THE DAWN OF AVIATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST: THE FIRST FLYING MACHINES OVER İSTANBUL

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Introduction*

The dawn of aviation in the Middle East began in 1909, six years after the Wright brothers' renowned flight on the coast of North Carolina. In a cold and blustery December of that year, the Belgian Baron Pierre de Caters and then the world-famous Frenchman Louis Blériot piloted the first heavier-than-air flying machines over İstanbul–or Constantinople as it was commonly called in Europe–the capital of the Ottoman Empire, which then included much of the Middle East. The flights of these machines astounded the thousands of spectators who had gathered to watch. "Bravo!" they cheered, clapping and waving, as these fabulous inventions rose into the sky. What did these observers think of this new technology? Did they believe that these machines simply provided a platform for stunts or did they believe that they had serious implications for mankind or, more specifically, for the Ottoman Empire?

At that time, no one thought, of course, to poll the spectators on their reactions to these flying machines. Indeed, to my knowledge, the recollections of only one such spectator have been published. By spectators I mean the subjects of the Ottoman Empire-Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Arabs and others-for there were also many foreigners, that is, Europeans, present. These latter lived mainly in the large European colony in the Pera, modern Beyoğlu, section of Istanbul. This was the commercial hub of the city, where powerful foreign banks and embassies were located. But among the "ordinary Ottoman" spectators a number of local journalists were on hand. Their reports of these flights provide a unique insight into the impression that they made on those who witnessed them. Here, I shall focus primarily

* The following narrative is a somewhat expanded version of the author's article "The Dawn of Aviation in the Middle East: The First Flying Machines over İstanbul," *Air Power History*, vol. 52, nr. 2 (2005), 26-41. This article did not include the translations given below. For those unfamiliar with Turkish orthography, ö and ü are the same as in German, ğ is silent and lengthens the preceding vowel, c = j, ç = ch, ı = the o in atom, and ş = sh.

on the reports in the leading Turkish newspapers and secondarily on those in "foreign" newspapers. Turkish was, of course, not only the language of the dominant and ruling element of the Ottoman Empire, but it was also widely understood among various minority groups within the state[1]. Accordingly, Turkish newspapers were the most numerous and had the widest circulation. "Foreign" newspapers were those published in Beyoğlu by various interests within the European colony.

With respect to Turkish newspapers, I shall concentrate on the three leading dailies in 1909, which, in order of importance, were the following: *İkdam*, *Tanin*, and *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr*. I shall also add a few details from *Yeni Gazete*, which was representative of the second tier of Turkish newspapers[2]. Founded in 1894, *İkdam* was devoted to politics, economic issues and literature. Its circulation in 1909 was about 40,000[3]. *Tanin*, established in 1908, was the organ of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), which came to power that year. It was above all a political paper[4]. The old newspaper *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* (1862-68) was reestablished as *Yeni* (New) *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* in 1909 by one of the most important Turkish journalists of the time, Ebüzziya Tevfik. This newspaper described itself as a journal of independent opinion and supporter of continuous progress. It soon became critical of the CUP[5]. *Yeni Gazete* generally focused on politics. The average circulation of *Tanin* and *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* was at least 20,000. In 1909, greater İstanbul

[1] The various minority groups in Istanbul published their own newspapers, sometimes several, in their own languages. Thus there were newspapers in Greek, Armenian, Arabic, Persian, and even in Spanish but in the Hebrew alphabet for Sephardic Jews. Lists of the leading newspapers of all kinds in İstanbul were published from time to time in *Die Welt des Islams*, see, e.g., 3 (1915), 278; 5 (1917), 78-80; 6 (1918), 61-62.

