
18. Ibid., 670.
19. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), Garp Ordusu Karadağ Cephesi, IIIncü Cilt, 3ncu Kisim (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 135–136.
20. Ibid., 137.
21. Ibid., 137.
22. Ibid., 140–144.
23. Ibid., 143.
24. Ibid., 149. Very oddly, this source notes that Hasan Riza had been promoted from colonel to general on the day he was shot. Hall, in *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913* (London: Routledge, 2000), 91, noted that Hasan Riza was assassinated, apparently by agents of Esat Paşa (Toptani) who aspired to his position.
25. Ibid., 155–157.
26. Ibid., 157.
27. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 92.
28. Turkish General Staff, *Karadağ* Cephesi, 160–161.
29. Ibid., 165.
30. Ibid., 166–167.
31. Ibid., 172.
32. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 92.
33. Turkish General Staff, *Karadağ Cephesi,* 184–185.
34. Ibid., 189–190.
35. Hall, *The Balkan Wars,* 91–96.
36. Turkish General Staff, *Karadağ Cephesi,* 197–198.
37. Ibid., 199–201.
38. Ibid., 210–211. A complete summary of the surrender protocol may be found on these pages.

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10
Final Operations
THE SECOND ARMISTICE

The Turks proposed a second armistice to the Bulgarians on April 7, 1913. On April 13, at the Çatalca train station, Brigadier General Ziya Paşa, the Ottoman representative, met with Bulgarian General Stefan Toshev to discuss the final terms. The armistice between the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria was signed the following day.1 The initial agreement was valid for a ten-day cease-fire period with renewable terms. A similar proposal was sent to the prime minister of Greece. On April 15, an Ottoman commission, composed of Staff Colonel Salih, Staff Major Refet, and Staff Captain Mesut, drove by automobile to Kaldunya Çiftliği (Kaldunya Farm) to finalize the details of a permanent agreement. Although fighting along the Montenegro front continued until

April 23, the First Balkan War essentially was over.
While the battles stopped at the tactical levels, the diplomats continued the struggle at higher levels. A subsidiary meeting of the London Ambassadors Conference had convened in Russia at the end of March (called the St. Petersburg Ambassadors Conference). This conference was unrelated to the Ottoman question and was supposed to settle the border dispute between Bulgaria and Romania. Unfortunately, the Great Powers used the conference for their own purposes, and Russia, especially, attempted to curry favor with Romania. In the end, on May 8, 1913, the conference adjudicated the dispute in Romania's favor by awarding her the Bulgarian port of Silistra. Underlying this decision was the assumption that Bulgaria would be amply compensated with

territory seized from the Turks. The decision was flawed and would have fateful consequences later in the Second Balkan War.
Throughout the month of May, in London, the rival ambassadors struggled to make sense of the claims of the victors in such a way as to have them be simultaneously acceptable to the Great Powers. The Serbs and the Greeks were uncooperative and delayed the decision but were finally pressured to agree to the terms. On May 30, 1913, the Treaty of London was signed, formalizing the end of the war. The Ottoman Empire's European possessions were truncated permanently by the treaty. Based on a proposal from British Foreign Minister Sir Edward Grey in January, the treaty imposed the now famous Enos-Midia Line, which ran straight across the Thracian peninsula from the Black Sea port of Midia to the Aegean Sea port of Enos, as the new frontier. The Turks ceded all lands west of the line, including Adrianople, to the Bulgarians. Additionally, the Ottoman Empire renounced claims to the Aegean islands and to Crete. Moreover, all territory in the Balkans was divided among the victors, and the Great Powers retained the right to determine the borders of the new Albanian state. The treaty denied the Bulgarians, who had carried the weight and cost of the war, the full fruits of the victory.
The Ottoman Army sat tight in its fortified lines at Çatalca and Gallipoli. On April 29, the general staff notified the field armies that negotiations were in danger of breaking down and to prepare for an enemy attack. Afterward, though (in May 1913), they made preparations to advance their armies to the Enos-Midia Line.

THE EVACUATION OF THE WESTERN ARMY

On April 19, 1913, the Serbs began to pull back from their newly won positions around Loşne in anticipation of the Great Powers' treaty revisions to the Albanian border. The fall of Işkodra on April 23, 1913, brought the fighting in the Balkans to a conclusion. As the armies drew apart, the Ottoman Western Army began to plan to evacuate the theater. In early May, the Western Army began to concentrate its surviving formations closer to the coastal towns of Şingin, Draç, and Avalonya. Discussions were held in these towns with the local consulates to coordinate a safe withdrawal of the remaining Ottoman forces. On May 10, the Vardar Army chief of staff, Colonel Halil, went to Constantinople to discuss the evaucation plan. There he signed an agreement with the Greeks authorizing safe passage by sea (made necessary by the absence of a yet to be formalized peace agreement). The first Turks to be brought out of the theater were sick and wounded men who had been brought to Avalonya. These men left the port on two Austrian ships on May 14.

On May 21, the Western Army issued its evacuation orders to its surviving formations. Identifying and staging the ships from the Sea of Marmara to the Adriatic ports took a remarkably short amount of time. The required transportation began to arrive, and the first formations began to embark at Avalonya on June 4. The commander and staff of the Western Army embarked on the *Güzel Girit* on June 17 and sailed for home.2 The Vardar Army was badly worn down; the final tally of surviving formations is shown in Table 10.1.

TABLE 10.1 Vardar Army Formations Evacuated from the Balkans, June 4–13, 1913

Formation	*Number of Battalions*
V Corps	
1st Battalion, 5th Rifle Regiment	1
37th Infantry Regiment	3
15th Rifle Battalion	1
44th Infantry Regiment	3
45th Infantry Regiment	2
VI Corps	
5th Rifle Regiment	2
16th Infantry Division	9
17th Rifle Battalion	1

49th Infantry Regiment	2
2nd Battalion, 50th Infantry Regiment	1
51st Infantry Regiment	3
52nd Infantry Regiment	3
1st Battalion, 54th Infantry Regiment	1
VII Corps	
7th Rifle Regiment	3
3rd Battalion, 31st Regiment	1
1st Battalion, 56th Infantry Regiment	1
57th Infantry Regiment	2
20th Rifle Battalion	1
3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment	1
21st Infantry Division	10
23rd Rifle Battalion	1
68th Infantry Regiment	3
Total	55

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 404.

The defeated Işkodra Corps spent only a minimal amount of time in prisoner of war camps; some men never entered captivity at all and many marched directly to the ports with their weapons. Table 10.2 shows the formations of this corps that were evacuated from the theater. Most of the corps was evacuated from Şingin and Draç beginning on June 7. Many of the native Albanians in the corps voluntarily remained behind. Additionally, the Turks evacuated sixty-five battalion cadres, seven cavalry regiment cadres, and twenty thousand spare rifles. The total of surviving formations belies the depleted strength of the formations. Table 10.3 shows the total Western Army strength in June 1913.

The ships began to arrive at Constantinople and other Marmara ports on June 22, 1913. However, the troops and equipment did not linger along the coast for very long. The Ottoman General Staff had prepared a comprehensive plan to reconstitute a new Second Army from the battered remnants of the Western Army. Within days, most of the survivors were on trains bound for military cantonments (temporary quarters) in and around the city of Konya (in central Anatolia).3 Although these formations would not be reconstituted and retrained for well over a year, by the time of the Ottoman Empire's entry into World War I in late October 1914, the Second Army was ready to fight again.

TABLE 10.2 Işkodra Corps Formations Evacuated from the Balkans, June 7–13, 1913

70th Infantry Regiment
71st Infantry Regiment (minus the 1st Battalion)
24th Rifle Battalion
3rd Battalion, 50th Infantry Regiment
1st Battalion, 51st Infantry Regiment
3rd Battalion, 53rd Infantry Regiment
2nd and 3rd Battalions, 54th Infantry Regiment
1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment
13th Mountain Artillery Battalion
24th Engineer Company
Jandarma Battalion
Işkodra Border Detachment
Division and Regimental Military Bands

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), Garp Ordusu Karadağ Cephesi, IIIncü Cilt, 3ncü* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 219.

TABLE 10.3 Vardar Army Strength, June 1913

Formation	*Officers*	*Men*	*Animals*	*Artillery*	*Machine Guns*
Vardar Army	1,252	20,201	2,500	18	28
Işkodra Corps	348	7,953	1,100	26	15

Total	1,600	28,154	3,600	44	43

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 405.

THE SECOND BALKAN WAR

The circumstances and events leading to the Second Balkan War are fascinating but beyond the scope of this work. Similarly, a complete discussion of the combat operations between the participants is outside of the subject of Ottoman Army operations. In short summary, the Second Balkan War was fought between the Bulgarians and a Serbo-Greek alliance, which later included the Romanians as well. The Turks stayed well clear of the war but used the Bulgarian's preoccupation to peacefully reclaim the city of Adrianople.

After the Treaty of London, there was much discontent in Bulgaria, especially within the army, over the division of Ottoman territory resulting from the treaty. The de facto division of Macedonia by the Serbs and the Greeks incensed the Bulgarians, who had generally been excluded from the area in question. Furthering the Bulgarian discontent was the fact that Bulgarian casualties greatly exceed the combined losses of the other members of the Balkan League. Thus, by mid-June 1913, the Bulgarian high command decided not to demobilize the army and instead began to organize for offensive operations against its former allies. It planned to conduct a military strike against the Serbs and Greeks in the Vardar and Uştruma River valleys using the reinforced Second and Third Armies. These forces were deployed from their positions in Thrace to the western frontier. This was a risky strategy as it left the newly won city of Adrianople unguarded. Central to the Bulgarian plan was the idea that the exhausted Turks would honor the Treaty of London and remain behind the Enos-Midia Line. The literature on the subject suggests that the Bulgarians thought they could depend on Russian diplomatic and moral support to maintain secure communications in their rear against the Turks and the Romanians.4 They could not have been more wrong.

On June 29–30, 1913, the Bulgarians attacked their erstwhile allies, the Serbs and the Greeks, who were expecting, and ready for, the attack. The Bulgarians were badly handled in these encounters. To

make matters worse, the Romanians entered the war against Bulgaria on July 10 and invaded the Dobrudzha the same day. The Bulgarians now faced a two-front war, although they recognized that the Romanians had limited objectives. The Turks also took advantage of the weakened Bulgarian position in Thrace to cross the Enos-Midia Line on July 12 to reclaim Adrianople. The Russians failed to back the Bulgarians and instead supported the Serbs and the Romanians. Amid these disasters, the Bulgarian government collapsed. The new government continued the war, further battles were fought, and the Serbs and Greeks invaded Bulgaria proper. Faced with complete disaster on all fronts, Bulgaria conceded defeat and opened negotiations in Bucharest on July 30.

Discussions at Bucharest continued until August 10, 1913, when a peace treaty was signed. The Treaty of Bucharest penalized Bulgaria for its ill-timed and poorly planned war. The Bulgarians retained only a small piece of their Macedonian conquests and only a single small port on the Aegean Sea. Moreover, they lost the Dobrudzha to Romania. The conference was a catastrophe for the Bulgarians. Moreover, the long-standing relationship that Bulgaria had enjoyed with Russia was demolished. Finally, Bulgaria lost Adrianople and western Thrace to the Turks.

THE ADVANCE TO ADRIANOPLE

After the Treaty of London in May, many members of the Liberal Union (and the CUP as well) were unhappy with the concessions made by the new government. The loss of Adrianople particularly vexed many nationalists, and unfortunately, Mahmut Şevket Paşa was identified with this symbolic defeat by many ordinary citizens. Members of the Liberal Union began to plot the assassination of Mahmut Şevket Paşa with the ultimate objective of taking control of the state. On June 11, 1913, the conspirators gunned him down as his car drove from the Ministry of War to the Porte. The CUP, led by Cemal, Talat, and Enver, immediately responded by tightening its grip on the government and the capital. It went after the Liberal Union and very quickly uncovered the conspiracy, which included a number of soldiers. This action sent many of the Liberal Union leaders into exile and cleared the way for the CUP to take full control of the government. Mehmet Sait Halim Paşa, a CUP member and Ottoman prince of Egyptian heritage, was appointed as grand vizier. The military was leaderless for several days as the CUP decided on an appropriate choice for the Ministry of War portfolio. On June 18, the new grand vizier appointed Ahmet Izzet Paşa, the chief of the Ottoman General Staff, to serve concurrently as the minister of war.5

The Turks watched the unfolding Second Balkan War with great interest. The newly installed Young Turk

government was especially interested in the deterioration of the Bulgarian strategic position in Thrace, caused by the repositioning of the bulk of their forces against the Serbs and Greeks. Enver (among others, including Mustafa Kemal) was eager to take advantage of the situation to reclaim Adrianople without having to resort to another full-scale war. However, planning fell short of this, and under the leadership of Ahmet Izzet Paşa, the General Staff now began to plan for an advance to the Enos-Midia Line. In general, the Çatalca Army would advance toward the west from the north while the Gallipoli Army would advance northwest from the south. The General Staff set the boundary between the armies on a line running from Hayrabolu to a point on the Sea of Marmara just south of Tekirdağ.

On the evening of July 11, Ahmet Izzet Paşa departed the capital to finalize the advance of the field armies to the new border at his field headquarters.6 From there he sent a letter to the Bulgarian commander outlining his intention to advance peacefully to the line specified by the London Conference.7 The General Staff sent out the order to advance on the morning of June 12, and the armies began to position themselves for movement that day.8 The armies themselves were restructured somewhat for the advance into Thrace. Table 10.4 shows the Ottoman order of battle on July 12, 1913.

There were two main movements. First, the Çatalca Army (commanded directly by Ahmet Izzet Paşa), led by cavalry regiments with infantry divisions following close on their heels, moved due west. This army was composed of three principal groupings: the Right Wing (in the north) under Major General Ahmet Abuk Paşa, the independent II Corps (in the center) under Hassan Izzet Paşa, and the Left Wing (in the south) under Hurşit Paşa. By nightfall on July 13, they had reached a line twelve kilometers from their Çatalca positions. The army advanced another twenty kilometers on June 14, twenty more kilometers on the following day, and ten kilometers on July 16. Finally, on June 17, the Turks closed up on the Enos-Midia Line. Second, but simultaneously, the Gallipoli Field Army, led by Brigadier General Fahri, advanced north. The Provisional I Corps moved on the left, and the Provisional II Corps moved on the right (See Table 10.4). The Provisional III Corps remained behind to maintain the defense of the peninsula. Having a lesser distance to travel, this army gained its objectives on the line within two days.

By July 17, 1913, the two Ottoman armies were firmly joined in their occupation of the Enos-Midia Line. It was a huge force when combined and totaled more than 250,000 men. Moreover, the armies were combat ready. The main groupings of forces lay three kilometers behind the

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TABLE 10.4 Ottoman Order of Battle, July 12, 1913

ÇATALCA ARMY

Left Wing		II Corps	*Right Wing*	
X Corps	I Corps	3, 5, 12 Infantry	III Corps	Provisional IV Corps
4, 31 Infantry	2, 28 Infantry	Division	7, 8, 9 Infantry	29 Infantry Division
Division	Division	10 Cavalry Regiment	Division	Aydin, Eregli, Kayseri Redif
Mamuretülaziz	Fatih Redif		8 Cavalry Regiment	Divisions
Redif Division	Division			2 Cavalry Regiment

Army Control
Ankara, Amasya, Selimiye, Yozgat Redif Divisions
Independent Cavalry Brigade
Aşiret Cavalry Brigade
Heavy Artillery Regiment

GALLIPOLI FIELD ARMY

Provisional I Corps	Provisional II Corps	Provisional III Corps
30, 32 Infantry Divisions	27 Infantry Divisions	Çanakkale, Edremit Redif Divisions
Provisional Infantry Divisions	Afyon, Samsun Redif Divisions	

Army Control
2nd Aşiret Cavalry Brigade

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 2nci Kisim, 1nci Kitap, Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarköy Çikmarmasi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), Charts 5, 6.

line, while the cavalry regiments screened the front. The field trains had brought forward enough rations for seven days of combat. The staffs ensured that the reestablishment of communications was a top priority, and within days telegraph lines were strung from the major headquarters to the capital. Concerned that these temporary field lines would fail, the staffs brought forward quantities of dispatch riders with motor-cycles as a backup means of communications.

Ahmet Izzet's general staff headquarters made preparations to depart the Sancak Tepe and to move forward as well. On July 14, the headquarters displaced forward to Kabakca Station. It had grown in size over the course of the war and now contained 575 officers and officials, 380 men, plus seventy wagons and five automobiles.9 At the station, the headquarters was loaded on two trains of ten cars each. Also on that day, the army's field trains, including field hospitals and veterinary services began to move forward. As the army began to move west, Ottoman prisoners released by the Bulgarians began to appear on the roads of

Thrace. From them, the Turks learned that the bulk of the prisoners were in Bulgaria and were being used as labor troops. Occasionally, the Turks came across small groups of Bulgarian soldiers who had been left behind. However, the great advance was made without any Bulgarian opposition.