[2] In 1909, the year following the deposition of Sultan Abdülhamid II and the beginning of complete freedom of the press, there was a burst of publication activity in the Ottoman Empire. According to *Türk Dil ve Edebiyatı Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul, 1976-98), s.v. "Basın," p. 322, 353 newspapers and other periodicals were published in 1909. A year later this number dropped to 130. The vast majority, ninety percent, were published in İstanbul. See *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (hereinafter cited as *İA*), s.v. "Basın" (Orhon Koloğlu). No library holds complete sets of all these publications or even the major newspapers. I used *İkdam* from the UCLA library, *Tanın* from the Library of the Social Sciences Faculty of Ankara University and the National Library in Ankara, *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* from the UC Berkeley Library, and *Yeni Gazete* from the Yapı Kredi Cultural Center, Sermet Çifter Research Library in İstanbul. For a guide to Turkish newspapers, see Hasan Duman, *Osmanlı-Türk Süreli Yayınları ve Gazeteleri (1828-1928): Ottoman-Turkish Serials and Newspapers (1828-1928)* (Ankara, 2000).

[3] *İA*, s.v. "İkdam" (editor).

[4] *Ibid.*, s.v. "Tanin" (Orhon Koloğlu).

[5] *Ibid.*, s.v. "Tasvîr-i Efkâr" (Orhon Koloğlu).

had a population of perhaps a bit more than half a million, but most of this population was illiterate.

Among these newspapers, *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* devoted the most attention to aviation and the flights of de Caters and Blériot. This was because Ebüzziya Tevfik's youngest son Velid Ebüzziya, who eventually took over the newspaper in 1912, was especially interested in flight. Many of the articles in *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* on this subject are signed with the initials V.E. (i.e., the letters *waw* and *alif* in the Arabic alphabet), which must stand for Velid Ebüzziya. No articles on aviation in any of the other Turkish papers cited in this study are signed. It is worth noting that Velid Ebüzziya and his older brother Talha set up a darkroom for photography, effectively the first for an Istanbul newspaper, in 1912 and in the same year Velid apparently took the first aerial photographs of Istanbul[6]. *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr*'s extensive coverage of the flights of 1909 are translated in full in the Appendix.

As for newspapers published by foreigners or European interests, the most important was *The Levant Herald*. It was established by a British subject, with the help of the British Embassy, in 1856 and ran until 1914. It concentrated on trade and diplomatic issues between the European powers and the Ottoman Empire. In 1909, the language of *The Levant Herald* was French with two columns of summaries in English. At that time, French was the language of trade and diplomacy for the European colony. Indeed, even the Ottoman high society in Beyoğlu spoke French and imitated Parisian social graces. *The Levant Herald* took a great, but rather different, interest in the flights of de Caters and, above all, Blériot. Apart from this different emphasis, its accounts of these flights add further details to those of the Turkish press and help complete the picture of those events. In order to compare and contrast the Turkish view of the significance of these flights with the European, I have also included a full translation of the reports of *The Levant Herald* in the same appendix[7]. I have supplemented this newspaper with a few references from the *Moniteur Oriental*, which began

[6] *Ibid.*, s.v. "Ebüzziya, Velid" (Ömer Faruk Şerifoğlu). In this article, there is a photograph of Velid dressed for flight and standing before an aircraft that is certainly one like Blériot flew over Istanbul in 1909. Yet, the caption reads, "Velid Ebüzziya in front of the first aircraft that flew over Istanbul, 1912." The location of the photograph is not given. As we shall see below, however, de Caters' flight preceded that of Blériot. The aircraft in the photograph is definitely not the one that de Caters flew.

[7] I would like to thank Pat Leiser for translating these reports and saving me much time.

in 1882 as the *Oriental Advertiser* and continued through 1920. In 1909, it too was published in French with English summaries and concentrated on economic and political issues, but promoted French and Greek interests[8]. The narrative of the flights of Baron de Caters and Blériot given below is a synthesis of the reports from all these newspapers, but *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* and *The Levant Herald* provide the heart of the story, the former especially for de Caters and the latter for Blériot.

İstanbul at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

As the twentieth century began, Sultan Abdülhamid II was completing a quarter-century as the absolute monarch of the Ottoman Empire. He had come to power in 1876 following a financial crisis left to him by his predecessors who had spent enormous sums and borrowed heavily to build an army and navy strong enough to fend off the European powers and preserve the integrity of the empire. The result was bankruptcy, and in 1882 Abdülhamid officially handed the finances of the Ottoman Empire over to European investors who were to administer the Ottoman Public Debt. Meanwhile, the European powers continued to chip away at Ottoman territory. Austria occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878 and Britain took control of Egypt in 1882. At the same time, internally, nationalism spread among more and more minority groups in both the European and Asian provinces of the state.

The many crises facing the Ottoman Empire had been brewing for some time and the Ottomans had adopted various measures, especially a series of reforms, in attempts to resolve them. Over the years many bureaucrats and intellectuals came to believe that in order to save the empire the sultanate needed to be transformed into a constitutional monarchy. The sultan's authority needed to be restricted and most of his power needed to be given to ministers responsible to a national popular assembly. Furthermore, this assembly would do away with all class and religious distinctions. Plans for a constitution to establish such a government were drawn up shortly after

[8] On these two papers, see respectively *İA*, vol. 8, pp. 274 and 315. Again, no library has complete sets of the European newspapers published in İstanbul. I used *The Levant Herald* from the Library of Congress and the UCLA library and the *Moniteur Oriental* from the Municipal Library in İstanbul. I wish to thank Berrin Dirim for obtaining copies of the latter for me.

Abdülhamid came to power. On 23 December 1876, during his first shaky months on the throne, he was induced to proclaim a constitution that guaranteed civil liberties and provided for a parliamentary government based on popular representation.

Abdülhamid was not, however, a political progressive. Jealous of his power, he took advantage of an unsuccessful war with Russia to prorogue the newly created parliament and suspend the constitution in February 1878. He subsequently ruled as an absolute monarch. Yet, the forces for change could not be suppressed. These forces were led by the Young Turk movement composed of those who were politically opposed to the sultan and wanted to transform the empire into a liberal constitutional monarchy. Their political arm, originally a secret organization, was the Committee of Union and Progress. As social conditions and the economy rapidly declined under the sultan, the CUP attracted an increasing number of supporters, including many in the army. Finally, after a mutiny in the Army, the CUP came out into the open and demanded a restoration of the constitution. The CUP soon had the support of most of the Army and forced Abdülhamid to restore the constitution on 23 July 1908.

In the elections of November-December 1908, the CUP came to power. This precipitated a struggle between the Unionists and conservative elements led by the sultan. Infiltrated and agitated by minor religious officials, the First Army Corps stationed in İstanbul revolted on 13 April 1909 in the mistaken belief that the constitution had replaced Islamic law. Similar "spontaneous" outbreaks spread across much of the Asian part of the empire. The government floundered while the sultan promised to meet the demands of the mutineers. The CUP would not have survived had it not been for the Third Army in Macedonia under the command of General Mahmud Shevket Pasha, a reform-minded officer who supported the constitution[9]. Moreover, the Third Army included many Unionist officers, notably Enver, who was then military attaché in Berlin and later a member of the triumvirate that ruled the Ottoman Empire during World War I, and Mustafa Kemal, later known as Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic in 1923.

[9] On Mahmud Shevket Pasha (1856-1913), see *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1960-2002), s.v. "Maḥmūd Shewḳat Pasha" (Feroz Ahmad).

With the Third Army, which became known in the Western press as the "Army of Deliverance" (Haraket Ordusu, or Action Army), Mahmud Shevket Pasha entered İstanbul, quickly crushed the revolt and saved the CUP. While legally maintaining a state of siege that lasted for two years, he became the dominant force in the cabinet, eventually assuming the position of Minister of War and Inspector General for the First, Second and Third Army Corps. On 28 April 1909, Abdülhamid was deposed. His brother Mehmet Reshad succeeded him as Mehmet V[10].