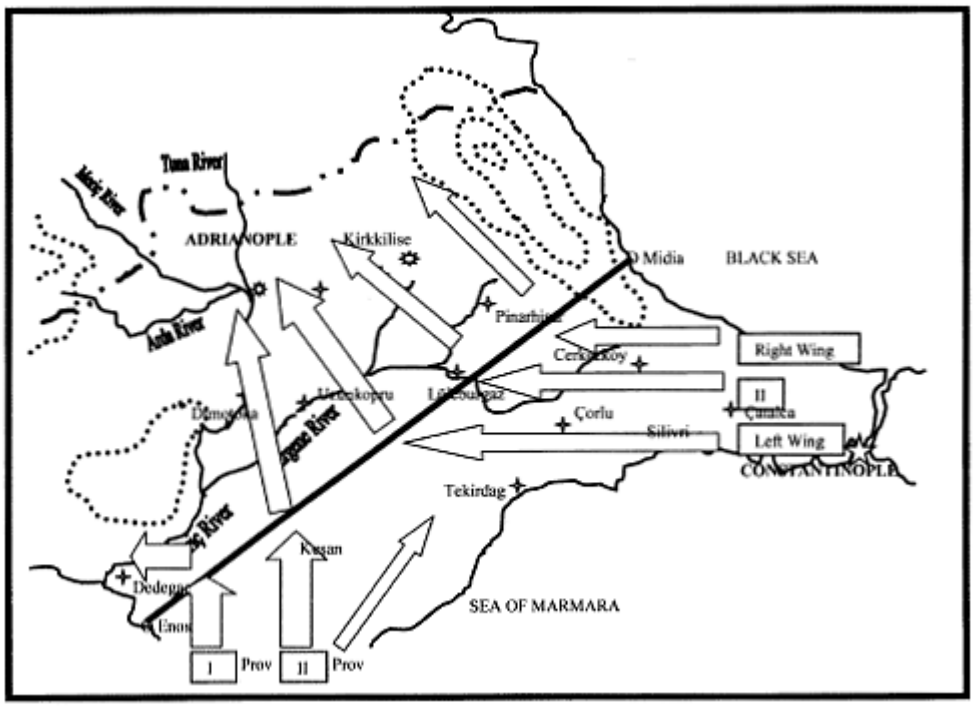
On July 16, Ahmet Izzet's headquarters had arrived in Çerkezköy. On the following day, it arrived in Çorlu, where Ahmet Izzet Paşa established his new command post. The Ottoman movement forward was heavily observed by foreign military attachés from the capital. The Austrian military attaché, in particular, was observed taking detailed notes about the army.10 On the night of July 17–18, Ahmet Izzet Paşa wrote a letter to the grand vizier noting that the Bulgarians appeared to have only a weak demonstration force in the vicinity of Adrianople. This stunning news was delivered to Mehmet Sait Halim Paşa the following morning, and he immediately convened a cabinet meeting to consider what actions the Turks might take.11 That day, Ahmet Izzet Paşa left his field headquarters for the capital to lobby for continuing the advance. Meeting briefly with the cabinet, he returned to the front on July 19. Later that day the now all-CUP and strongly nationalistic cabinet decided to continue the advance with the objective of reclaim-ing Adrianople.

Ahmet Izzet Paşa received the order to advance at 11 A.M. on July 20 by ciphered telegraph message. However, he was directed to wait for two to three days to allow the government to consider what the Greeks might do and to develop a strategy to deal with any Greek actions. The General Staff, now located forward in the field, immediately sent out warning orders to both armies to plan to renew the advance. The historic General Order Number 8 was released on the evening of July 20, 1913, which directed the renewal of the advance with the objective of taking Adrianople.12 General Order Number 8 envisioned strong cavalry forces dashing forward followed by rapidly marching infantry to seize Adrianople and Kirkkilise. Furthermore, if the Bulgarians kept retreating, the Turks intended to pursue them as far west as possible. In the event that Greek units were encountered, the armies were directed to gain contact without hostile action.

Simultaneously, the foreign minister, Talat Paşa, was preparing cables to send to the embassies of the Great Powers, which would announce the Ottoman fait accompli to the world. The operation was set to begin on July 22, 1913. Map 10.1 shows the advance to Adrianople.

THE OCCUPATION OF ADRIANOPLE

Events in the field quickly overcame the carefully crafted plan, however, as the Çatalca Army's Independent Cavalry Brigade reacted to



Map 10.1 The Advance to Adrianople, July 12–22, 1913.

reports of retreating Bulgarian infantry and overran the Lüleburgaz train station at 4:45 P.M. on July 20.13 The train station was some six kilometers beyond the Enos-Midia Line. The next day, the Aşiret Cavalry Brigade, operating in the Right Wing's sector, exceeded its orders and overran the line as well. The army staff had no choice but to follow up these forces with infantry support.

In the headquarters of the Left Wing, the chief of staff, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Enver made plans to be the first Ottoman leader to enter the city of Adrianople. He enlisted the aid of a volunteer named Halet Bey who spoke French. Through Halet Bey, Enver contacted the Bulgarian garrison of the city. At this point, the Bulgarian defenders, some four thousand in all, were interested mainly in a safe withdrawal to Bulgaria, which Enver promised them. In return he received intelligence concerning the best routes for the 2nd Cavalry Regiment to enter the city14

On the morning of July 22 at 7:30 A.M., the combined Ottoman field armies moved forward. In the absence of opposition, the cavalry swept forward. Shortly thereafter, Enver's aide hurriedly brought him the news that the army was about to enter the city. Enver made a dash for the lead cavalry regiment, which was just entering the city's eastern outskirts. At 10:30 A.M., he triumphantly sent a message to Ahmet Izzet

Paşa that announced, "Now, I have entered Edirne [Adrianople]. The Bulgarians are retreating toward Mustafa Paşa. I have taken artillery and equipment."15 Later that day, stronger cavalry units made their way into the city as well. The bulk of the Left Wing remained outside the city in an assembly area. Kirkkilise fell the same day to Ottoman cavalry forces.

The Ottoman staff logisticians were awaiting the news of the reoccupation of Adrianople in Lüleburgaz. There they had prepositioned several trains of munitions and artillery with which to restock the empty bunkers of the city. These began to move forward immediately. The Gallipoli Field Army also rapidly advanced to the Meriç River, and its Provisional I Corps took Dedeğaç. Staff Major Mustafa Kemal was the chief of staff for this corps, but he was designated as the acting commander in the field by Brigadier General Fahri for these closing operations.

As envisioned by the staff, the army maintained its forward momen-tum and on July 25, 1913, had pushed beyond the original frontier of October 1912. Belatedly, the alarmed Bulgarians began to redeploy some infantry regiments east to counter the Turks. The advance continued until August 2, against ever-increasing opposition, when Ahmet Izzet Paşa decided to halt.

The general staff immediately began to plan the reoccupation and refortification of the Adrianople fortress complex. The Gallipoli Field Army, still under the command of Fahri Paşa, was assigned this task. However, the General Staff issued deactivation orders to the Gallipoli Field Army on July 24.16 The Provisional II Corps was renamed the Gallipoli Corps and retained the original mission. The Provisional I Corps was reassigned to the control of the Çatalca Army.

By July 28, Fahri had established his headquarters in the city and had moved the divisions of the Gallipoli

Corps into the strong points. He assigned the 27th Infantry Division to the northwest sector, the Samsun Redif Division to the northeast sector, and the Afyon Redif Division to the southern sector. Many of the fortress guns were captured intact, as were large quantities of ammunition. Altogether the Turks found fifty-two artillery pieces and two machine guns operational in the city. During the next several weeks, the logisticians poured even more guns and supplies into the fortress.

All of Bulgaria's hard-won gains in Thrace were thus lost in the space of a fortnight. The Turks demonstrated an astonishingly rapid ability to react to events. The "on the fly" occupation of Adrianople was well coordinated and proceeded smoothly. The General Staff made the refortification of the fortress a top priority and made plans to accomplish this. Overall, the reoccupation (or "reconquest," as Enver was wont to call it) of Thrace was a brilliant display of political resolve and military exper-

tise. In many ways, the operation was the creation of the CUP leadership. The Ottoman public wildly acclaimed the action, and some even pushed for the reconquest of the lost Aegean islands. However, the Ottoman Army, worn down by defeat, was in no condition to conduct serious offensive operations. Content with its triumphant victory in Thrace, the army now turned to the arduous task of rebuilding itself.

FINAL TREATIES

The Bulgarians and the Ottoman government hammered out a new treaty, independent of Great Power interference. The Bulgarians desired a friendly Ottoman Empire in their rear as they cast a covetous eye on the lost lands in Macedonia and along the Aegean seacoast. On September 30, 1913, both countries signed the Treaty of Constantinople, which formalized the current border between the two states. A subsequent Treaty of Athens, on November 14, 1913, formally ended hostilities with Greece. This treaty restored relations between the two countries but left open for future adjudication the question of the Aegean islands. However, relations between the two eroded badly in the following year, almost bringing them to war once again. The Serbs signed the Treaty of Constantinople on March 14, 1914, which simply confirmed their gains under the previous Treaty of London. The uncooperative Montenegrins never signed any formal treaty with the Ottoman state ending the war, but World War I overcame this technicality.

CASUALTIES

The war was very costly to the combatants in human terms. Casualty statistics abound and often conflict with one another. The Ottoman state never published its casualty figures. This fact is sometimes attributed to inaccurate or careless records keeping. In fact, the Ottoman state and military maintained very detailed records, which included strength returns, mobilization and operational plans, warning orders, operations orders, and official correspondence. The author estimates that the Ottoman Empire lost about fifty thousand men killed, seventy-five thousand men dead of disease, and one hundred thousand men wounded. The total bill approximates the losses of the Gallipoli Campaign in 1915. Table 10.5 shows the number of casualties lost during the war.

ORGANIZATIONAL COSTS TO THE OTTOMAN ARMY

The organizational cost of the war to the Ottoman Army was huge. Of twelve Nizamiye infantry divisions, the Western Army evacuated only two intact divisions in June 1913. None of the Western Army's

TABLE 10.5 Casualties in the Balkan Wars, 1912–1913

	First Balkan War				*Second Balkan War*		
Country	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Died of disease*	*POW*	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Died of disease*
Bulgaria	14,000	50,000	19,000		18,000	60,000	15,000
Greece	5,169*	23,502			2,563	19,307	
Montenegro	2,836*	6,602	(1)		240	961	
Serbia	36,550	50,000	(total that includes both the First and Second Balkan Wars)				
Ottoman Empire	**50,000**	**100,000**	**75,000****		**115,000**		

Total Ottoman Casualties: 340,000 killed in action, died of disease, wounded, or taken prisoner.

Sources: Richard C.Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2000), 135–136, and the author's calculations from this work.

* Killed includes those who died of disease.

** These are the author's estimates of possible Ottoman casualties. Assuming that the Turks lost about an equal number of dead as the Christian states in the First Balkan War, I have calculated wounded in a ratio of one to two and death by disease in a ratio of one to one and a half. These casualty rates reflect the known casualty rates from the Ottoman participation in First World War I. The number of prisoners of war (POWs) is the cumulative total cited in this work.

fifteen Redif infantry divisions survived the debacle. The Eastern Army lost two of its initial ten Nizamiye infantry divisions and four of its original eleven Redif infantry divisions. Two of its infantry divisions were inactivated prior to the start of the war because the battalions were too dispersed in the Balkans, in Yemen, and on the Aegean islands. Additionally, six corps headquarters were lost in the campaigns. Table 10.6 shows the units lost or inactivated during the war. To this astonishing total of lost formations must be added the fortress commands of Adrianople, Salonika, Işkodra, and Yanya, with their regiments of heavy artillery and fixed facilities.

TABLE 10.6 Ottoman Corps and Divisions Destroyed, Captured, or Inactivated during the First Balkan War

Ottoman Corps headquarters	IV Corps, VII Corps, Provisional VII Corps, Işkodra Corps, Uştruma Corps, Independent Yanya Corps
Ottoman Nizamiye divisions	1st, 6th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 22nd, 23rd, 24th Infantry Divisions
Ottoman Redif divisions	Adrianople, Aydin, Babeski, Denizli, Drama, Elbesan, Gümülcine, Iştip, Izmit, Kastamonu, Konya, Manastir, Mitroviçe, Nasliç, Nevrekop, Salonika, Serez, Pirzeren, Pristine, Uşsak, Üsküp, Yanya, Redif Infantry Division

Note: The 1st and 6th Infantry Divisions were inactivated at the beginning of the war.
Sources: Author's notes and works previously cited.

A case may be made that many of the regiments of these divisions survived and were integrated into other formations during the war. However, as organizational entities, they were erased from the Ottoman Army's order of battle. Altogether, the Turks lost thirty-six active and reserve infantry divisions in the First Balkan War. It was a military disaster of unprecedented magnitude.

NOTES

1. Turkish General Staff, *Balkan Harbi Kronolojisi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1999), 119.
2. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913) IIIncü Cilt, Inci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu ve Ustruma Kolordusu (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 405.
3. Ibid., 406–407.
4. The best summary of the diplomatic and military aspects of the Second Balkan War may be found in Richard C.Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2000), Chaps. 6 ("The Interbellum") and 7 ("Interallied War").
5. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncü Cilt, 6ncu Kisim (1908–1920), 1nci Kitap* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1971), 242–243.
6. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi, IInci Cilt, 2nci Kisim, 2nci Kitap, Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarköy Çikmarmasi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 388.
7. Ibid., 389.
8. Ibid., 389–391.
9. Turkish General Staff, *Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi,* 397.
10. Ibid., 404.
11. Ibid., 407–408.
12. Ibid., 412. The phrase that the Turkish General Staff used to describe General Order Number 8 was "an order of large historical importance" *(tarihi önemi büyük olan bir emri).*
13. Ibid., 413.
14. Ibid., 415–416.
15. Ibid., 419.
16. Ibid., 456.

11
Defeat in Detail: Conclusion

DEFEAT IN DETAIL

The Ottoman Army was decisively defeated in detail during the First Balkan War. Unable to achieve the necessary mass, portions of their armies were isolated and beaten in widely separated campaigns. The basic condition necessary for the enemy to accomplish this was the strategic dispersion of the Ottoman armies,

which was exaggerated by the army's operational attachment to envelopment operations. In the first instance, the old military adage, "He who defends everything, defends nothing," certainly held true as the Turks sought to retain both the Balkan and the Thracian strategic centers of gravity. This enabled their enemies to achieve decisive superiorities at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. In the second instance, given the twentieth century's worsening tactical dynamic, which greatly favored entrenched troops supported by machine guns and artillery, the Turks forfeited their greatest inherent advantage by conducting offensive encirclement operations at the operational level of war.

In Thrace, the Eastern Army attempted to encircle a larger and more concentrated foe at Kirkkilise but was defeated. Subsequently, it again attempted to encircle the enemy at Lüleburgaz-Pinarhisar but again was defeated. Falling back to the Çatalca Line, the great fortress of Adrianople was left isolated, as was the Gallipoli Peninsula, allowing them to be attacked separately. In Macedonia, the Vardar Army attempted to encircle the enemy at Kumanova and then at Manastir, but was defeated twice. This handed the initiative to the enemy and exposed the flanks of the detachments connecting the eastern and western

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theaters. Greatly superior forces overwhelmed the troops defending Salonika, and that city was lost. The only successes, at Yanya and Işkodra, happened in peripheral theaters of war while on the defensive. By the first armistice, the Ottoman armies lay shattered.

The Ottoman Army never recovered from these early losses in the west, and eventually, the entire theater collapsed under crushing enemy attacks. In Thrace, the resurgent Çatalca Army attempted unsuccessfully to wrest to wrest the initiative with daring amphibious operations. Again, the Turks did not achieve decisive mass and were consequently defeated.

THE EFFECT OF THE PREWAR REORGANIZATION AND DEPLOYMENTS

The incomplete prewar reorganization of the entire Ottoman Army had a tremendous effect on its performance. The implementation of the 1910 reorganization introduced the corps headquarters into the Ottoman force structure without a trained body of commanders and staff officers who were prepared to operate these headquarters. None of the prewar annual maneuvers employed the new corps headquarters, even on a trial basis. Making a difficult situation more complex, the introduction of the new triangular infantry division (which included an artillery regiment) voided all previous doctrinal thought and doctrinal templates within the army.

As a result of the massive organizational changes, the Ottoman Army entered the war in a condition of professional unreadiness. Although the army looked, moved, and apparently fought like an army that was ready, it was always planning and fighting in operationally uncharted waters. Physically the Ottoman Army appeared sound, but intellectually it was unsteady. Nevertheless, the commanders, staffs, and troops did their best to make the new organizational architecture functional.

One of the most damaging aspects of the Ottoman Army's prewar deployment was its incessant deployment of regiments and battalions to Yemen and the Balkans. While it could be maintained that the army received experience and was blooded in these deployments, the deployments made large unit training, war games and maneuvers, and staff rides in the affected divisions nearly impossible. Moreover, they decreased the overall combat proficiency of the formations involved as the troops were engaged largely in fighting brigands and rebels. Two first-line infantry divisions (the 1st and 6th Infantry Divisions) failed to concentrate under the mobilization plan and were inactivated because their regiments were scattered throughout the empire.

THE EFFECT OF THE ENEMY

Given the strategic situation of having to defend two widely separated centers of gravity, the Ottoman Army was faced with a terrible planning problem. A powerful enemy in the form of the Balkan League compounded this by possessing the capability to mobilize and concentrate its armies faster than the Turks. The strategic plans were defensive but encompassed offensive encirclement plans at the operational level. The plans themselves did not doom the Turks, for in many ways they were technically viable. The most damaging factor that upset the Ottoman strategy was the active presence of Greece, with its small, but powerful, army and its dynamic navy, within the Balkan League.

The Ottoman General Staff's Plan Number 5 accurately predicted the four-nation Balkan League and the hostile threat. However, the General Staff did not accurately gauge the effect of the Greek Navy on mobilization and concentration or on the execution of the theater campaign plans. The almost overnight rise of the Greek Navy to maritime ascendancy in the Aegean Sea in 1912 profoundly affected the Ottoman war plans. First, the Turks had to find troops to guard the now-vulnerable Gallipoli Peninsula. This resulted in the loss of the XV Corps to the Eastern Army during the crucial opening battles in Thrace. Moreover, the Eastern

Army's IV Corps was gutted to provide troops to guard the XV Corps's now-unguarded sector. Two complete army corps were removed, more or less immediately, from the Eastern Army's order of battle. Furthermore, reinforcements bound for the Eastern Army by sea from Syria and Palestine had to come over slower land routes, and a third corps was thus not available for the opening battles. In effect, the Greek Navy eliminated a significant portion of the Ottoman Army in the all-important opening round of the war.