Abdülhamid may not have been a political progressive, but he was an enthusiastic proponent of reforms and technological advances that helped him increase or centralize his power. Thus, he supported the expansion and improvement of both primary and secondary education on one hand and, on the other, higher education–especially in the military schools. He also founded the first Turkish university. As for technology, he was an avid patron of the telegraph system, for example, which already crisscrossed the empire and had become an important instrument of his autocratic rule. He was less enthusiastic about expanding the railroad system because its construction was almost entirely in the hands of foreigners, but he recognized its usefulness. The first Orient Express train left Vienna for İstanbul on 12 August 1888. The construction of the Hejaz Railroad linking Damascus with Medina began in 1900. The most ambitious project was the construction of the Berlin to Baghdad railroad, the importance of which led to international political complications that prevented its completion. But by the beginning of the twentieth century İstanbul was connected by rail with Ankara and northern and eastern Anatolia.

Meanwhile other technological wonders had begun to penetrate the Ottoman Empire, above all the capital, during Abdülhamid's reign. Electric lighting was introduced in 1878. Between 1881 and 1907, tramway lines were expanded throughout the city. A Briton drove the first automobile to İstanbul in 1905, but the sultan would not allow one to be imported until around 1908. Photography, of which the sultan was a great enthusiast,

[10] The basic works on this period in Ottoman history are Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal, 1964); Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1968); Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks: the Committee of Union and Progress in Turkish Politics 1908-1914* (Oxford, 1969); and Aykut Kansu, *The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey* (Leiden, 1997). See also *İA*, "Otuzbir Mart Olayı," (Necdet Sakaoğlu).

became increasingly common. The first cinema opened in 1897[11]. And upon the heels of Abdülhamid's deposition, a somewhat familiar version of aviation returned to İstanbul.

Ballooning was not new to the Ottoman Empire. The first balloon ascent in İstanbul had occurred by at least 1802, but subsequent ascents or attempted ascents were very rare. As soon as Mahmud Shevket Pasha established himself in İstanbul, he wanted to modernize the Ottoman Army. He had spent eight years in Germany and afterwards tried to keep informed of all technological developments in Europe that had military applications. These developments included balloons and airships. Thus, the time seemingly was auspicious for the Frenchman Ernest Barbotte who arrived in İstanbul in May 1909 with a balloon that he wished to demonstrate and, if possible, sell to the Ottoman government. On 28 May at the Taksim Parade Ground, on the northern edge of Beyoğlu, Barbotte made his first demonstration. Thousands of people, including four to six thousand paying customers, converged on the Parade Ground to witness the spectacle. Among those present were the sultan's second son Ziyaeddin and the sultan's nephew Ahmed Tevfik. A military band tried to entertain the spectators who were kept waiting for some time. Finally, late in the afternoon, Barbotte rose into the air with his yellow balloon named "Osmanlı" (the Ottoman). Riding in a small basket attached to the balloon were, in addition to Barbotte, Henri Turot, a journalist and member of the city council of Paris, a Turkish engineer for the city of İstanbul, and the aid to the commander of the First Army Corps. The balloon rose without difficulty to about 600 meters and managed to drift across the Bosphorus and land on the Asian side. On 31 May, Barbotte attempted a second ascent with other passengers, but it was aborted because of strong winds. Later, he made ascents on 4 and 6 June. In the latter, he carried aloft the Ottoman prince Ahmed Tevfik, who thus became the first member of the royal family to "fly," and a member of Mahmud Shevket Pasha's staff. Later Barbotte went to İzmir and made another ascent on 9 June. Despite his successful "flights," the Ottoman government did not purchase his balloon[12].

[11] On the introduction of these innovations, see *İA*, s.v. "Aydınlatma" (Doğan Kuban and Zafer Toprak), "Tramvay" (R. Sertac Kayserilioğlu), "Otomobil" (Burçak Evren), "Fotoğrafcılık" (Engin Çizgen), and "Sinemalar" (Burçak Evren).