The Greek Navy also exerted what could be called a distant blockade on the ports of the Western Army in Macedonia and Albania. This army was denied the VIII Corps, which was scheduled to come to Salonika from Syria and Palestine. Other reinforcements, munitions, and logistical supplies, which would have come to the Western Army by sea, likewise never arrived. The presence of an additional army corps of three Nizamiye infantry divisions might well have tipped the tactical balance in the struggle for Salonika. As the war progressed, the Western Army was attrited by a continuous drain on its manpower as combat and disease sapped its strength. Reinforcements never arrived, and by April 1913 the battered Western Army was a mere shell of its former self.

The Greek Army, in a masterful concentration of effort, threw its weight toward the capture of Salonika. In an unexpectedly brilliant and rapid campaign, the Army of Thessaly seized the city. The loss of this

city was a strategic disaster for the Turks. In the absence of secure sea lines of communications, the retention of the Salonika-Constantinople corridor was essential to the overall strategic posture of the Ottoman Empire. Once this was gone, the defeat in detail of the Ottoman Army was inevitable.

To be sure, the Bulgarians and the Serbs played an important role in the defeat of the main Ottoman armies. Their great victories at Kirkkilise, Lüleburgaz-Pinarhisar, Kumanova, Bitola, and Manastir shattered the Eastern and Vardar Armies. However, these victories were not decisive in the sense that they ended the war. The Ottoman field armies survived, and in Thrace, they actually grew stronger day by day. It should be remembered that these victories were enabled partially by the weakened condition of the Ottoman armies brought about by the active presence of the Greek fleet.

NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF OTTOMAN PERFORMANCE

The Turks did many things wrong in the First Balkan War. Western observers came away with a picture of the Ottoman Army that suggested it was horribly mismanaged and poorly led. It appeared that tactical operations were poorly planned and executed. The coordination of artillery support was particularly thought to be deficient, as were troop training and weapons proficiency. The leadership of the army was characterized as inefficient, corrupt, and unprofessional. Logistics were seen also as very weak. The early disorderly retreats were highly publicized as evidence of the army's lack of discipline. In short, the world saw what it expected to see: a terrible performance by a notoriously inefficient army.

However, much of what the world saw was an incomplete view of what happened. After the war the Europeans did not study the actual operations of the Ottoman Army. Indeed, as the events of World War I overcame Europe, the lessons of the Balkan Wars faded into obscurity.

At the highest levels of political-military policy making, the Ottoman ministry of war was dysfunctional. Instead of effectively maintaining control over a coherent and coordinated national and intertheater strategy, the Ottoman ministers of war tended to become involved in the daily direction of the army's operations. In particular, Nazim Paşa and Ahmet Izzet Paşa physically positioned themselves at the front and took direct personal control of the armies. Although this added impetus and energy to the operations of the armies in Thrace, the armies in Macedonia and Greece were left without a strategic goal other than survival for an extended period of uncertain duration.

In a similar vein the absence of the chief of the Ottoman General Staff, Ahmet Izzet Paşa, for almost the entire year of 1912 must have had a negative effect on the efficient functioning of the staff. Little is known of the character and ability of the acting chief of staff, Hadi Paşa, who drifts in and out of the story like a ghost. It appears that the staff was generally supervised by Pertev Paşa (the chief of operations and intelligence) in the absence of Ahmet Izzet Paşa. In the light of the known weaknesses in Ottoman strategic intelligence, it is highly likely that this area suffered from neglect while Pertev Paşa focused on staff supervision and on operations. Moreover, the absence of the actual chief of staff enabled Nazim Paşa to involve himself directly in operational matters.

At the strategic level, the Ottoman campaign plans were tied to a mobilization and concentration plan that failed to operate at full effectiveness. Consequently, many formations mobilized too slowly and never arrived in time to participate in the early engagements. This particularly hurt the Eastern Army in Thrace, which had to adjust its deployment to belatedly guard the Gallipoli Peninsula. The end result in both theaters was the

launching of premature offensives without the full forces necessary to ensure victory.
Also, at the strategic level, the Ottoman Army demonstrated great weaknesses in its ability to gather and analyze intelligence. Ottoman commanders in the field often received intelligence estimates that were way off the mark, leading them to either underestimate or overestimate the enemy's strength. However, as the early years of World War I would demonstrate, this weakness was characteristic of all European armies and would not be overcome until large and well-trained intelligence staffs evolved.
At the operational level, the Turks demonstrated a consistent attachment to the strategy of envelopment and annihilation. This was a direct result of their German-style war college curriculum and of the rise of a professional caste of staff officers imbued with contemporary German doctrine. Although there was a degree of strategic beauty in their plans, the Turks had never rehearsed these maneuvers in the hard school of annual full-scale exercises. Therefore, they were unpracticed in the actual battlefield coordination and execution of such developments. Their enemies, who were equally unrehearsed in such sophisticated maneuvers, stuck to blunt frontal assaults, which sometimes worked. In effect, the Turks used operational techniques that, when uncom-pleted, left them vulnerable to enemy counterattacks.
The Ottoman field army staffs were routinely unable to determine the adequate troops-to-task requirement for offensive operations. This is a doctrinal term that means how many troops are required to execute a particular mission. The principal reason for this probably was a function of a lack of practical knowledge of the capabilities of the new and

untried corps and triangular infantry divisions. Certainly, at the corps level, the acute shortage of experienced staff personnel had much to do with this problem. This did not seem to be a problem when conducting defensive operations. This would also be a problem for many other European armies in World War I.
There was a wide performance gap between uniformly excellent planning procedures and poorly executed combat operations. Fre-quently, the well laid plans and operations orders miscarried in action. Again, the newness of the triangular infantry division probably had a great deal to do with this particular problem as commanders struggled to understand the new organizational structure and its effect on operations. Moreover, the prewar set-piece, scripted maneuvers did little to teach how real combat operations were actually carried on.
As Redif formations were introduced into the line of battle, there was also a problem with asymmetric combat capabilities because the reservists were not as capable as the active forces. The ad hoc grouping of Nizamiye and Redif infantry divisions into the same army corps prior to the first armistice was a compensatory measure but usually resulted in failure. At Çatalca, the Turks physically removed the Redif infantry divisions from the line of battle until they had completed a massive retraining program.
At the tactical level, there were severe deficiencies with artillery support prior to the first armistice. Again, this was a direct result of the tactical reorganization of the army, which placed artillery battalions within infantry divisions. The army had no opportunity to practice and to iron out exactly how this was done before the outbreak of hostilities. Often, the Turkish artillery was dispersed and uncoordinated with the infantry that it was supposed to support. Consistently, the enemy often gained fire superiority and rendered the Ottoman artillery arm ineffective. After the first armistice, this was much less of a problem.
The inefficient and spotty training of the individual reservists (Redif) left much to be desired. Often these men were untrained in the proper use of their weapons and equipment. Moreover, they often broke under enemy attack, indicating great weaknesses in their cohesion and fighting spirit. Occasionally, this happened to the active force as well. In particular, the army's retreats were widely publicized as panic-stricken routs.

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF OTTOMAN PERFORMANCE

Despite the prevailing negative opinions by the Western community about Ottoman Army performance during the Balkan Wars, there were many positive aspects. Even the Germans, who had strong ties to the

Ottoman Army, tended to dwell on its deficiencies rather than its strengths. The author believes that the failure of the Europeans to examine the demonstrated strengths of the Ottoman Army in these wars led directly to an underestimation of their fighting capability Consequently, in World War I, the Allies, and the British in particular, would badly underestimate the Turks at Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia, and in the Sinai.
Although it lost the Balkan Wars, a case can be made that the Ottoman Army profited greatly from this experience and developed greater efficiency for the coming world war. What, then, could be said about the positive aspects of Ottoman Army performance during the Balkan Wars?
At the strategic level, the Ottoman Army demonstrated great proficiency in the planning phase of combat operations. Operations orders were generally uniform in format (using the five-paragraph field order),

indicating standardization in the doctrinal approach to war. The astonishing rapidity of the flow of reports up and down the chain of command was excellent and contributed to overall efficiency. Operational planning was rapid and thorough, indicating that the General Staff officer corps was well trained in the production of combat orders.

The army demonstrated a great ability to move rapidly over separate avenues of approach and to concentrate at a decisive point. Senior commanders (at the theater, army, and corps levels) often positioned themselves at the front where they could act decisively if required. Sometimes, they were even too close to the action to effectively command their formations (Mahmut Muhtar Paşa and Fethi Paşa were examples of this tendency) and were directly caught up in the fighting.

At the operational level, the Ottoman Army demonstrated the capability to rapidly reorganize itself into effective ad hoc operational and tactical groups (the Provisional Adrianople Corps and the Left Wing at the Second Battle of Çatalca are excellent examples). This enabled the Turks to partly solve the troops-to-task problem by overcoming it through organizational means. This characteristic was seen in every theater through the formation of independent corps and detachments. This demonstrates a high degree of doctrinal standardization that enabled commanders to task-organize (or tailor) the army for specific operational needs.

The Ottoman Army proved that it could analyze its failures and create effective solutions to its problems. The consolidation of the artillery in the Çatalca Lines showcases this capacity. Likewise, the massive retraining program conducted there during the first armistice proved remarkably effective in improving the performance of the Redif infantry divisions. The operational concept of the Şarköy amphibious operation was a very creative solution to the problem of available attack frontages. Moreover, the army could envision and plan for future

requirements. For example, in summer 1913, while advancing on Adrianople, it made plans for the refortification of the city; simultaneously, it began the reconstitution of the Second Army from formations evacuated from Albania.

Ottoman commanders at all levels proved aggressive, and there was steady professional growth by many of them throughout the war. In particular, Cavit Paşa, Esat Paşa (Yanya), Fethi Paşa, Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, and Mehmet Şükrü Paşa were extremely effective at corps-level command. At the divisional level, Cevat Paşa, Enver Bey, Halil Bey, and Mustafa Kemal Bey proved themselves to be outstanding combat leaders.

In the conduct of joint operations that involved the Ottoman Navy, the Ottoman Army was remarkably effective. The Turks planned and executed a technically successful corps-sized amphibious operation. Moreover, they were able to employ naval gunfire support efficiently throughout the war. They were also able to efficiently and rapidly marshal and employ maritime transport for troop movement between Europe, Asia, and the Gallipoli Peninsula. Even the evacuation from Macedonia in 1913 was handled expeditiously.

LESSONS LEARNED

It could be maintained that the Balkan Wars and the experiences and lessons learned in them enhanced the effectiveness of the Ottoman Army in World War I. Immediately after the bloodless summer campaign to reclaim Adrianople in 1913, the Ottoman General Staff began to plan for the future. Table 11.1 shows the disposition of the Ottoman Army in summer 1913. The top priorities of the army were the refortification of Adrianople, the reconstitution of the Second Army, and the restationing of the army. By September 1913, many of the formations in Thrace were already returning home to their peacetime garrisons in Anatolia. With these tasks in hand, Ahmet Izzet Paşa and the general staff went to work to remedy many of the deficiencies uncovered by the war.

It would appear that Ahmet Izzet Paşa possessed a passion for tin-kering with the organizational architecture of the army. On December 11, 1913, as a result of the Balkan Wars, he instituted yet another massive army reorganization: the New Organization of Regular Forces in Army and Independent Corps and Divisional Areas (Yeni Teşkilat-ı Askeriye Nizamnamesine Göre Ordu, Bağımsız Kolordu ve Tümen Bölgeleriye).1 The basic composition of the active army was retained, but the inefficient and unsuccessful Redif system was eliminated from the force structure. This meant that the Turks no longer maintained complete reserve army corps and reserve infantry divisions as separate formations. When called to the colors in fall 1912, the reserve formations had

TABLE 11.1 Disposition of Ottoman Forces, July 1913

BALKANS	EUROPEAN THRACE	CAUCASIA
(All units lost in spring 1913)	Çatalca Army I Corps: 2, 28 Fatih Infantry Divisions	Third Army IX Corps: 33 Infantry Division

II Corps: 3, 5, 12 Infantry Divisions	XI Corps: 34 Infantry Division
III Corps: 7, 8, 9 Infantry Divisions	**RECONSTITUTION IN CENTRAL ANATOLIA**
IV Corps: 29, Aydin, Ereğli, Kayseri Infantry Divisions	**Vardar Army headquarters (Second Army)**
X Corps: 4, 31, Aziz Infantry Divisions	**V Corps headquarters**
Army Reserve: Yozgat, Ankara, Selimiye, Amasya Infantry Divisions	**VI corps: 16 Infantry Division**
Gallipoli Field Army	**VII Corps: 21 Infantry Division**
Prov. I Corps: 30, 32, Mürettep Infantry Division	**SYRIA**
Prov. II Corps: 27, Samsun, Afyon Infantry Divisions	VIII Corps: 25, 26 Infantry Divisions
Prov. III Corps: Çanakkale, Edrimet Infantry Divisions	**MESOPOTAMIA**
	35, 36 infantry Divisions

Note: Units in boldface type indicate formations being reconstituted.

proved unready and were often a liability in combat. Ahmet Izzet Paşa now stabilized the postwar army at thirty-eight active infantry divisions, with no organized reserve infantry divisions behind them. Thus, the Ottoman Army became the solitary European power that did not have a capacity to call up entire reserve divisions and corps.2 During World War I as the Turks expanded their army, they simply activated more active army corps and infantry divisions.

The army's inspectorate system remained, but its focus changed from the training and maintenance of complete large-scale formations to troop training at the regimental and battalion levels. This was calculated to maintain the military readiness of the individual reservists and to ensure that these men were capable of wartime service within a reasonable mobilization time frame. Instead of being assigned to a Redif infantry division, all reservists were assigned to local force pools to augment the existing active infantry divisions, which were maintained in a cadre status. (Readers wishing to learn more about this subject may consult my *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in The First World War* [Westport, CT: Greenwood], 2000.)

To remedy many of the operational and tactical problems evident in the Ottoman Army, the Turks requested that Germany enlarge its military mission in the Ottoman Empire. Often referred to as the German

Military Mission, the exact Turkish-language title was the German Reform Mission. This brought Major General Otto Liman von Sanders and about twenty highly trained German general staff officers to Constantinople in mid-December 1913. Their job was to form model regiments and battalions and to conduct model training and maneuvers for the Turks to pattern themselves after. Some of the officers were sent to key positions on the Ottoman General Staff, army staffs, and corps staffs.

Instructions also went out to the moribund army formal schools command, which, during the war, had more or less shut its doors. The first priority was to restart the officer schools, especially the Ottoman war academy and the schools for company-grade officers.3 The General Staff established three centralized training locations for this purpose, in Constantinople, Erzincan, and Aleppo. The war academy excluded, the first courses ranged in length from two weeks to three months. Additionally, the new training centers were directed to host conferences for the exchange of training information. Reflecting the general unhappiness with weapons proficiency in the army, the courses were authorized to expend one hundred rounds of rifle ammunition or twenty rounds of pistol ammunition per student.

On January 3, 1914, the CUP replaced the minister of war, Ahmet Izzet Paşa, with the newly promoted Staff Colonel Enver (who now styled himself the "conqueror of Adrianople"). The young and aggressive Enver immediately began to forcibly retire large numbers of older army officers, many of whom were the surviving *alayli* (regimental officers). He held that these men were too cautious, too politically unreliable, or too ignorant and timid. Some of the officers were, of course, members of competing political parties. Within a few months Enver had forced into retirement 2 field marshals, 3 lieutenant generals, 30 major generals, 95 brigadier generals, 184 colonels, 236 lieutenant colonels and majors, and some 800 captains and lieutenants.4 Although the officers were not killed, it was clearly a purge. This cleared the way for many of the younger and aggressive men, who had won reputations in the Balkan Wars, to advance quickly to high command. Among these officers of promise were Cevat Paşa, Cevit Paşa, Esat Paşa, Galip Bey, Hafif Hakki Bey, Halil Bey, Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, Mehmet Vehip Bey, Mustafa Fevzi Bey, Mustafa Kemal Bey, and Yakup Şevki Bey. These soldiers would lead the Turks to many victories during World War I and the War of Independence.

Enver Paşa quickly asserted himself in several other areas during spring 1914. On March 14, 1914, Enver sent out very detailed training guidance to the army.5 He made platoon training and fire discipline a top priority, along with marches and battle drills. He also specified that large-scale training exercises and maneuvers

would resume, and that these must include exercises conducted during periods of cold weather.

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Enver reaffirmed the Ottoman attachment to envelopment operations by providing doctrinal guidance that stressed the importance of encircling and annihilating the enemy. He also insisted on the development of hard-marching infantry with an on- and off-road capability to enhance the conduct of envelopment operations. Enver provided specific instructions for the training of cavalry during periods of fog and reduced visibility in order to guarantee continuous contact with the enemy.

Presaging the tactical doctrines of the World War I, Enver directed that small units (platoons and companies) institute procedures for developing fire and movement in offensive combat. In the defense, he mandated the establishment of reserves and the generation of heavy defensive fire. He directed that the machine-gun detachments work on developing speed of engagement and proficiency in flanking fires. Enver very specifically ordered that the machine guns themselves be surveyed in (like artillery), so that interlocking fire plans could be developed.

Reflecting the deficiencies revealed during the Balkan Wars in the delivery of effective fire support by the Ottoman Army's field artillery arm, Enver ordered that the I Corps conduct experiments with infantry formations coordinating direct support artillery fires. This would ensure the close cooperation between infantry and guns necessary for the full implementation of contemporary German tactical doctrines. This was to be done by linking infantry companies to dedicated artillery batteries directly through a system of colored pennants. In particular, red and white pennants were to be used to initiate and direct artillery firing. Enver directed that the I Corps commander develop a workable fire support system and test it in a rigorous exercise scheme. The commander was instructed to complete the fire support test and to submit a full report through the First Army Inspectorate to the Ministry of Defense by October 28, 1914.6

There were other paragraphs in the instructions that covered medical and veterinary matters. There were extensive instructions for the proper emplacement and construction of entrenchments. There was even guidance on the development of a system of tactical communications using trumpets. All in all, Enver's training guidance was a remarkable document for its time and showcased the army's ability to take a critical look at its problems and generate institutional solutions. Of particular importance, the document indicated a gathering awareness of firepower as the sine qua non of modern warfare.

On April 7, 1914, the general staff under the watchful eye of the German Colonel Fritz Bronsart von Schellendorf, the newly assigned first assistant chief of the Ottoman General Staff, completed staffing of the new Primary Campaign Plan for the Ottoman Army. The Turks

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eliminated the previous twelve campaign plans, now rendered obsolete by the loss of the Balkan provinces. Instead, the General Staff created a single-purpose defensive war plan that delivered half of the army to Thrace and a third of the army to Caucasia. There these forces would establish armies of observation and establish defensive positions. Offensive operations, at both the strategic and operational level, expressly were forbidden (although there was a proviso allowing local attacks at the tactical level to seize key terrain). The reconstituted corps and infantry divisions were included in this plan, even though they had not yet fully recovered. In the associated mobilization and concentration plans, the Turks discarded the rigid timetables that had failed during the Balkan Wars, and instead adopted a flexible movement schedule based on when a particular formation reported itself ready for war. By decoupling the engine of mobilization from the concentration of troops, the general staff avoided the problem of reacting to the plan itself rather than reacting to events. This plan was endorsed immediately by Enver Paşa and was forwarded to the Ministry of the Marine for concurrent staff action.

To support the planning process, the Ottoman army inspectorates and army corps were ordered to begin planning large-scale maneuvers once again.7 The simulated war games portion of these exercises was specified as four days of simulated combat. The armies were ordered to conduct corps-on-corps maneuvers and to include the operations officers of the subordinate infantry divisions in the planning process. Reflecting the lessons learned from the recent wars, the general staff directed that heavy artillery would be included in the maneuvers. The maneuver cycle was built around a report to the general staff that was due annually on May 1, which outlined the planned exercises for the following fall. The outbreak of World War I interrupted the 1914 maneuver cycle that was planned in Thrace for the First Army.

To accelerate the ongoing resurrection of the formal schools system, Enver placed the operation of the centralized training sites directly under the command of colocated Ottoman Army corps commanders on April 14.8 The I Corps, X Corps, and VI Corps were tasked to supervise the Constantinople sites, the Erzincan sites, and the Aleppo sites, respectively. Later, on April 21, 1914, in Army Order Number 7, the operation of the war

academy was placed directly under the supervision of the second assistant chief of staff (Bronsart von Schellendorf, himself a graduate of the German War Academy).9
Enver also made one final adjustment to the tables of organization for both Ottoman army corps and infantry divisions by eliminating the respective independent Nişanci regiments and battalions. It is unclear exactly why Enver inactivated these formations and eliminated them from the Ottoman force structure. During the Balkan Wars, these rifle

formations often were misused when they were employed mostly as reserves rather than in their doctrinal role of reconnaissance and screening. It is possible that the Turks recognized that the actual battlefield utility of these highly specialized formations did not justify the assignment of large numbers of select officers and men. In any case, by summer 1914, the Nişanci units were inactivated and the Ottoman corps and infantry divisions were established as pure triangular formations (in terms of assigned infantry assets).
By early summer 1914, most of the army had returned to its garrison homes and was hard at work conducting individual and unit training. Thirty-six of the projected thirty-eight infantry divisions were formed and were operational in a cadre status. Table 11.2 shows the disposition of the Ottoman Army on August 3, 1914. The Turks chose to maintain a higher number of active divisions at about half-strength in peacetime. These formations would be augmented within a week of mobilization by the reservists of the Ihtiyat (the former First and Second Redif) and brought up to war establishment.
In the space of the year from July 1913 to July 1914, the Ottoman Army proved highly adaptable and consistently sought to improve its combat efficiency. The army that emerged in fall 1914 was much maligned by European observers, and little was expected of it. However, much to the surprise of the world, the Ottoman Army proved effective, resilient, and capable of sustained combat.

TABLE 11.2 Disposition of Ottoman Forces, August 3, 1914

EUROPEAN THRACE
First Army
I Corps: **1,** 2, 3 Infantry Divisions
II Corps: 4, 5, **6** Infantry Divisions
III Corps: 7, 8, 9 Infantry Divisions

SYMRNA
IV Corps: **10, 11,** *12* Infantry Divisions

ANATOLIA
V Corps: **13, 14, 15** Infantry Divisions

SYRIA
Second Army
VI Corps: 16, 26 Infantry Divisions
VIII Corps: 25, *27* Infantry Divisions

CAUCASIA
Third Army
IX Corps: **17,** *28, 29* Infantry Divisions, 9 Cavalry Brigade
X Corps: 30, **31,** *32* Infantry Divisions
XI Corps: **18,** 33, 34 Infantry Divisions, 11 Cavalry Brigade,
Van Calvary Brigade

MESOPOTAMIA
Fourth Army
XII Corps: 35, 36 Infantry Divisions
XIII Corps: **37, 38** Infantry Divisions

ARABIA-YEMEN
VII Corps: 21, **22, 39, 40** Infantry Divisions

Note: Units in boldface type indicate reconstituted formations, in italics indicate units redeployed since 1913.

CONCLUSION

The Turks lost the First Balkan War. Perhaps with a strategy firmly rooted in the defense, they might have achieved a better outcome. The fragility of the Balkan League was amply demonstrated during the Second Balkan War, and the Turks might have drawn out the war on more favorable terms, which might have led to a similar collapse of the league. Instead the Ottoman Army was sent reeling in defeat, its divisional base shattered and its reputation ruined.
The world has taken very little note of the growth of military efficiency and professionalism within the Ottoman Army during the first two decades of the twentieth century. At the time, and subsequently, much of the Ottoman Army's success (such as it was) was attributed to the effect of the German advisors. Sometimes even their battlefield successes were simply written off to the poor tactics of their enemies or to fortunate circumstances.
Europe would discount the Turks in the careful calculations of the balance of power in the fatal summer of 1914. When they joined with Germany in an alliance, they were seen as a liability and as easy prey. Few observers, if any, viewed the Turks as a viable military power. However, in November 1918, even after the collapse of Russia, Bulgaria, and Austria-Hungary, the mutinies in the French Army and the German Navy, and after the ejection of the Serbian and Romanian armies from their homelands, the Ottoman Army, although battered beyond recognition, was still on its feet and in the field. This was due largely to the hard-won

experiences of the Balkan Wars and the Ottoman Army's ability to learn from its mistakes. It was a magnificent accomplishment.

NOTES

1. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncü Cilt, 6nci Kisim (1908–1920), 1nci Kitap* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1971), 209.
2. Schlieffen's final memorandum of December 28, 1912, called for the merg-ing of active and reserve formations in all army corps (esentially elminating the differences between active and reserve army corps). He also proposed that German army corps strength be reduced to twenty infantry battalions with 90 field guns (down from twenty-four battalions and 144 guns). Interestingly, a full-strength Ottoman Army corps in summer 1914 would possess twenty-one infantry battalions and 96 field guns and howitzers, with a mixed complement of active and reserve soldiers. The similarity to Schlieffen's proposal is remarkable. See Martin Samuels, *Command or Control? Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888–1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1995), 84–86, for a discussion of Schlieffen's proposals.
3. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 398–399. See the instructions for Officer Training Centers (Zabitan Talimgahlari Talimatnamesi), 1913.

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4. Turkish General Staff, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi Kafkas Cephesi 3ncü Ordu Harekati, Cilt I and II* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 52.
5. Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 405–411. See Army Order Number 1, dated March 14, 1914.
6. Ibid., 410.
7. Ibid., 403–404.
8. Ibid., 401
9. Ibid.

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Appendix A
Ottoman Aviation, Prelude to Military Use of Aircraft

Bülent Yilmazer

FOUNDATIONS OF AN AVIATION ORGANIZATION

The might of the Ottoman Army was at its zenith from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, when it was known and feared. This was largely due to its mobility and the modernity of the weapons it employed. The former ability was, in the main attributable to commando-type units, the "Akıncı," and the "Sipahi," a fearless, audacious, light cavalry force.

In 1908 an attempt was made to revive the former glory of the Ottoman Empire by young army officers when, on July 24, they marched on Istanbul. A revolution followed in which the army initiative was organized into a nationalistic party led by the the Young Turks Movement. In addition to the administrative reforms, the proclamation of İikinci Meşrutiyet (the Second Constitutional Assembly) in 1908 aimed at modernizing the army and increasing its armament and equipment capacity.

Demonstrations of balloons and aircraft conducted in Istanbul in 1909 greatly impressed the young, open-minded officers leading the new government. Here was an idea for reviving the concept of the Sipahi, involving swift reconnaissance and harassing forces. As a result of these visions, the new Harbiyye Nâzırı (minister of war), Mahmut Şevket Paşa, who possessed an unequaled insight into modern weapons, early in 1910 ordered military attaché offices to be established in Paris and Berlin.1 These offices were to follow and report on developments in modern warfare and weapons. Binbaşı Enver, who was appointed as

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the military attaché for Berlin, was no other than the renowned Enver Paşa, who would impel the Ottoman Empire into World War I. On the other hand, Binbaşı Ali Fethi (Okyar), who was appointed as the military attaché for Paris, played a prominent role in shaping the relations between French and Turkish aviation.2 This year saw unusually large army maneuvers held by all major European powers. The attachés dutifully attended as observers and reported to Istanbul.3 The Paris attaché was accompanied by Kolağası Mustafa Kemal

(Atatürk) during the Picardie maneuvers.4 These reports specially mentioned the involvement of aircraft as a means of fast reconnaissance and observation in both the French and German exercises.5 In consequence, the two attachés were instructed to investigate these aspects further.6

The minister of war's next move was, on February 14, 1911, to instruct the two attachés to obtain information on pilot training and conditions of payment.7 Only a week later, replies were received from both Paris and Berlin. The French government was, at this stage, unwilling to train foreign officers, so the attaché suggested following the example of other countries by sending trainees to one of the many civil flying-training schools.8 During May 1911, the commanders of the First, Second, and Third Armies circulated application forms asking officers to volunteer for pilot training. Initially one officer would be trained in France and one in Germany. Applicants had to possess high school certificates for technical subjects and be in good health.9 Seven officers applied, and were called to take a written examination on June 28, 1911, to test their proficiency in technical matters.10 On July 4, a selection committee chose Suvari Yüzbaşı Fesa to be sent to France and Istihkam Mülâzım-ı Evvel Yusuf Kenan to Germany. When notification was sent to Germany, however, the school suddenly wanted an excessively high fee; as a result, both officers were enrolled in the Bleriot School at Etampe, near Paris, in July.11 Both pilots finished their training in February 1912. First to graduate was Fesa, receiving French Aero Club certificate no. 780 (Turkish no. 1), and then Yusuf Kenan, no. 797. The latter had initially made slow progress with many mistakes.12 Because of this and later events in Turkey, he was never issued a Turkish license.

While the two pilots were receiving training in France, the Ottoman Army General Staff made Erkân-ı Harp Kaymakam Süreyya, who was in charge of the 2nd Division of the Erkâni- Harbiyye-i Umûmiyye (General Staff), responsible for aviation matters.13 To cope with the increased workload, and realizing that the resources of his office alone would not be enough to handle the complicated tasks at hand, Süreyya proposed a committee to be formed with members from Kitaât-ı Fenniye ve Mevâki-i Müstahkeme Müfettişliği (Inspectorate of Techni-

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cal and Fortified Formations) to take care of all aviation matters. The committee, Tayyare Komisyonu (Aircraft Committee), was formed under the chairmanship of Süreyya; the members were Istihkam Kaymakam Refik, İstihkam Binbaşı Mehmet Ali, and İstihkam Binbaşı Zeki. Thus, the first official body of Ottoman aviation, the forefather of today's Turkish aviation, was established.14

The Tayyare Komisyonu made several excursions in December 1911 to find a suitable airfield for a Tayyare Mektebi (Aircraft School) to be established soon. A suitable piece of land was found near Ayastafanos (San Stefano), and two light tent hangars were erected in January 1912.15

THE TRIPOLITANIAN WAR (THE TURKISH-ITALIAN WAR)

Suddenly, in September 1911, without provocation or prior warning, the Italian Army threatened to annex the Ottoman province of Tripoli in North Africa. Italy, which was late in securing colonies compared with other European states, made its demands known by claiming from the Ottoman State certain regions of Libya. When this demand was rejected, the Italian government declared war on Turkey on September 29, 1911, and occupied Tripoli and Benghazi. The success of the first Italian troops ashore was small, but they were followed by an aircraft detachment. However, the air flotilla had some difficulty getting ashore because the Italian army commanders had a low opinion of the value of aircraft in combat.16

Aircraft were first used in war against the defending Ottoman units on October 22, when a Bleriot piloted by Capitano Riccardo Moizo made a flight over the battlefront.17 Further swift developments in air warfare were seen on October 26, when an aircraft was first used operationally to aim the guns of the battleship *Sardegna* on Turkish positions.18 Then, on November 1, grenades were dropped on a Turkish camp. These are the first recorded occasions of aircraft employed in warfare. The damage inflicted by the grenades was negligible. However, the reconnaissance flights and the directing of the ship's guns had assisted greatly in defeating the Turkish forces. The Italian headquarters quickly changed its opinion of aircraft and airmen.19

Several other "firsts" in military aviation occurred during this war. In February 1912, Capitano Carlos Piazza photographed Turkish positions from the air.20 On March 4, 1912, Piazza and Sottotenente di comp Giulio Gavotti made a night flight, experimenting with the idea of aerial raids during the night.21 On the night of June 10–11, 1912, Capitano Marengo dropped bombs over a Turkish camp, marking the first night

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raid in history.22 Aircraft were also used to drop propaganda leaflets in an attempt to influence the Arabs.23 The airship also received its baptism of fire during this conflict. Besides the usual reconnaissance and bombing raids, it was the Italian airship P1 that dropped incendiary bombs, in the first recorded aerial use of such weapons, during a night mission on July 12, 1912.24

The Turks also made their contribution with several firsts in military aviation. The Ottoman units on the ground had learned to group soldiers together and make them fire in unison at aerial targets. They had also managed to raise a 90mm Krupps gun so that it could fire shrapnel shells into the air.25 Thus, Capitano Carlo Montù became the first airman to be wounded by ground fire when he received a bullet hit on January 31, 1912.26 One additional incident, which marks another first in military aviation—the capture of the opponent's aircraft—took place on September 10, 1912, when a Nieuport, piloted by Moizo, landed inside the Ottoman lines.27

Although the Ottoman army did not use, or rather did not have the chance to use, aircraft during this conflict, a few words are necessary to illustrate the Ottoman aviation efforts at this time.

The Ottoman army did possess some aircraft during the later stages of the Turkish-Italian War. However, circumstances did not favor the use of these aircraft at North Africa. The very first aircraft for the Ottoman Army, two Deperdussins, arrived at Ayastafanos in March 1912. Unfortunately, even before the two new aircraft had performed their first flight, a severe storm struck Ayastafanos and both aircraft were damaged beyond immediate repair.28

Although several other machines were acquired prior to the end of 1912, getting reinforcement and aircraft to Tripoli was not easy, as the Italian Navy had initiated a blockade of the North African coastline. This was followed, in April 1912, by an intensive bombardment of the Gallipoli Peninsula and annexation of the twelve Dodecanese Islands, including Rhodes. Some aviation equipment ordered from England, including two Bristol Prier-Dickson monoplanes, were intercepted and seized by the Italian Navy in July 1912.29

At the very early stages of the war, in November 1911, much before the first Ottoman aviators had earned their wings and the Ottoman Army had acquired its first aircraft, several attempts were made, offering large sums of money, to employ foreign pilots, particularly in France. Mahmut Şevket Paşa personally took part in the process to contract mercenary pilots.30 Two French pilots willing to undertake the task with their aircraft were found. In January 1912 a French steamer carrying the flyer Duval and his aircraft to Tunisia was intercepted and boarded by Italian marines. This event sparked off a

diplomatic crisis between France and Italy; eventually, the pilot and aircraft were released.31

Another attempt was made by a French merchant, who chartered a ship destined for South Africa, on which two pilots and their aircraft were to be hidden. This arrangement, which was negotiated by the Ottoman military attaché in Paris, was, however, disapproved of by the ambassador, who delayed the signing of the contract. Consequently, the ship left without the secret cargo.32

Another arrangement was made. It was planned that Fesa, who had just completed his pilot training at the Bleriot school, and another Ottoman officer should accompany the French pilots and the aircraft to Southern Algeria. From there they would either fly or proceed by caravan to Tripoli.33 Meanwhile, Fesa's service would soon be needed at Istanbul, as some aircraft were acquired in France and already dispatched to there. It must have become evident that the plan could not be realized in the short term, for on February 29, Süreyya sent a telegram to the military attaché in Paris ordering Fesa's immediate return to Istanbul.34 Not until May 1912 did the small French party actually arrive at Biskra in Algiers, and only then did the French pilots suddenly refuse to act as mercenaries against the Italians. They revealed the plans to the French authorities, who promptly confiscated the aircraft and other material.35

With the outbreak of the war in the Balkans in September 1912, any plans to supply aviation material to the far-off North Africa was dropped in favor of protecting the Ottoman capital, Istanbul, barely 250 kilometers away from the conflict in the Balkans.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FLYING SCHOOL AND WAR UNITS

The course of events had made it very clear that the scheme of employing foreign pilots and their aircraft was not a practical solution. Alas, when the first two Turkish aviators, Fesa and Yusuf Kenan, returned to Istanbul in February 1912 after gaining their wings in France, there were no aircraft available for their use. To rectify this deficiency, the Harbiyye Nâzırı arranged a meeting, at the beginning of March 1912, to propose a law for aircraft procurement.36 Due to the economic burden of the Tripoli war, there were no funds available from the normal budget, and instead it was proposed to transfer money from the large sums that had been collected publicly by the Donanma-i Osmânî Muâvenet-i Milliyye Cemiyeti (Ottoman Navy National Support Asso-ciation) to buy capital ships for the Ottoman Navy.37 Following the example of public subscriptions used in France to raise funds for

aviation, it was also suggested that higher officers and wealthy citizens should show their patriotic attitude by donating up to six month's salary.38 This call was acted upon enthusiastically. Very soon, enough money had

been collected to buy two Deperdussins; a 50 horsepower (HP) two-seater and a 25 HP single-seater, which were available for delivery in France. These two aircraft arrived at Ayastafanos on March 15 to be assembled and prepared for flight by Fesa and Yusuf Kenan.39 In late April, a large military parade to bolster public enthusiasm was being arranged in Istanbul in honor of Sultan Reşad. The initial assignment for the first Turkish pilots was to train for this event to show military aircraft to the public for the first time. Unfortunately, in late March, before this event and even before the two new aircraft had performed their first flight, a severe storm struck Ayastafanos. The tent-hangars that housed the aircraft were demolished, and both aircraft were damaged beyond immediate repair.40

Just prior to this setback, however, the military attaché in Paris had forwarded a favorable offer from the director of the REP factory. As money was readily available, the director personally went to Istanbul to negotiate his suggested contract. He offered to supply new aircraft, open a flying school, and train an initial cadre of Turkish pilots and mechanics in France. This scheme was agreed upon, and the contract that was signed included a clause that two REP aircraft should be delivered in such time as to participate in the parade on April 27. Two more aircraft were to be delivered during the summer. Eight pilots and a contingent of carpenters and mechanics were to undergo training in France at the Robert Esnault-Pelterie (REP) school.41

After this contract was signed, the Tayyare Komisyonu published their estimated budget for 1912. It was proposed to establish an aircraft school, an aircraft construction plant, and aircraft squadrons, and a memorandum signed by Mahmut Şevket Paşa was issued in this respect.42

The flying school thus formed was to cater to the training of pilots, observers, mechanics, and riggers. Several operational aircraft squadrons were envisaged, each with an establishment of four aircraft. Called Tayyare Bölükleri (Aircraft Squadrons), these units were to be divided into two flights of two dual-seat warplanes with personnel comprising a commander, four pilots, four observers, and a complement of ground support personnel.