[12] On early ballooning in the Ottoman Empire, see Yavuz Kansu et al., *Havacılık Tarihinde Türkler* [Turks in the history of aviation] (Etimesgut, Turkey, 1971), pp. 112-14, and,

Nevertheless, Barbotte helped set the stage for a new era in aviation in the Ottoman Empire, and the appearance of the most wondrous innovation of all. Indeed, as we shall see, the demonstrations by de Caters and Blériot would parallel those of Barbotte in more ways than one.

Reports of Marvelous Flying Machines

Amidst the political and social turmoil in İstanbul and the appearance of a series of technological advances that were beginning to change the lives of at least some of the city's residents, word began to arrive from the West with increasing frequency of the astonishing feats of the most amazing technological advance of all–flying machines. Ever since the Wright brothers' flight, news had reached İstanbul via telegraph and post, the foreign press, newspaper correspondents, military attachés and other diplomatic personnel, travelers and businessmen of the evermore astounding accomplishments of these machines.

One resident of İstanbul who, as mentioned, was captivated by the notion of controlled heavier-than-air flight was Velid Ebüzziya, whose father was the owner and editor of the newly established *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr*. This newspaper had barely been in business for four months when Velid, at the age of 27, contributed the first of two long articles on the subject of flying machines.

Through the press in Europe, Velid had followed advances in aviation in the West for some time. To his mind, most of his countrymen were poorly informed, if not completely ignorant, of these developments, so he took it upon himself to educate them as best he could through the mass media. In his first article, "The Subject of Flying Machines," which appeared on 4

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on Barbotte's ascents, especially P. Oberling, "A History of Turkish Aviation Part I: Aerostation among the Ottomans," *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 9 (1984), pp. 152-55.

I might add that *Fly* magazine, June, 1909, p. 13, reported the following: "The first Turkish airship, the 'Osmanlı,' has just undergone its trial flights near Paris. The airship was ordered by the Ottoman government that has just vanished and its arrival in the sultan's dominions is awaited with much speculative interest by the natives, as aeronautics has hitherto been a forbidden sport in that country.

Major Feihy Bey, the Turkish military attaché in Paris, took part in the first flight, which was accomplished very satisfactorily, a descent being made at Mormant, twenty-eight miles from Paris. The aeronauts, Turot and Barbotte, will take the airship to Salonica, hoping that delivery will not be refused owing to the change of government in Turkey."

On the Sultan's paranoia about balloons, see Oberling, p. 151.

October 1909, he first pointed out that all segments of the Western world were completely preoccupied with the matter of flying machines and that this technology was of the utmost importance. Yet, this subject had been ignored by the Turkish press. Velid stated that the desire to fly was as old as mankind, but not until recent scientific developments, especially in automobile engines, was the stage set for the invention of the flying machine. Only now could its full implications be contemplated. Indeed, he speculated that flying machines would make political borders meaningless and that this might lead to world peace and reconciliation.

Before providing a history of major aviation achievements beginning with the Wright brothers, Velid described for his readers the different approaches that had been taken in attempts to invent an airship. These were the creation of an ornithopter, which flew by imitating the movements of birds; a helicopter, which ascended by propellers; and what the French called an *aeroplane*, which was composed of flat or semi-concave planes and was driven by propellers. Among these, only the last had been successful, although the helicopter had possibilities. Velid also went into further detail to describe the structure of aeroplanes and their different versions–monoplanes, biplanes, and multiplanes–and stressed again how aeronautical progress would parallel advances in appropriate engines. In the course of this, he introduced new technical terminology to his readers and coined new words in Turkish.

In Velid's second article, which appeared the next day, he divided the history of aviation into four periods after the invention of the aeroplane. The first began in 1906 when the Brazilian Alberto Santos-Dumont, after steering a balloon around the Eiffel Tower, built an ungainly flying machine with which he managed to travel through the air for fifty meters in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris–the first flight in Europe. Velid described this in some detail and then recounted Santos-Dumont's subsequent flights. The second period, according to Velid, began in 1908 when Wilbur Wright made his first flight in Europe. This was followed by a number of other flights of greater and greater duration. The success of these flights not only impressed Europeans but also stimulated them to imitate and surpass Wilbur Wright's achievements. The next year, in fact, Louis Blériot astounded the world by being the first to fly from France over the English Channel to England. This flight thus initiated the third period in the history of the aeroplane. It

captured the imagination of at lest some of the Turkish press, for Velid cited *Tanın* as declaring that Blériot opened a new era in history, one that would change the way of life of the entire world. But the Turkish press, according to Velid, published the briefest of information on Blériot's flight, information that was insufficient to allow one to appreciate the full magnitude of Blériot's achievement. Therefore Velid decided to provide a detailed account of it based on European sources, probably newspapers, which he does not name. Finally, Velid came to his fourth period in the development of flight, the first aircraft races, which were held at Reims, France a month after Blériot's flight. He described the various competitions and the participants, including Henri Farman, Blériot, and the American Glenn Curtiss. Modeled after the periodic automobile races in the famous cities of Europe, the Reims air races were extremely important, stated Velid, because they attracted great interest and stimulated rapid progress in the technology of aviation. Velid promised to follow this progress and keep his readers informed. Little did he know then that he would soon bear witness to the dawn of aviation in his own country and the Middle East. (See fig. 1)

Baron Pierre de Caters' Demonstration of Flight in İstanbul

On Wednesday 23 November, *The Levant Herald* announced that Baron de Caters, a Belgian whose name was well known in Europe, was arriving that day on the Orient Express and that he planned to make a demonstration of flight in İstanbul. Disposed of a vast fortune (and married to a direct descendant of the celebrated painter Peter Paul Rubens), he had dedicated himself to aviation and had participated in various competitions. In İstanbul, his demonstration of flight would be for the benefit of the Ottoman Navy and, in fact, most tickets for his demonstration had already been purchased by subscription opened for the fleet. On Sunday 27 November, the same newspaper reported that the Baron intended to fly across the Bosphorus, that is, from Europe to Asia, and that he had scouted Haydar Pasha, on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus opposite the Golden Horn, for possible landing or takeoff sites. For his flights, he had brought two aircraft at a cost of 10,000 francs and he planned to build hangars for them at a cost of at least 25,000 francs. General Mahmd Shevket Pasha had received de Caters and assured him of the cooperation of the Army. On 28 November 1909, *Yeni Gazete* published a banner advertisement announcing that the famous flyer Baron de Caters was coming to İstanbul to make a

demonstration of flight. This demonstration would be held on 29 November at Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi (Hill of Eternal Liberty)[13] between two and three o'clock. Tickets were now on sale and could be purchased at various department stores, shops, and the famous Pera Palas Hotel[14]. But this advertisement proved to be a bit premature. On 1 December, the same paper, under the headline "Baron de Caters' Balloon," stated that the flight was postponed until 1 December, weather permitting, and again mentioned where tickets could be purchased, including at kiosks at Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi[15]. Meanwhile, on 29 November, *The Levant Herald* wondered if the Baron would have favorable weather for crossing the Bosphorus and stated that the editor of *Le Monde Hellenique*, Mr. Revelis, would fly with him. (see fig. 2)

Not until 30 November did *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* announce that de Caters had arrived in İstanbul[16]. It said that he planned to make a demonstration flight in place of Blériot, who would arrive later to make a similar demonstration. The implication was that de Caters was trying to get to İstanbul before Blériot, no doubt in an attempt to be the first to fly across the Bosphorus in emulation of Blériot's flight across the English Channel–although at its widest point the Bosphorus is only about 3,500 meters. Sermet Alus, an eyewitness to the flights of de Caters and Blériot, recalled forty years after the fact that at the end of November all the newspapers were abuzz about the coming appearance of Blériot. According to Alus, they speculated that he would want the distinction of flying among İstanbul, Beyoğlu and Üsküdar, on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus, thus flying across both the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. When de Caters suddenly appeared, says Alus, the newspapers said he would make an aerial tour over