The first REP dual-seat warplane arrived as promised on April 20, together with the REP chief pilot, the Englishman Gordon Bell, and two mechanics. The aircraft was hurriedly assembled, and the two Deperdussins were rebuilt. On the morning of April 26, Bell took the REP plane on a test hop and a little later made a forty-five-minute flight over Istanbul and the Bosporus, climbing to a height of one thousand meters.43 This marked the first flight of a Turkish military aircraft. That

afternoon, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, followed by the army commanders and the members of Tayyare Komisyonu, gathered at the Ayastafanos airfield. Gordon Bell, in the red-painted REP plane *Ordu (Army)* and Fesa in the now repaired 25 HP single-seat Deperdussin made a flight in front of the officials.44 The next day, these two aircraft were assigned to participate in the parade, but the wind became so strong and gusty that only the very experienced Gordon Bell could make a takeoff and fly over the Abidey-i Hürriyet (Liberty Memorial) at the ceremony grounds in Istanbul.45

The times were not right for parades, however. Essential equipment had to be acquired. Balloons were needed for observation in Tripoli and for the protection of the Dardanelles. The army units had to be provided with aircraft, spare parts, and munitions for offense against the Italian presence in the Dodecanese Islands. Thus, on May 6, two members of Tayyare Komisyonu, Süreyya and Mehmet Ali, departed for Europe.46 As the Tripoli forces were completely isolated by the Italian blockade, the Army Command's primary communications requirement was for a large airship. The specifications were a range of at least 1,500 kilometers, a payload of no less than 2.5 tons, a wireless, a searchlight, and bomb racks. The requirements further specified aircraft able to carry bombs.47 The two members of Tayyare Komisyonu first paid a visit to Austria and then to the air center at Johannisthal near Berlin.48 Negotiations were begun with the Zeppelin factory about the airship. The price quoted for the airship, the hangar to store it, and the needed gas production plant was in excess of the budget. They were also informed that it would take five to six months to get the approval of the German government for the sale.49 During the negotiations at the Harlan factory for the procurement of bombing aircraft, a demonstration was requested to prove the bombing capability of the aircraft. Harlan was unable to secure the necessary permission to perform such a demonstration from the German War Ministry. Süreyya inserted a provision in the contract that Harlan would assure that the aircraft delivered would be able to drop bombs with accuracy, and this would be proven by the experiments made at Istanbul.50 This was the first instance for such a provision in a contract for the procurement of aircraft. The contract signed included two Harlan Eindeckers, to be flown by the pilots Adolf Rentzel and Reinhold Jahnow, and two mechanics in support.51 Fifty 15 kg bombs and one hundred 1.5 kg grenades made up the offensive order. Five 15-kg bombshells, to be filled with sand for the bomb-dropping trials of the Harlan aircraft, were also procured.52 Meanwhile, a 750 cubic meter observation balloon that was ordered for the Edirne Kalesi (Adrianople Fortress) in April 1910 finally arrived at Edirne (Adriano-ple).53

On June 3, 1910, Süreyya and Mehmet Ali proceeded to France, where they visited a number of factories.54 At the Deperdussin factory, a 70 HP two-seater was procured for money donated by Prince Celaleddin. When the aircraft later arrived in Turkey, in July, it was named *Prens Celaleddin*.55 From the Bleriot factory, another two-seater was ordered, a Bleriot IX-2. Süreyya's father, Rıza Paşa, personally financed this purchase.56 The aircraft was named *Vatan (Homeland)* upon arrival in Turkey. A pilot and two mechanics were contracted to function as instructors at Tayyare Mektebi.57 When visiting the REP factory, the second warplane that had been contracted for earlier was ready, and the two officers performed its acceptance. It was arranged to send this aircraft to Turkey immediately. The contract with REP was renewed, and the factory promised to deliver the remaining two in July.58 At the factory, three school aircraft with different types of REP-constructed engines (a two-seater 80 HP and two single-seaters, one with a 60 HP and one with a 40 HP engine) were offered for immediate delivery and procured.59 From another firm specializing in aviation equipment, three hangars (one large and two mobile) were obtained.60 The two officers finally paid a visit to England, where they bought two Bristol bomber aircraft and two vehicles for aircraft transportation. Negotiations for 120 3.5 kg bombs, sixty 15 kg bombs, and eighteen bombs for trials were made.61 Bristol was to forward the final price for these to Istanbul. This last order never reached Turkey, as it was intercepted and seized by the Italian Navy. While the two officers were in England, they made arrangements to employ two pilots and two mechanics, and a training course was arranged for five Turkish pilots and two engine-mechanics.62 Süreyya and Mehmet Ali returned to Turkey on July 5, 1910, bringing much of the procured equipment with them.63 While these two members of the Tayyare Komisyonu were away, pilots had been selected for training in France. Arriving at the REP school at Le Buc in May, one by one they completed their primary training and started to gain their flight certificates, the last one receiving his certificate by the end of October 1912.64

At the REP school, the flying instructors would have preferred to give the Turkish pilots a rather more comprehensive training. However, with the Tripoli War in progress and new clouds of war building up over the Balkans, all pilots had to return to Turkey as fast as possible.

In June, a further seven officers were chosen for training in England. The pilot trainees, Mülâzım's Saffet, Mehmed Ali, Abdullah, Fazıl, and Sabri, and mechanics, Mülâzım-ı Evvel Fethi and Mülâzım Aziz, arrived at Bristol's in Brooklands in July.65 During the training, Fethi displayed such an exceptional aptitude for flying that he was allowed to receive pilot training in addition to the mechanic's course.66 During

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June, Tayyare Komisyonu proceeded with detailed planning of facilities for the Tayyare Mektebi, and construction started along the guidelines set by Süreyya.67 Further, the organizational structure and a training syllabus were worked out for the school.68 The available aircraft for the service had increased, to include two Deperdussins, two REPs, and two Bristol Prier-Dickson monoplanes. To augment this, the newly procured aircraft started to arrive: three additional REP school planes, a third REP warplane, the Bleriot *Vatan* and the Deperdussin *Prens Celaleddin.* One of the Harlans was also received in July. Unfortunately, one of the Bristol Prier-Dickson monoplanes was severely damaged when the English pilot, Collyns Pizey, unwisely attempted a flight in gusting wind.69 Only a handful of pilots were available for this relative abundance of aircraft, and even fewer mechanics were available for the necessary repair and maintenance.

With the arrival of the newly procured equipment Yusuf Kenan was, with some justification, highly critical of the decision to buy the REP, Harlan, and Bristol aircraft. He contended that these aircraft were unsuitable, being far inferior to machines manufactured by Bleriot, Deperdussin, and Nieuport. Furthermore, on July 27, he published an article in a leading Istanbul newspaper, going public with his criticism and describing how the Deperdussin was wrecked upon arrival.70 Feel-ing that he had procured the best available aircraft, Süreyya's reaction to this article was that the criticism had been directed at him person-ally.71 Although Harbiyye Nâzırı tried to settle the matter, Yusuf Kenan was gradually taken off flying and eventually left Ayastafanos some weeks later.

Political changes occurred in the Ottoman government in August 1912 when, as a reaction to the young officers, a new cabinet was appointed under Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa. Together with the new Harbiyye Nâzırı, Nazim Paşa, it halted further progress of the fledgling Ottoman Army aviation. All military procurement issues were brought under the authority of the Muhtelit Mübayaa Komisyonu (Mixed Ac-quisition Committee), which soon withdrew all funds allocated to aviation, and the buildings under construction at Ayastafanos were not completed.72 When, in September 1912, mobilization was declared for the Balkan War, most of the aviation personnel, except for a few pilots, were transferred back to their original units. As Süreyya was appointed to the intelligence office, in accordance with the mobilization plans, Tayyare Komisyonu was dissolved.73 Of the pilots returning from France, only Mülâzım-ı Evvel Nuri was lucky enough to perform a few flights before all flying was stopped. Fortunately, this severe setback for aviation in the Ottoman Army was of short duration.

Nevertheless, it delayed training and damaged several aircraft, which were left in the open unattended.

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THE BALKAN WARS

The events of the war in North Africa and the intelligence on the buildup of armed forces in the Balkan states caused a change in the plans of the Ottoman Army in favor of a gradual buildup of an Ottoman aircraft force. The successes of enemy aircraft in Tripoli made the Ottoman Army General Staff even more convinced of the vital need of having its own aircraft units. The young officers of the Ottoman army were eager to employ aircraft as an instrument of reconnaissance and harassment. However, though it was possible to organize a very effective force to utilize this new war machine, mainly due to the political struggles within the Ottoman government and the army, the responsibility and authority for organizing and commanding this new force were not left in able hands. Because of mixed feelings, critical views, and high expectations, all kinds of wrong was done and very precious time and resources were wasted.

At Ayastafanos, only one school aircraft was in flyable condition: the single-seat, 25 HP Deperdussin. The three new REP school aircraft could not fly, as no spares existed for their engines that had been ruined by the stay in the open. The situation with respect to war aircraft for the aircraft companies was much better. Ten aircraft were on hand, and six of these were ready for action: the Bleriot *Vatan,* the Deperdussins *Osmanlı* and *Prens Celaleddin,* the two Harlans, and one of the REP warplanes. One of the Bristols was considered unsafe to fly due to the instability it displayed during flights. The other Bristol was fit for flying; however, its undercarriage was so fragile that it could not be used on unprepared fields.74 Two more REP warplanes were fit for flight. An additional four aircraft were available for training at Ayastafanos. However, they were suitable only for the ground training of pilot candidates. Five more aircraft were ordered after the war started, and only two Mars Doppeldeckers and one Bleriot XI-2 arrived in time to see action in the late stages of the Balkan Wars.

From the eight pilot trainees sent to France and six sent to England in summer 1912, only those in France returned in time to participate in the First Balkan War. Even they had not accumulated enough skills for flying.75 Only Nuri and Fesa had any real flying experience. The others at England were called back before they could complete their training, a very unwise decision, mainly shaped by political views. To augment the inexperienced Ottoman pilots, four French and two German pilots were employed, as well as eight foreign mechanics. Few other foreign flyers were contracted during the course of the war.

When the actual war operations started in October, Fesa, Yüzbaşı Refik, and Nuri were selected to pilot the aircraft, together with the French and German pilots. Mülâzım Abdullah, Piyade Yüzbaşı Mehmet

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Cemal, and Fethi were to act as observers, due to their limited pilot experience. Other Turkish pilots who returned from training in November and December were only able to participate when the fighting continued after the armistice and during the Second Balkan War.

No authority was officially assigned the duty to manage aviation matters. This responsibility was somewhat loosely invested in the body of Kıtaât-ı Fenniye ve Mevâki-i Müstahkeme Müfettişliği. At the time of mobilization, Mehmet Cemal was appointed as deputy commander of the Tayyare Mektebi at Ayastafanos. His service was regarded inadequate, and he was removed from post at the end of February 1913. İ stihkam Binbaşı Veli was appointed deputy commander in his place.76 The 3rd Division of the Erkân-ı Harbiyye-i Umûmiyye laid the mobilization plan for the formation of the aviation units.77

On October 9, three aviation units, each comprising two aircraft, were ordered to join the command of the Şarki Rumeli Ordusu (Eastern Rumelia Army), Garbi Rumeli Ordusu (Western Rumelia Army), and Edirne Kalesi. As there was not enough gas for the observation balloon at Edirne, it was requested that the aircraft assigned there should be sent at top priority, before any potential enemy laid siege to the fortress.78

One Deperdussin with the Ottoman pilot Refik was loaded on a train and sent to Edirne. However, the Bulgarian Army had moved very swiftly and besieged the fortress. Thus, the aircraft was routed back to the aircraft school at Ayastafanos and was severely damaged in the process.79 Later, in November, French pilot Granil was ordered to fly one aircraft to Edirne with Ottoman Mülâzım-ı Sani Midhat. When the French pilot refused to fly to Edirne, his contract was canceled and he was expelled.80

Two Harlan aircraft with the German pilots Jahnow and Rentzel, under the command of Mehmet Cemal, were sent to the command of Şarki Rumeli Ordusu and arrived at Kirkkilise on October 15.81 However, the weather remained unsuitable for flying for more than a week. On the night of October 23, the Şarki Rumeli Ordusu had to evacuate its positions in haste. The two aircraft at Kirkkilise were left into the hands of the enemy in the wake of retreating Ottoman forces.82

One Bleriot XI-2 and one REP plane were sent to the command of Garbi Rumeli Ordusu with Ottoman pilots

Fesa and Nuri, one French pilot, Ottoman observers Fethi and Abdullah, and a French mechanic.83 All arrived at Selanik (Salonika) by rail on October 14. The aircraft were forwarded further to Köprülü (Titov Veles) and made three flights toward Kumanovo. When the Ottoman Army started to withdraw in the direction of Manastir (Bitola) on October 24, the aircraft were moved back to Selanik and made one flight over the advancing Greek Army in

the vicinity of Karaferye. When the Greek Army approached Selanik, the aircraft were burned on November 10 and the Ottoman crew hid at the residence of Fahrizade Adil Bey, who was a member of Cemiyet-i İslamiye (Islamic Society). Fesa, Nuri, and Fethi changed clothes and boarded a ship sent by the Egyptian Prince Ömer Tosun Paşa to evacuate the Turkish civilian population. The British consul at Selanik also had a hand in this plot. Abdullah was captured by the Greeks and made a prisoner of war. The French pilot and mechanics were arrested but soon expelled to France.84

Meanwhile, on November 6, an attempt was made at the Edirne Fortress to utilize the observation balloon there to provide vital information for aiming the heavy guns in Edirne. However, the attempt was a complete failure, and worse still, the balloon was damaged. There was too little gas to keep the balloon airborne, and the balloon crew lacked proper training and was unfamiliar with the launch and recovery procedures.85

In January 1913, the war in North Africa ended. By this time, the Ottoman Army was left with only six operational aircraft, none of which was in a safe state for flying. All the formerly employed foreign pilots had returned and only eight Turkish pilots remained active; the others were ordered to army duties at the front, another unwise decision, shaped mainly by the political struggles within the army.86 While the aircraft were being repaired from scratch by local resources at Ayastafanos, two Mars aircraft arrived from Germany with pilots Mario Scherff and Walter Kray and mechanics Alfred Schitak and Böhme.87 However, one of the Mars aircraft was wrecked during its initial flight.

While the peace talks were still going on with the Balkan states in January 1913, another change of government took place in the Ottoman parliament. Following the successful coup d'état on January 13, which was organized by Miralay Cemal, Kaymakam Enver, and Talat Paşa, a new government formed from the members of the reformist Young Turks movement came into power again.88 Of particular importance for the aircraft organization was that the aviation-minded Mahmut Şevket Paşa, who had initially started the aviation efforts in mid-1911, again became minister of war.89 The Başkomutanlık Vekâleti (Army General Headquarters) ordered all aircraft to be made ready for action with all haste. At the same time, Süreyya, who had been promoted to the rank of Miralay, was recalled back to his duty at Kıtaât-ı Fenniye ve Mevâki-i Müstahkeme Müfettişliği to handle aviation matters.90 His presence at the office and his attention to the needs of the flying units were a great boost to the morale of the aviation personnel.91 Flying officers who had been assigned army duties were recalled. A new air detachment was then ordered to the Gelibolu (Gallipoli) front.92 However, the aircraft dispatched to Gelibolu was damaged due to a heavy snowstorm there,

and the German Hauptman Birkner, who was employed as an observer there, was sent back to his country as his service was no longer needed.93

Early in February, with a plan to reconnoiter for a planned thrust toward Edirne, Fethi made a highly successful reconnaissance flight in the Deperdussin, with Binbaşı Sedat (Doğruer) as an observer.94 Later, they made two additional flights. Fesa and Fethi performed few other reconnaissance flights over this front. Yüzbaşı Kemal and Yüzbaşı Mehmet Kenan (Dalbaşar) acted as observers during these reconnaissance flights.95 However, the Ottoman attacks along the coast of the Sea of Marmara toward Şarkoy met with failure. A Bulgarian counterattack ended with a general Ottoman withdrawal to a new defense line closer to Istanbul. At this time, Miralay Süreyya was once more ordered to the front as chief of staff for the Mürettep 4ncü Kolordu (IV Provisional Corps) at Çatalca.96

To establish the new enemy positions along this line, Fesa and Kemal performed an important flight on February 22. For two hours, the crew flew low over the enemy lines. They were vigorously fired upon by ground forces of both sides and hit several times but were able to return and make a very detailed report.97 Any aircraft flying over the front was shot on by all ground forces because the aircraft of all the sides involved in the conflict did not carry any identity markings at that time.98 The Redif units charged with the defense of the landing grounds even fired on the Ottoman aircraft that were returning from reconnaissance flights.99 When Ottoman flyers complained about friendly ground fire, an order was issued on March 6, 1913, to paint large crescent and star markings in orange under both wings of all Ottoman aircraft.100 This was the first instance of the official adopting of national identity markings on military aircraft.