[13] At an elevation of 120 meters in the northwestern part of the modern district of Şişli in İstanbul, it is one of the highest points near the city. Much of this area is now covered by development. Today the high point of the hill lies within a triangular park bounded on the south by the Çevre Yolu (Ring Road) leading to the southern bridge across the Bosphorus, Şişli-Kâğıthane Street to the east, and Piyale Paşa Boulevard to the west. In 1911 a monument was built on this site in memory of those who died in putting down the revolt of 13 April, 1908. It is called the Âbide-i Hürriyet, see *İA*, s.v. "Âbide-i Hürriyet" (Latife Batur). I would like to thank Tony Greenwood for clarifying this for me.

[14] *Yeni Gazete*, nr. 452, p. 4. On the renowned Pera Palas, see *İA*, s.v. "Pera Palas" (Çelik Gülersoy and Afife Batur).

[15] *Yeni Gazete*, nr. 455, p. 4. Cf. a similar short announcement in *İkdam*, nr. 5460, 1 December, p. 4.

[16] It is worthy of note that on 30 November *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* also announced the installment of the first telephone in the Sultan's palace.

the Bosphorus, to Üsküdar and the Princess Islands in the Sea of Marmara. In any case, while Blériot was en route, the Baron was busy building a shed to protect his machine–only one is subsequently mentioned in the press–at the site of his planned flight[17].

Although Baron de Caters had achieved some fame in Europe, nothing, in fact, had been said of him in the Turkish press. Consequently, Velid went to the Pera Palas where he was staying and interviewed him. In a long article that he published in *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* on 1 December, he acknowledged that the Baron was virtually unknown in İstanbul, that he had arrived with a dual-winged flying machine, and that he had been in the city several days making preparations for a demonstration of flight. Velid went on to describe de Caters as one of Blériot's competitors. The Baron was a wealthy aviation enthusiast and an "amateur," not an engineer who designed his own machines. He was unknown because he was Belgian and the French newspapers had ignored him. Nevertheless, he began to win fame at the Frankfurt races where he had surpassed Blériot, with respect to time aloft and altitude, and won first prize.

Velid described de Caters as a member of the Belgian nobility, about 35 years old, powerfully built, and an energetic "sportsman." He had been a race-car driver and had received the title of "World Record Holder" at the Monaco races. In 1907 the Baron became interested in flying machines and purchased a Voisin aircraft built by the French brothers of the same name. After the Frankfurt races, and preceeding his rival Blériot, he came to İstanbul, spending more than 16,000 francs to bring his machine to the city[18]. As soon as he arrived, he obtained the necessary permit and built a shed to protect his aircraft at the site of his proposed demonstration. Velid stated that the Baron planned to make a number of flights until he had matched his successes in Europe. Thus the people of İstanbul would have a chance to learn first hand about how flying machines operated and be able to assess their importance.

[17] Alus, "40 Yıl Evel İstanbulda İlk Uçan İki Uçak" [The first two aircraft to fly over İstanbul forty years ago], *Havacılık ve Spor*, December 1949, p. 10. Alus does not specify the newspapers in question. I would like to thank Stuart Kline for bringing this article to my attention.

[18] In mid November, de Caters had been in St. Petersburg where he gave demonstration flights, *Flight*, vol. 1, nr. 48, 27 November, 1909, p. 767.

Velid went on to say that de Caters met Mahmud Shevket Pasha, the Commander of the Hareket Ordusu, while obtaining his permit and the General ordered a commission to study the flights that were to take place in order to determine the usefulness of aeroplanes for military purposes. Meanwhile, bad weather threatened to hamper the Baron's plans. At the same time, he was not completely satisfied with the site he had chosen from which to launch his flights. Long, wide, level, and open spaces were difficult to find around İstanbul.