Heavy rains had rendered the landing ground at Ayastafanos useless. The aircraft could not even taxi due to thick mud on the ground. The school commander requested the construction of a wooden strip in front of the two hangars housing the aircraft, to be used for takeoffs and landings.101 This initiative marks the very first effort to use a planked runway in aviation history.

Edirne Kalesi had been requesting aircraft since the beginning of the hostilities for the observation of the Bulgarian forces around the city. On February 17, the fortress command was requested to prepare a landing ground for an aircraft that would fly in as soon as the weather permitted. Final preparations were made at a field already appropriated for this purpose near the ammunition depot, at the north side of the town.102

Toward the end of February, it became evident that aircraft could not be delivered to the fortress. It was not only the long distance

between Ayastafanos and Edirne that made the scheme impractical. Even if an aircraft could be flown into the fortress, there was no fuel, spare parts, or other logistics available to support the continued operation of the aircraft for any useful means.103 On March 6, having lost all hopes of an aircraft to assist in reconnaissance and aiming the guns, the fortress command decided to try the defunct observation balloon again. However, this second attempt, like the first one, met with failure. Due to an insufficient amount of hydrogen gas, the balloon ascended only to a height of 15 meters. In addition to the lack of a ground-handling crew, there were no officers with proper training to command the ground crews or perform any useful aerial observation.104 No other attempts were made to utilize the balloon.

Meanwhile, an aircraft dispatched from France was confiscated by Serbia. When informed about this, the officers at Kıtaât-ı Fenniye ve Mevâki-i Müstahkeme Müfettişliği were not even sure if this was an aircraft ordered for the Ottoman Army. They were compelled to contact Süreyya, who was at the Çatalca Front, to resolve the matter.105 This was not the only occasion when they needed to consult Süreyya on various aviation matters.106 Just like other aviation officers, whose service could have been put to better use for aviation, Süreyya changed post several times during the course of the Balkan Wars.107

On March 19, Yüzbaşı Fesa made a reconnaissance flight via a route over Büyükçekmece, Sürgünköy, Kadıköy, and Karamurat.108 On March 22, the German pilot Scherff, with Yüzbaşı Kemal as observer, made (for the time) a spectacularly long, four-hour reconnaissance flight in a Mars plane. The route followed was Kumburgaz to Çorlu to Çerkeşköy to Akalan. Sherff received a monetary reward and was cited for decoration for his distinguished service.109 Two days later, Fethi took the Kaymakam Enver, chief of staff of X Corps, on a flight over Karaköy.110 Again, on March 29, the crew of Scherff and Kemal completed a new long-range flight.111 This same crew became the first Turkish aviators to drop bombs when, on a short flight over the Bulgarian lines, they dropped six small (1.5 kg) bombs. A very detailed account of the flight performed on March 22, from the recollections of Mario Scherff, was published in the *Das Buch der deutschen Fluggeschichte*.112

At the end of March, after the Ottoman attacks failed, peace negotiations were resumed in London. The Ottoman army aircraft organization had, by this time, ceased to exist as a fighting force. Only three aircraft remained in a dubious state of airworthiness.113 Fighting having once more come to a standstill, Süreyya was once again called back to Kıtaât-ı Fenniye ve Mevâki-i Müstahkeme Müfettişliği to handle the aviation matters, which had gone into great disarray by this time.114 He was sent to Europe with all haste to obtain more new equipment.115 The

attempts were soon frustrated, as very few factories were able or willing to deliver equipment. This was obviously due to international political pressure, as payment was offered in gold. The only success until late April was the procurement of the relatively modern Parceval airship PL9.116 Several trial flights were performed over Istanbul, but the airship never saw action over the front.117

Drawing upon their experience from the first phase of the war, the Ottoman Army decided that an independent class of officers was needed to act as observers aboard reconnaissance aircraft. Following the examples of France and Germany, orders for the organization and training of a class of staff officers as observers were issued in May 1913. A training syllabus and a handbook for aerial observation were published.118 As there were not many aircraft on hand, two that were suitable for flight were appointed for observer training in addition to their war duties.119 Kaymakam Enver was appointed to oversee the training of staff officers for aerial observation.120

Meanwhile, the army had succeeded in ordering two new Bleriot IX two-seaters. However, only one arrived in time at Ayastafanos, in June, to participate in the war.121

Early in summer 1913, the Balkan War was almost over. However, some of the Balkan states were resentful

about the outcome of the Treaty of London (concluded on May 30). Because of the friction among themselves, they fell into dispute over the share of land they had taken from the Ottoman Empire. The Second Balkan War began on June 29 among the Balkan states when they clashed in order to obtain sovereignty over the disputed areas. The Ottoman army took advantage of the dissension and moved forward to gain back the lands it had lost. At this time, the Ottoman Army had only three aircraft available for combat duty.122 Scherff and his two mechanics, Schitak and Böhme, returned to Germany of their own will.123
On July 13, the first day of the Turkish attack, the Mars, piloted by Fethi, took off in the early morning on a reconnaissance flight. On July 18, the two remaining aircraft, the Bleriot XI and a REP warplane, departed Yesilköy and flew to the forward field at Çorlu. From there, they were to fly northwest to assist the Turkish units in pursuing the retreating enemy.124 Although the Bulgarians possessed nearly thirty aircraft during this phase of the Balkan Wars, none was to be seen to challenge the observation flights made by the Ottoman aircraft during the thrust of the Ottoman Army toward Edirne.125 Behind the enemy lines, the Ottoman intelligence agents had done their homework very well, informing the disposition of enemy aircraft to army headquarters at Istanbul. Başkomutanlık Vekâleti issued orders to the units at the battlefront, advising them not to open fire on any aircraft because there were no enemy aircraft active at the front.126

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On July 22, while the Bulgarian forces were evacuating Edirne without a fight, the Ottoman aircraft were flying to forward fields at Babaeski, Edirne, and Kirkkilise. Nuri and his observer, Kemal, made a very long reconnaissance flight on July 23, flying the Mars from Babaeski to Edirne, and completely covering the Bulgarian Army retreating toward Dimetoka (Didimotiho). Fesa, in the Bleriot, left Babaeski for the Army Corps at Kirkkilise on July 26. He made his first duty flight on the same day with a reconnaissance in the vicinity of Mustafapaşa (Svilengrad).
Nuri, with the REP, remained at the Army Headquarters at Babaeski to support the left-wing army advance. This old aircraft was very worn and had a very unreliable engine. Nuri was obliged to fly without the assistance of an observer. Up to August 2, the REP made three flights, but then it was decided not to fly the aircraft any more, as it clearly constituted a severe risk for the pilot. Later, the Deperdussin, which had been crudely repaired at Yesilköy, was sent by train to Babaeski.127 Nuri, with his observer Mülâzım Sadık, departed Babaeski on September 22 enroute to Edirne, but the hastily repaired engine failed, and they were forced to land near the Meriç (Maritza) River.128
Fesa made a general reconnaissance flight with Miralay Fuat Ziya (the commander of 5th Infantry Division operating under II Corps) as observer on July 28.129 On August 3, Fesa flew a ninety minute flight along the front and damaged the landing gear of his aircraft while landing.130 On August 9, two more reconnaissance missions were performed. Fethi departed on August 10 with the Mars for a reconnaissance flight toward the town of Meriç, south of Edirne. Unfortunately, he crashed near the town. But although the aircraft was completely destroyed, the only injuries were a few bruises received by the observer, Kemal.131
At the same time, also being eager to pilot an aircraft in the war, the two pilots (Fazıl, now promoted as Yüzbaşı, and Yüzbaşı Salim) had succeeded in making one of the Bristol monoplanes airworthy. They were moved to Kirkkilise to bolster the Bleriot unit there. Arriving on August 14, they made their first flight in the vicinity of Fakıh, Fazıl piloting and Salim observing. On the next flight, the two officers changed seats. In order to follow the Turkish advance in the area, the aircraft unit moved forward to a new field near Karahızır and erected a portable tent-hangar on the site. With the evident success and high morale of the unit, more observers were assigned and missions continued daily over the area of fighting around Umur, Fakıh, and Gürgaz. A heavy rain shower on the night of August 24–25 collapsed the hangar roof, and both aircraft were seriously damaged.132

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On August 20, 1913, Yüzbaşı Kazım (Özalp), staff officer of the Left Wing Army Command, issued an order outlining the structure of an aerial observation report for the first time in aviation history.133
On September 29, 1913, the Bulgarians agreed to an armistice. At this time there were no airworthy Ottoman aircraft. The Ottoman army made every effort to use all kinds of aerial equipment during the Balkan Wars. Whatever equipment was available was used very effectively with extreme dedication, many times at the personal sacrifice of a handful of Ottoman aviators, who went into combat despite the unfavorable circumstances.
Greece possessed few aircraft and a lesser number of pilots to fly them during the Balkan Wars. Several French, and a few British, mercenary pilots also flew for the Greek forces. They flew several reconnaissance flights at the fronts near Selanik, Yanya, and the Dardanelles. At least one Greek pilot lost his life in the course of the Balkan Wars.134

Serbia had few pilots training abroad, several aircraft, and only mercenary foreign pilots to fly them, and they were never deployed against the Ottoman armies.135
Bulgaria had a larger aviation force of aircraft and pilots. It also employed Russian pilots, for both the organization and training of their fledgling air force and for combat duties.136 On February 21, 1913, one of these Russian pilots landed inside the Ottoman lines near Edirne by mistake and was taken prisoner of war.137 Russia at that time must have had an abundance of pilots, for some of them even offered their service to the Ottoman Army unsolicited.138 Several other mercenary pilots from England, Italy, France, and Austria were also recruited.139 At the time of mobilization, only an aviation park, consisting of a Balloon Otdelenie (Platoon) with two balloons and a Bleriot aircraft, was deployed. The Bleriot was considered only as a substitute for use during the replenishment of the hydrogen gas for the balloons.140 At the beginning of the hostilities, Bulgaria did not consider the use of aircraft as a serious deterrent in combat.141 Bulgaria used balloons and aircraft to some effect, for aerial observation, bombing, and leaflet dropping, during the Balkan Wars. Whereas the Ottoman aviation units followed the ground troops at their heels, the Bulgarian aviation units were based at over a hundred kilometers from the battlefront.142 The transfer of Bulgarian aviation units near the Çatalca defense lines was delayed for reasons unknown, and the active use of aircraft by the Ottoman Army here preempted the Bulgarian offensive.143 Despite their advanced training; much better aircraft such as the Bleriots and Farmans, which were more suitable for combat duties; and much better resources such as prepared airfields, spares, fuel, and maintenance facilities, some Bulgarian flyers lost their lives during the war.144 The influence of aerial reconnaissance reports on the success of ground armies during the

battles suggested that airpower had great potential, and the Bulgarian Army Staff changed its views on aviation.145 However, during the second phase of the Balkan Wars, they withdrew almost all aviation elements from the Ottoman Front.
The armies opposing the Ottoman forces did not deploy their aircraft to the most critical battlefronts—namely, on their advance toward the capital of the Ottoman Empire. This was the front where Ottoman aircraft were actively used. Because the Balkan States preferred to confine their aviation activities to the less lively battlefronts, the aircraft of opposing forces did not meet each other in the air for an aerial battle.
In the Ottoman Army, at the outbreak of the First Balkan War in the middle of September 1912, the responsibility to handle aviation matters remained with Kıtaât-ı Fenniye ve Mevâki-i Müstahkeme Müfettişliği in an unofficial manner. This was simply because Kaymakam Süreyya was formerly a member of this office at the time he was appointed to establish an airpower for the Ottoman Army, in summer 1911. In reality, at a time when European armies were emphasizing the unison of aviation elements to function as a team under a single command, during the whole course of the Balkan Wars, no official body was charged with the responsibility of handling aviation matters for the Ottoman Army.146 In addition to the misconduct of the army units, which effectively led to the defeat of the Ottoman forces in detail, in the absence of an authorized body to manage resources and despite the most devoted efforts of the aviation personnel, the Ottoman aviation units were not utilized as effectively as they could have been.147
The novice Ottoman pilots had no time to make practice flights or indulge in the experience of long-distance flights. They were literally plucked away from the flight courses in Europe, where they gained their wings, and immediately sent to the battlefront. At the front, they had to perform long-range reconnaissance flights repeatedly. Their spirits and capabilities were continually taxed in dangerous sorties. Ottoman aircraft were fired on by the ground forces of all sides and performed several forced landings, not because of friendly or enemy bullets, but due to inadequate maintenance conditions. There were very few trained Ottoman mechanics to maintain or repair the aircraft. The task was relegated to the pilots themselves, requiring them to care for the planes, which differed widely in their construction, engine, and flight characteristics, and they could be tasked to fly at any time. The matter of spare parts and the crucial fuel and oil was another story. Even the Tayyare Mektebi at Ayastafanos did not have a workshop or the simplest machinery to manufacture any spare parts.148 The school did not even have electricity; night work was done under the lights of gas-burning lamps.149 The pilots and the few naval mechanics that

assisted them to produce spare parts or make repairs employed make-shift methods.150 This they accomplished in spite of the lack of any technical drawings and training in the use of various materials for aircraft. Maintaining a supply of spare parts and adequate quantities of fuel and oil for the aircraft that were following the advancing army units very closely was a constant problem.151 Fuel was transferred in twenty-liter cans; they never arrived as needed and had to be lifted up above the fuel tank of the aircraft by hand

because there were no hand pumps to transfer fuel. The Ottoman pilots were somewhat luckier than their European counterparts in that they were issued observer officers to ease their flight duties much before other European states took this necessary step.152 Although the fledgling Ottoman pilots undertook a multitude of perilous missions, none lost his life in the course of the Balkan Wars, which says much for the skill of the Turkish airmen.

Airpower historians have too often dismissed the aeronautical aspects of the Tripolitanian and Balkan Wars as of little importance when, in addition to many feats accomplished for the first time regarding the military use of aircraft, the fundamental principals of aerial warfare were established during these conflicts. It would seem that many military authorities of that time fell into the same delusion as the historians and were unable to absorb the important lessons, both strategic and tactical according to the military and political perspective, from these conflicts. Unfortunately, the commanders of the major European powers did not include the Balkan Wars in their assessment of the military value of aircraft.153 They had to learn their lesson the hard way, at the cost of many lives, during the bitter years of World War I.

NOTES

1. Orhan Aydar, *Uçan Süvariler* (Ankara: Ulus Basimevi, 1948), 21. Mahmut Sevket Paşa spent nine years in Germany, prior to 1908, and there he had come to realize the importance of military technology. See Pierre Oberling, “The State as Promoter of Technology Transfer: The Early Years of Ottoman Aviation,” *Journal of Turkish Studies,* 8 (1984): 211.
2. Ali Fethi Okyar was most effective in arranging fully cooperative relations between Ottoman and French aviation prior to the Balkan Wars and, much later, between the fledgling air forces of the newly established Turkish Republic and French aviation, when he was once again appointed as ambassador to Paris between 1925 and 1930.
3. For full details of these reports, see Fethi Kural, *Kuruluş Yılarında Türk Askeri Havacıliği Belgeleri (1909–1913)* (Ankara: Hava Basim ve Neşriyat Müdürlüğü, 1974).
4. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk foresaw the importance of aviation as a military power as early as 1910, when he observed the role of aircraft in the Picardie maneuvers. Later, he would voice his vision in this respect with the words, “The future is in the skies.”

5. Kural, 54–55.
6. Ibid., 18.
7. Ibid., 20.
8. Ibid., 21.
9. Ibid., 22; Süreyya İlmen, *Türkiyede Tayyarecilik ve Balonculuk Tarihi* (Istanbul: Hilmi Kitabevi, 1947), 19.
10. Kural, 27.
11. Ibid., 28; Y.Kansu, S.Şensöz, and Y.Öztuna, *Havacılik Tarihinde Türkler, Vol. 1* (Ankara, 1971), 117.
12. Kural, 209–210; İlmen, *Türkiyede Tayyarecilik ve Balonculuk Tarihi,* 20.
13. Ilmen, 19; Mazlum Keyüsk, *Türk Havacılik Tarihi 1912–1923, Birinci Kitap* (Eskişehir: Uçuş Okullari Basimevi, 1950), 15.
14. İlmen, 21; Keyüsk, 15. For an introduction to the evolution of Ottoman aviation, see Edward Erickson, *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2001), Appendix D.
15. İlmen, 21–22; Keyüsk, 17–19, 22. Ayastafanos, the location of the first aviation school in Turkey, is known as Yeşilköy today.
16. Harry Woodman, “The Origins of Aerial Bombardment,” *Aeroplane Monthly* (January 1990), 28.
17. John Taylor, Michael Taylor, and David Mondey, eds., *Air Facts and Feats* (New York: Two Continents Publishing Group, 1974), 43; John H.Mor-row, Jr., *The Great War in the Air: Military Aviation from 1909 to 1921* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993), 25; Keyüsk, 50; Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 121. Capitano Moizo made this flight over the battlefront on his own initiative; it is regarded as the first “unofficial” war flight. See Woodman, “The Origins of Aerial Bombardment,” 28). Capitano Carlos Piazza was “officially” ordered to carry out a reconnaissance flight, which he performed on the morning of October 23, 1911. Although even the Turkish sources acknowledge the first reconnaissance flight on October 22, some Western sources still regard Piazza’s flight as the first reconnaissance flight. See Michael Paris, “The First Air Wars: North Africa and the Balkans 1911–13,” *Journal of Contemporary History,* 1 (1991): 97.
18. Paris, 98. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 121, places the date of the incident on October 28.
19. Woodman, 28; Paris, 98.
20. Woodman, 31; Paris, 99.
21. Woodman, 31.

22. Ibid., 31; Keyüsk, Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 124.
23. Woodman, 30; Paris, 99; Keyüsk, 50; Kural. An original sample of the propaganda leaflets dropped by Italian aircraft is published in Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna.
24. Woodman, 31. Paris, 99, attributes this accomplishment to airship P2.
25. Woodman, 30; Paris, 99; Kural, 151.
26. Woodman, 30–31; Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 123.
27. Aydar, *Uçan Süvariler,* 11–16; Keyüsk, 50; Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 122; Robin Higham, *Air Power: A Concise History* (London, 1972), 23. For communiqués regarding the incident, see Kural, 155–156. Aydar places the date of the incident on September 9, based on an article published in the October 5, 1912, issue of *l'Illustration.* However, the coded telegram published in Kural, from the Ottoman commanding officer in Tripoli to the Ottoman General Staff, clearly places the event on September 10.
28. Aydar, 22; Keyüsk, 26.

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29. C.H.Barnes, *Bristol Aircraft since 1910* (London: Putnam Aeronautical, 1995), 64.
30. İlmen, 51–94; Kural, 135–145.
31. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 124; Paris, 99.
32. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 124; İlmen, 56.
33. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 124; Kural, 140–144, 224.
34. Kural, 165.
35. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 124.
36. Ibid., 124; and Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu and Mustafa Kaçar, eds., *Çağini Yakalayan Osmanli: Osmanli Devletinde Modern Haberleşme ve Ulaştirma Teknikleri* (Istanbul: İslam Tarih, Sanat ve Kültür Araştirma Merkezi, 1995), 531–532.
37. Aydar, 18–19; Keyüsk, 27–28; Kural, 162.
38. Aydar, 19–20; Kural, 161–163; John H.Morrow, Jr., *The Great War in the Air,* 34. İhsanoğlu and Kaçar, 532.
39. İlmen, 22; Kural, 167.
40. Aydar, 22; Keyüsk, 22–26.
41. İlmen, 22; Kural, 213.
42. Keyüsk, 16–22; Kural, 164–165.
43. İlmen, 29–30; Aydar, 24. İlmen provides the full text of the telegrams reporting the first flight of a Turkish aircraft as well as a copy of the barograph signed by Gordon Bell testifying the height of 1,000 meters attained during the flight.
44. Aydar, 26.
45. İlmen, 31–37; Aydar, 24, 26; Keyüsk, 26.
46. İlmen, 38. İlmen provides the actual date as April 23, 1328, in the Ottoman Malî calendar system. However, he mistakenly quotes the date as May 7, 1912, in the Western-style Gregorian calendar system.
47. Ibid., 36–38.
48. Ibid., 38–45.
49. Ibid., 45–46, 70–71.
50. Ibid., 47–54, 59.
51. Ibid., 54, 58–60, 69, 72–73; Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 129; Kural, 294–295.
52. İlmen, 56–59, 72–73; Kural, 170–171, 197–198. İlmen states that the contract was drawn up for twenty-five "large bombs" of 20 kilograms each. However, the communiqué from Engineering Corps to the General Staff and the report, which was signed by Süreyya and Mehmet Ali, and published in Kural, specifies fifty bombs of 15 kilogram each.
53. Kural, 109–117.
54. İlmen, 69–94.
55. Ibid., 101, 131; Kural, 277.
56. İlmen, 77, 101, 129–131; Kural, 163, 278.
57. İlmen, 80–81, 91, 103; Kural, 188, 192–195.
58. İlmen, 74–78; Kural, 182, 188.
59. İlmen, 89, 91; Kural, 188.
60. İlmen, 75, 78, 90–91; Kural, 187–188, 194.
61. İlmen, 86, 91–92; Kural, 195.
62. İlmen, 86, 91, Kural, 92, 198.
63. İlmen, 94.
64. Ibid., 78, 82–83, 92–93, 98, 101; Keyüsk, 26–27; Kural, 183; Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 127.

65. İlmen, 101; Keyüsk, 38.

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66. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 127.
67. İlmen, 104–107.
68. Keyüsk, 104–113.
69. Aydar, 25; John Pudney, *Bristol Fashion* (London: Putnam Aeronautical, 1960), 63–64. Collyns Pizey was acting as the test pilot of Bristol under the alias of Mr. Pryce.
70. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 127.
71. İlmen, 102–103.
72. Ibid., 107–108.
73. Ibid., 108; Aydar, 40.
74. Aydar, 38.
75. Ibid., 37.
76. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 127, 129.
77. Keyüsk, 75.
78. Aydar, 42; Keyüsk, 75–76.
79. Keyüsk, 82–84.
80. Aydar, 42–43; Keyüsk, 85–86, 88.
81. Kural, 241, 275–276.
82. Turkish General Staff, trans., Murat Tunca, *1912–13 Balkan Harbinde Türk-Bulgar Harbi, II Cilt, Kirklareli Muharebesi,* 268; Keyüsk, 79–80; Kural, 275–276; Christian Hotte, "A French Pilot in the Ottoman Army," *Small Air Forces Observer,* October 2000, 93. Keyüsk, based on a report, dated October 24, 1912, by General Dimitrief, commanding officer of the Bulgarian Third Army, concurs that the aircraft were left intact into the hands of the enemy. However, in the translation of General Dimitrief's report, Tunca does not use an expression indicating the aircraft were intact. In his report dated March 28, 1913, printed in the Kural reference, Binbaşı Mehmet Cemal, former commanding officer of Tayyare Mektebi, claims that he destroyed the aircraft during the unfortunate retreat of the Ottoman forces. Hotte, citing from the memoirs of a mercenary French pilot published in *La Vie au Grand Air* between October 1912 and February 1913, says the Geman pilots set the aircraft on fire when they had to run away from the advancing Bulgarian forces.
83. Keyüsk, 76, 81; Hotte, 93.
84. Keyüsk, 81; Hotte, 93.
85. Keyüsk, 84; Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Osmanli Devri, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IInci Cilt, 3ncü Kisim, Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler (Ikinci Baski)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 191.
86. Keyüsk, 88.
87. Kural, 245–247.
88. Kaymakam Enver is the former military attaché in Berlin.
89. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler,* 264.
90. İlmen, 110.
91. Aydar, 38.
92. Keyüsk, 89–90; Kural, 233.
93. Keyüsk, 93; Kural, 243.
94. Aydar, 33–40; Keyüsk, 90; İsmet Görgülü, *On Yillik Harbin Kadrosu* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1993), 34. Binbaşı Sedat was the operations officer acting under Kaymakam Enver.
95. Keyüsk, 90–91. Yüzbaşı Mehmet Kenan, chief of satff of the Independent Cavalry Brigade, later became Lieutenant General Mehmet Kenan Dalbasar. He participated in the Tripolitanian War, where he witnessed the use of airpower for the first time. See Görgülü, *On Yillik Harbin Kadrosu,* 35; Turkish General Staff,

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Türk İstiklal Harbi'ne Katilan Tümen ve Daha Üst Kademelerdeki Komutanlarin Biyografileri (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1989), 196–198.

96. İlmen, 114; Görgülü, 33.
97. Kural, 236.
98. Keyüsk, 115.
99. Ibid., 91.

100. Ibid., 92; Kural, 268–270. Although the reason behind the choice of the orange color is not specified, this may be also the very first use of orange as a high-visibility marking on military aircraft.
101. Keyüsk, 92–93; Kural, 260.
102. Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler,* 286.
103. Keyüsk, 100.
104. Ibid., 102; Turkish General Staff, *Edirne Kalesi Etrafindaki Muharebeler,* 287.
105. İlmen, 116.
106. Keyüsk, 123–126.
107. Ibid., 158, 178–179.
108. Ibid., 95–96.
109. Kural, 244.
110. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 136; Görgülü, 31. Kaymakam Enver is no other than the key leader in the coup d'état of January 13, 1913.
111. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 138.
112. Peter Supf, *Das Buch der deutschen Fluggeschichte, Zwiter Band* (Stuttgart: Drei Brunnen Verlag, 1958), 122–125. In his memoirs Scherff mistakenly identifies his observer as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. However, Mustafa Kemal, holding the rank of Binbaşı, was posted at the Dardanelles front during the Balkan Wars. See Görgülü, 31, 35.
113. Keyüsk, 96; Kural, 230.
114. İlmen, 119–120; Kural, 231.
115. İlmen, 122.
116. Ibid., 143–151; Keyüsk, 141–144.
117. İlmen, 153–157; Keyüsk, 138–140.
118. Aydar, 44–45. France and Germany began training observers in 1911; Britain started as late as July 1914. See Morrow, *The Great War in the Air.*
119. Keyüsk, *Türk Havacilik Tarihi 1912–1923,* 97–98, 111; Kural, 235.
120. Keyüsk, 98, 111; Kural, 235. Here we see the former military attaché of Berlin and ambitious leader of the Young Turks movement taking another key role in shaping Ottoman aviation.
121. Kural, 238, 240.
122. Aydar, 45.
123. Ibid., 45; Keyüsk, 111–112.
124. Keyüsk, 114.
125. Dimitar Nedialkov, *Airpower of the Kingdom of Bulgaria* (Sofia: Fark Ood, 2001), 28, 59.
126. Keyüsk, 115.
127. Aydar, 47.
128. Ibid., 47; Keyüsk, 128–129; Kural, 258.
129. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna,139; Görgülü, 34.
130. Aydar, 47; Keyüsk, 120–121. Keyüsk provides the actual date as July 21, 1329, in the Ottoman Malî calendar system. However, he mistakenly quotes the date as August 1, 1913 in the Western-style Gregorian calendar system.
131. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 139.

132. Keyüsk, 126.
133. Kural, 256. Yüzbaşı Kazim later became General Kazim Özalp, the first minister of national defense of the Turkish Republic. See Görgülü, 34; Turkish General Staff, *Türk İstiklal Harbi'ne Katilan Tümen ve Daha Üst Kademelerdeki Komutanlarin Biyografileri,* 186–187. Nedialkov lays claim to the first document ordering planned aerial reconnaissance with reference to an order issued by Colonel Jostov of the Bulgarian Army during the Balkan Wars; however, he does not specify the date of this order.
134. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 129–130; Paris, 102.
135. Kansu, Şensöz, and Öztuna, 130; Paris, 102–103.
136. Nedialkov, 38; Paris, 101.
137. Keyüsk, 100, 102.
138. Kural, 295–296.
139. Nedialkov, 25, 28; Paris, 101.
140. Turkish General Staff, trans., Murat Tunca, *1912–13 Balkan Harbinde Türk-Bulgar Harbi, I Cilt, Harbin İhzari* (Istanbul: Askeri Matbaa, 1943), 198.
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Appendix B
Ottoman Regular Army Order of Battle, 1911

Formations	*Regiments and Battalions*	*Garrison Location* **(bold print indicates out of garrison)**	*Commander* (if known)
ARMY			
Army Corps			
Divisions			
FIRST ARMY	Headquarters	Harbiye, Constantinople	Ferik Zeki Paşa
1st Corps	Headquarters	Harbiye, Constantinople	
1st Infantry Division	Headquarters	Harbiye, Constantinople	Col. Hasan Izzet
	1st Infantry Regiment	Harbiye, Constantinople	
	2nd Infantry Regiment	Bakirkay, Constantinople	
	3rd Infantry Regiment	**Işkodra**	
	1st Rifle Battalion	Taksim, Constantinople	
	1st Field Artillery Regiment	Taksim, Constantinople	
	1st Division Band	Harbiye	
2nd Infantry Division	Headquarters	Selimiye, Constantinople	Mirliva Prince Aziz Paşa
	4th Infantry Regiment	**Işkodra**	
	5th Infantry Regiment	Selimiye	
	6th Infantry Regiment	Selimiye	
	2nd Rifle Battalion	Selimiye	
	2nd Field Artillery Regiment	Selimiye	
	2nd Division Band	Selimiye	
3rd Infantry Division	Headquarters	Pangalti	Mirliva Osman Paşa
	7th Infantry Regiment	Taşkişla	
	8th Infantry Regiment	Taşkişla	
	9th Infantry Regiment	Kagithane	
	3rd Rifle Battalion	Tophane	

	3rd Field Artillery Regiment	Rami Kişlasi
	3rd Division Band	Taşkişla
1st Corps Troops	1st Rifle Regiment	Yildiz
	1st Cavalry Brigade	Davutpaşa
	1st Cavalry Regiment	Yildiz
	2nd Cavalry Regiment	Davutpaşa
	2nd Cavalry Brigade	Davutpaşa
	3rd Cavalry Regiment	Davutpaşa
	4th Cavalry Regiment	Selimiye
	1st Horse Artillery Battalion	Davutpaşa
	1st Mountain Artillery Battalion	Munzevi Kişlasi
	1st Field Howitzer Battalion	Gumuşsuyu
	1st Engineer Battalion	Iplakhane

	1st Telegraph Battalion	Ertugrul Kişlasi	
	1st Transport Battalion	Yildiz	
	1st Medical Regiment	Ahirkapi	
	1st Railroad Battalion	Ahirkapi	
	2nd Railroad Battalion	Ahirkapi	
	War Academy	Harbiye, Constantinople	
	Cavalry Squadron	Harbiye, Constantinople	
	Infantry Company	Harbiye, Constantinople	
	Provisional Companies (2)	Harbiye, Constantinople	
	Machine-gun Company	Harbiye, Constantinople	
	Bosporus Fortress Command	Bosporus	
	1st Heavy Artillery Regiment	Bosporus	
	2nd Heavy Artillery Regiment	Bosporus	
	Searchlight Detachment	Bosporus	
	Torpedo Detachment	Bosporus	
	Mine Detachment	Bosporus	
	Wireless Detachment		
2nd Corps	Headquarters	Tekirdağ	Mirliva Sevket Turgut Paşa
4th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Tekirdağ	Mirliva Hifzi Paşa
	10th Infantry Regiment	Tekirdağ	
	11th Infantry Regiment	Tekirdağ	
	12th Infantry Regiment	Hayrabolu	
	1st Battalion	**Işkodra**	
	2nd Battalion	**Şam (Damascus)**	
	3rd Battalion	Tekirdağ	
	4th Rifle Battalion	Tekirdağ	
	4th Field Artillery Regiment	Tekirdağ	
	4th Division Band	Tekirdağ	
5th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Gelibolu (Gallipoli)	
	13th Infantry Regiment	Gelibolu (Gallipoli)	
	14th Infantry Regiment	Malkara	

	15th Infantry Regiment	Uzunkopru	
	5th Rifle Battalion	Gelibolu	
	5th Field Artillery Regiment	Constantinople	
	5th Division Band	Gelibolu	
6th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Izmir (Smyrna)	Colonel Sevki
	16th Infantry Regiment	Izmir (Smyrna)	
	17th Infantry Regiment	**Yemen**	
	3rd Battalion	Izmir	
	18th Infantry Regiment	**Sakiz Adasi**	
	1st Battalion	Odemiş	
	6th Rifle Battalion	Sisam	
	6th Field Artillery Regiment	Constantinople	
	6th Division Band	Izmir	
2nd Corps Troops	2nd Rifle Regiment	**Yemen**	
	2nd Field Howitzer Battalion	**Şam (Damascus)**	
	2nd Engineer Battalion	(Edirne) Adrianople	
	2nd Telegraph Battalion	(Edirne) Adrianople	
	2nd Transport Battalion	Istanbul	
	2nd Medical Regiment	Istanbul	
	Çanakkale Fortress Command	Çanakkale	
	3rd Heavy Artillery Regiment	Çanakkale	
	4th Heavy Artillery Regiment	Çanakkale	
	5th Heavy Artillery Regiment	Çanakkale	
	Independent Heavy	Çanakkale	

	Artillery Battery	Çanakkale	
	Torpedo Detachment	Çanakkale	
	Mine Detachment	Çanakkale	
	Wireless Detachment		
3rd Corps	Headquarters	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	
7th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	Colonel Hilmi
	19th Infantry Regiment	**Yemen**	
	3rd Battalion	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	
	20th Infantry Regiment	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	
	21st Infantry Regiment	Tirnavacik	
	7th Rifle Battalion	**Yemen**	
	7th Field Artillery Regiment	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	
	7th Division Band	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	
8th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Çorlu	Mirliva Celal Paşa
	22nd Infantry Regiment	Çorlu	
	23rd Infantry Regiment	Saray	
	1st Battalion	**Yemen**	
	24th Infantry Regiment	Samakof	
	1st Battalion	**Yemen**	

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	8th Rifle Battalion	Çorlu	
	8th Field Artillery Regiment	Çorlu	
	8th Division Band	Çorlu	
9th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Babaeski	Colonel Kadri
	25th Infantry Regiment	**Yemen**	
	26th Infantry Regiment	Babaeski	
	27th Infantry Regiment	Lüleburgaz	
	1st Battalion	**Işkodra**	
	9th Rifle Battalion	**Yemen**	
	9th Field Artillery Regiment	Lüleburgaz	
	9th Division Band	Babaeski	
3rd Corps Troops	3rd Rifle Regiment	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	
	3rd Cavalry Brigade	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	
	7th Cavalry Regiment	Çorlu	
	8th Cavalry Regiment	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	
	10th Cavalry Regimanet	Marmara Ereglisi	
	2nd Mountain Artillery Battalion	Marmara Ereglisi	
	3rd Mountain Artillery Battalion	Edirne (Adrianople)	
	2nd Field Howitzer Battalion	Edirne (Adrianople)	
	3rd Engineer Battalion	Kirklareli (Kirkkilise)	
	3rd Transport Battalion		
	two border companies		
4th Corps	Headquarters	Edirne (Adrianople)	Ferik Ahmet Abuk Paşa
10th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Edirne (Adrianople)	Mirliva Mehmet
	28th Infantry Regiment	Edirne (Adrianople)	
	29th Infantry Regiment	Cesirmustafapaşa	
	30th Infantry Regiment	Edirne (Adrianople)	
	10th Rifle Battalion	Edirne (Adrianople)	
	10th Field Artillery Regiment	Edirne (Adrianople)	
	10th Division Band	Edirne (Adrianople)	
11th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Dedeağaç	
	31st Infantry Regiment	Edirne (Adrianople)	
	32nd Infantry Regiment	Dedeağaç	
	33rd Infantry Regiment	Dedeağaç	
	11th Rifle Battalion	Dedeağaç	

	11th Field Artillery Regiment	Edirne (Adrianople)
	11th Division Band	Dedeağaç
12th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Gumülcine
	34th Infantry Regiment	**Yemen**
	35th Infantry Regiment	Iskeçe
	36th Infantry Regiment	Kircaali

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	12th Rifle Battalion	Gumülcine
	12th Field Artillery Regiment	Edirne (Adrianople)
	12th Division Band	Gumülcine
	4th Rifle Regiment	
	4th Cavalry Brigade	
	9th Cavalry Regiment	
	11th Cavalry Regiment	
	12th Cavalry Regiment	
	5th Cavalry Brigade	
	1st Cavalry Regiment	
	2nd Cavalry Regiment	
	3rd Field Howitzer Battalion	
	2nd Horse Artillery Battalion	
	5th Mountain Artillery Battalion	
	4th Engineer Battalion	
	4th Transport Battalion	
	three border companies	
	Medical Detachment	
	Edirne Fortress Command	
	6th Heavy Artillery Regiment	
	7th Heavy Artillery Regiment	
	8th Heavy Artillery Regiment	
	9th Heavy Artillery Regiment	
	Heavy Field Howitzer Battalion	
	Engineer Battalion	
4th Corps Troops	Machine-Gun Companies (5)	Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Dimetoka
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Kircaali
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
		Edirne (Adrianople)
SECOND ARMY	Headquarters	Salonika
5th Corps	Headquarters	Salonika
13th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Salonika
	37th Infantry Regiment	Salonika
	38th Infantry Regiment	Salonika

	39th Infantry Regiment	Salonika
	13th Rifle Battalion	Salonika
	13th Field Artillery Regiment	Salonika
	13th Division Band	Salonika
14th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Serez
	40th Infantry Regiment	Serez
	41st Infantry Regiment	Nevrekop

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	42nd Infantry Regiment	Cuma-I Bala
	14th Rifle Battalion	**Yemen**
	14th Field Artillery Regiment	Serez
	14th Division Band	Serez
15th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Usturumca
	43rd Infantry Regiment	Usturumca
	44th Infantry Regiment	Petric
	45th Infantry Regiment	Petric
	15th Rifle Regiment	Gevgili
	15th Field Artillery Regiment	Salonika
	15th Division Band	Usturumca
5th Corps Troops	5th Rifle Regiment	Salonika
	6th Cavalry Brigade	Gevgili
	14th Cavalry Regiment	Gevgili
	25th Cavalry Regiment	Serez
	26th Cavalry Regiment	Salonika
	5th Mountain Artillery Battalion	Katerin
	6th Mountain Artillery Battalion	Katerin (cadre)
	4th Howitzer Battalion	Demirhisar (cadre)
	5th Engineer Battalion	Gevgili
	5th Transport Battalion	Salonika
	Salonika Port Command	Salonika
	Heavy Artillery Battalion	Salonika
	Torpedo Detachment	Salonika
	Searchlight Detachment	Salonika
	Border Detachments	
6th Corps	Headquarters	Manastir
16th Infantry Division	Headquarters 46th Infantry Regiment	Iştip
	47th Infantry Regiment	Iştip
	48th Infantry Regiment	Koçana
	16th Rifle Battalion	Köprülü
	16th Field Artillery Regiment	Iştip
	16th Division Band	Iştip
		Iştip
17th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Manastir
	49th Infantry Regiment	Manastir
	50th Infantry Regiment	Manastir
	51st Infantry Regiment	Manastir
	two battalions	Florina
	17th Rifle Battalion	Resne
	17th Field Artillery Regiment	Manastir
	17th Division Band	Manastir

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18th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Debre
	52nd Infantry Regiment	Debre
	53rd Infantry Regiment	Kirçova
	54th Infantry Regiment	Elbasan
	18th Rifle Regiment	Debre

	18th Field Artillery Regiment	Manastir
	18th Division Band	Debre
6th Corps Troops	6th Rifle Regiment	Manastir
	7th Cavalry Brigade	Manastir
	6th Cavalry Regiment	Manastir
	16th Cavalry Regiment	Iştip
	13th Horse Artillery Regiment	Pirlepe
	3rd Horse Artillery Battalion	Manastir
	2nd Mountain Artillery Battalion	Manastir (cadre)
	8th Mountain Artillery Battalion	Manastir (cadre)
	9th Mountain Artillery Battalion	Elbasan (cadre)
	5th Field Howitzer Battalion	Manastir
	6th Engineer Battalion	Köprülü
	6th Telegraph Battalion	Manastir
	6th Transport Battalion	Manastir
	two border companies	
7th Corps	Headquarters	Üsküp
19th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Üsküp
	55th Infantry Regiment	Komanova
	56th Infantry Regiment	Komanova
	57th Infantry Regiment	Bilaç ve Berana
	19th Rifle Battalion	Üsküp
	19th Field Artillery Regiment	Üsküp
	19th Division Band	Üsküp
20th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Metroviçe
	58th Infantry Regiment	Metroviçe
	59th Infantry Regiment	Taşlica
	60th Infantry Regiment	Taşlica
	20th Rifle Battalion	Yakova
	20th Field Artillery Regiment	Priştine
	20th Division Band	Metroviçe
21st Infantry Division	Headquarters	Yakova
	61st Infantry Regiment	Yakova
	62nd Infantry Regiment	Ipek
	63rd Infantry Regiment	Berana
	21st Rifle Battalion	Yakova

	21st Field Artillery Regiment	Pizren
	21st Division Band	Yakova
7th Corps Troops	7th Rifle Regiment	Üsküp
	8th Cavalry Brigade	Üsküp
	15th Cavalry Regiment	Gevgili
	17th Cavalry Regiment	Üsküp
	18th Cavalry Regiment	Priştine
	7th Engineer Battalion	Priştine
	7th Transport Battalion	Priştine
	nine border companies	
22nd Infantry Division (Independent)	Headquarters	Kozana
	64th Infantry Regiment	Kozana
	65th Infantry Regiment	Naslic
	66th Infantry Regiment	Alasonya
	22nd Rifle Battalion	Serfice
	22nd Field Artillery Regiment	Kayalar
	22nd Division Band	Kozana
23rd Infantry Division (Independent)	Headquarters	Yanya
	67th Infantry Regiment	Yanya
	68th Infantry Regiment	Yanya
	69th Infantry Regiment	Preveze

	23rd Rifle Battalion	Yanya
	23rd Field Artillery Regiment	Yanya
	23rd Divison Band	Yanya
	Yanya Fortress Command	Yanya
	Four artillery battalions	Yanya
	Engineer Company	Yanya
	Prevez Fortress Command	Prevez
	Engineer Company	Prevez
	Two border companies	
24th Infantry Division (Independent)	Headquarters	Işkodra
	70th Infantry Regiment	Işkodra
	71st Infantry Regiment	Işkodra
	72nd Infantry Regiment	Tuz
	24th Rifle Battalion	Işkodra
	24th Field Artillery Regiment	Işkodra
	24th Division Band	Işkodra
	Işkodra Fortress Command	Işkodra
	13th Heavy Artillery Regiment	Işkodra
	Engineer Company	
	Two border companies	

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8th Corps	Headquarters	Şam (Damascus)
25th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Dera
	73rd Infantry Regiment	Dera
	74th Infantry Regiment	Suveydiye
	75th Infantry Regiment	Kerek
	25th Rifle Battalion	Maan
	25th Division Band	Dera
26th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Halep (Aleppo)
	76th Infantry Regiment	Halep (Aleppo)
	77th Infantry Regiment	Maraş
	78th Infantry Regiment	Adana
	26th Rifle Battalion	Aleppo
	26th Field Artillery Regiment	Aleppo
	26th Division Band	Aleppo
27th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Beyrut
	79th Infantry Regiment	Hayfa
	80th Infantry Regiment	Beyrut
	81st Infantry Regiment	Kudüs (Jerusalem)
	27th Rifle Battalion	Mesiha
	27th Division Band	Beyrut
8th Corps Troops	8th Rifle Regiment	Şam
	9th Cavalry Brigade	Şam
	28th Cavalry Regiment	Dera
	29th Cavalry Regiment	Amman
	30th Cavalry Regiment	Şam
	14th Mountain Artillery Battalion	Şam
	15th Mountain Artillery Battalion	Şam
	8th Engineer Battalion	Humus
	8th Transport Battalion	Şam
	Railroad Regiment (two Bns)	along the railroad to Medina
THIRD ARMY	Headquarters	Erzincan
9th Corps	Headquarters	Erzurum
28th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Erzurum
	82nd Infantry Regiment	Erzurum
	83rd Infantry Regiment	Erzurum

	84th Infantry Regiment	Hasankale
	28th Rifle Battalion	**Yemen**
	28th Field Artillery Regiment	Erzurum
	28th Division Band	Erzurum

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29th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Bayburt
	85th Infantry Regiment	Bayburt
	86th Infantry Regiment	Işhan
	87th Infantry Regiment	Trabzon
	29th Rifle Regiment	Erzurum
	29th Field Artillery Regiment	Bayburt
	29th Division Band	Trabzon
9th Corps Troops	9th Rifle Regiment	Erzurum
	21st Cavalry Regiment	Erzurum
	4th Horse Artillery Battalion	Erzurum
	9th Engineer Battalion	Erzurum
	9th Transport Battalion	Erzurum
	Erzurum Fortress Command	Erzurum
	12th Heavy Artillery Regiment	Erzurum
	Engineer Platoon	
	Twelve border companies	
10th Corps	Headquarters	Erzincan
30th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Erzincan
	88th Infantry Regiment	Erzincan
	89th Infantry Regiment	Erzincan
	90th Infantry Regiment	Erzincan
	30th Rifle Battalion	**Yemen**
	30th Field Artillery Regiment	Erzincan
	30th Division Band	Erzincan
31st Infantry Division	Headquarters	Erzincan
	91st Infantry Regiment	Siirt
	92nd Infantry Regiment	Bitlis
	93rd Infantry Regiment	Sivas
	31st Rifle Battalion	Erzincan
	31st Division Band	Erzincan
32nd Infantry Division	Headquarters	Elazig
	94th Infantry Regiment	Diyarbakir
	95th Infantry Regiment	Elazig
	96th Infantry Regiment	Dersim
	32nd Rifle Battalion	Erzincan
	32nd Field Artillery Regiment	Erzincan
	32nd Division Band	Elazig
10th Corps Troops	19th Cavalry Regiment	Erzincan
	20th Cavalry Regiment	Diyarbakir
	10th Engineer Battalion	Erzincan
	10th Transport Battalion	Erzincan
	Medical Detachment	Erzincan

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11th Corps	Headquarters	Van
33rd Infantry Division	Headquarters	Van
	97th Infantry Regiment	Van
	98th Infantry Regiment	Başkale
	99th Infantry Regiment	Dogubeyazit
	33rd Rifle Battalion	Van
	33rd Cavalry Regiment	Van

34th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Muş
	100th Infantry Regiment	Muş
	101st Infantry Regiment	Malazgirt
	102nd Infantry Regiment	Karakilise
	34th Rifle Battalion	**Yemen**
	34th Division Band	Muş
11th Corps Troops	23rd Cavalry Regiment	Van
	21st Field Artillery Battalion	Van
	11th Transport Battalion	Van
	22nd Mountain Artillery Battalion	
	Eight border companies	
1st Aşiret Cavalry Division	Headquarters	Erzurum
	39th Cavalry Regiment	Erzurum
	1st Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Erzurum
	2nd Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Kigi
	3rd Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Varto
	4th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Hinis
	5th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Hasankale
	6th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Sivas
2nd Aşiret Cavalry Division	Headquarters	Karakilise
	24th Cavalry Regiment	Karakilise
	7th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Eleşkirt
	8th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Karakilise
	9th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Karakilise
	10th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Karakilise
	11th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Karakilise
	12th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Tutak
	13th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Diyadin
	14th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Dogubeyazit
3rd Aşiret Cavalry Division	Headquarters	Erciş
	25th Cavalry Regiment	Erciş
	15th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Bulanik

	16th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Erciş
	17th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Erciş
	18th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Saray
	19th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	Başkale
4th Aşiret Cavalry Division	Headquarters	Mardin Mardin Cizre Mardin Mardin Viranşehir Siverek
	20th Cavalry Regiment	
	20th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	
	21st Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	
	22nd Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	
	23rd Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	
	24th Aşiret Cavalry Regiment	
FOURTH ARMY	Headquarters	Baghdad
12th Corps	Headquarters	Mosul
35th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Mosul
	103rd Infantry Regiment	Mosul
	104th Infantry Regiment	Revandiz
	105th Infantry Regiment	Mosul
	35th Rifle Battalion	Mosul
	35th Field Artillery Regiment	Mosul
	35th Division Band	Mosul
36th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Kerkük
	106th Infantry Regiment	Kerkük
	107th Infantry Regiment	Kerkük
	108th Infantry Regiment	Süleymaniye
	36th Rifle Battalion	Kerkük

	36th Division Band	Kerkük
12th Corps Troops	13th Cavalry Brigade	Kerkük
	33rd Cavalry Regiment	Mosul
	34th Cavalry Regiment	Kerkük
	35th Cavalry Regiment	Kerkük
	Eight Border Companies	
13th Corps	Headquarters	Baghdad
37th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Baghdad
	109th Infantry Regiment	“
	110th Infantry Regiment	vicinity of Baghdad
	111th Infantry Regiment	Baghdad
	37th Rifle Battalion	Necef

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	37th Field Artillery Regiment	Baghdad
	37th Division Band	Baghdad
38th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Basra
	112th Infantry Regiment	Basra
	113th Infantry Regiment	Amara, Baghdad,
	114th Infantry Regiment	Müntafik
	38th Rifle Regiment	Müntafik
	Field Artillery Battalion	vicinity of Basra
		Baghdad
13th Corps Troops	14th Cavalry Brigade	Baghdad
	31st Cavalry Regiment	Baghdad
	32nd Cavalry Regiment	Baghdad
	36th Cavalry Regiment	Baghdad
	25th Mountain Artillery Battalion	Baghdad
	13th Engineer Company	Baghdad
	13th Telegraph Company	Baghdad
	13th Transport Battalion	Baghdad
	Medical Detachment	Baghdad
	Six Border Companies	

INDEPENDENT COMMANDS

14th Corps (Independent)	Headquarters	San’a (in Yemen)
39th Infantry Division	Headquarters	San’a
	115th Infantry Regiment	San’a
	116th Infantry Regiment	Zimar
	117th Infantry Regiment	Umran, Zindiye, Sibam
	39th Rifle Battalion	Su’il Hamis
40th Infantry Division	Headquarters	Hudeyde
	118th Infantry Regiment	Hudeyde
	119th Infantry Regiment	Taiz
	120th Infantry Regiment	Hicce
	40th Rifle Battalion	San’a
41st Infantry Division	Headquarters	Asir (Ebha)
	121st Infantry Regiment	Asir (Ebha)
	122nd Infantry Regiment	Asir (Ebha)
	123rd Infantry Regiment	Asir (Ebha)
	28th Mountain Artillery Battalion	Asir (Ebha)
14th Corps Troops	37th Cavalry Regiment	San’a
	27th Mountain Artillery Battalion	vicinity of San’a
	14th Engineer Battalion	San’a
	Regular Jandarma Battalion	Tehame
	Engineer Company	Sinanpaşa

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43rd Infantry Division (Independent)	Headquarters	Mecca

	128th Infantry Regiment	Taif
	129th Infantry Regiment	Cidde
	130th Infantry Regiment	Medina
	43rd Rifle Battalion	Taif
	30th Mountain Artillery Battalion	vicinity of Medina
	Mecca Fortress Artillery Battery	Mecca
42nd Infantry Division (Independent)	Headquarters	Libya
	124th Infantry Regiment	Bengazi
	125th Infantry Regiment	Libya
	126th Infantry Regiment	Libya
	127th Infantry Regiment	Libya
	42nd Rifle Battalion	Libya
	38th Cavalry Regiment	Libya
	Field Artillery Battalion	Libya
	Libyan Fortress Command	Libya
	Artillery Battalion	Libya
	Engineer Company	Libya
	Wireless Company	Libya

Source: Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncü Cilt, 6nci Kisim (1908–1920) Inci Kitap* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1971), 147–174.

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Appendix C
List of Place Names

Common 1912 Usage	Modern Turkish	Modern European
Adrianople	Edirne	
Avalonya	Avalonya	Valore (Albania)
Bunarhisar	Pinarhisar	
Chataldhza (Tchataldja)	Çatalca	
Constantinople	İstanbul	
Dedeagach	Dedeagach	Alexandroupli (Greece)
Durazzo	Durazzo	Durres
Elbasan	Elbasan	Tirana (Albania)
Gallipoli	Gelibolu	
Ipek	Ipek	Peć (Kosova)
Janina (Jannina)	Yanya	Ioania (Greek)
Kirkkilise (Kirkillise)	Kirklareli	
Kumanovo	Kumanova	Kumanova (Macedonia)
Manastir	Manastir	Bitola (Macedonia)
Novi Bazar	Yeni Pazar	Novi Pazar (Yugoslavia)
Pirlepe	Pirlepe	Prilep
Preveze	Preveze	Preveza (Greece)
Salonika	Selanik	Thessalonika (Greece)
Scutari	Işkodra	Shkader (Albania)
Smyrna	Izmir	
Rodosto	Tekirdağ	
Uştruma	Uştruma	Stumica (Macedonia)
Üsküp	Üsküp	Skopje (Macedonia)

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