On 2 December, *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, probably Velid, reported that the previous day had been spring-like and clear with no wind. But by the time the Baron had gotten his machine in order, installed the motor, and attached the propeller, it was sunset. Still, de Caters started the engine and tested the aircraft by "flying" it along the ground several times for about 100 meters. The reporter for the newspaper was greatly impressed with the speed and ease with which this was done, but, like the rest of the spectators, was disappointed that the Baron did not fly. He noted that five or six hundred people had come to watch. *Yeni Gazete*, on the other hand, reported on the same day that thousands of people came to watch de Caters fly. The good weather doubled the crowd. Even the schools were empty. Indeed, the male and female students from most of the schools in Beyoğlu went "in battalions" to the site. Among the crowd were princes Mecid, Necmeddin, Hilmi, and Ziyaeddin. Thanks to the rain that had fallen in previous days, this crowd turned the roads going to Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi to mud[19].

On 3 December, *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* announced that the event that İstanbul had been waiting for had finally occurred. On the previous day, Baron de Caters made the first flight with a flying machine over the city. The early morning had again been calm and clear and a torrent of people had surged toward the site. Among them were Sermet Alus and two friends who paid 50 *kurush* each for the entry fee[20]. There was another school holiday. Among the dignitaries present were again princes Mecid, Necmeddin, Hilmi, and Ziyaeddin as well as Salahaddin (the son of Sultan Murad V who had reigned briefly in 1876), various ambassadors, including the one from

[19] *Yeni Gazete*, nr. 456, 2 December, p. 4; these were all sons of Sultan Mehmed V (1909-18).

[20] "40 Yil Evvel İstanbul'da İlk Uçan İki Uçak," p. 10. On the value of the *kurush*, see below n. 91

Italy, the head physician from the Imperial Palace, Hayri Bey, and the governor of Beyoğlu. Second Lieutenant Cemaleddin was also there, perhaps as a representative of the Army[21]. The box seats and roofed viewing stand that the governor had set up were completely filled. Those with tickets could enter a special area to observe and examine the aircraft in the shed. The princes took a special interest in the aircraft and asked the Baron many questions about it[22]. The Baron's machine was a canary-yellow, "pusher" biplane, which Alus called a "monster."[23] In the center of the two wings was a small "cockpit." The wings were attached to a box kite-like tail by a skeleton frame. The engine had eight cylinders and could produce 70 horsepower. The top speed of the aircraft was 76 kilometers per hour. It carried 80 liters of fuel, which was enough for three hours. Under the direction of the governor, rows of soldiers lined up on each side of the field to keep the spectators away from the runway. And police also patrolled among the rest of the crowd.

Despite the good weather in the morning, the Baron was not able to get his flying machine ready for takeoff as early as planned. Around eight o'clock, a white flag was raised over the shed, which seemed to indicate that he was ready,[24] but the hours dragged on and the crowd became increasingly impatient. Finally around noon, the Baron had his aircraft brought from its shed and had it pointed toward the field that stretched beyond for 200 meters. Wearing a yellow beret and a "jumpsuit" of the same color, he leapt into the machine and started the engine. It made such a loud booming and tapping sound and so shook the ground that it terrified the horses hitched to various conveyances and threatened to cause a stampede. Some people feared that they would be trampled to death. Alus recalled how the horses reared up and spread confusion among the crowd[25]. At the same time, the propellers caused awesome whirlwinds that blew dust and smoke high into the air in all directions.

Meanwhile, strong winds began to blow from the southwest, but the Baron decided to carry on. His machine moved ahead quickly. Its three

[21] On those present, cf. *İkdam*, nr. 5462, 3 December, pp-3-4; *Yeni Gazete*, nr. 457, 3 December, p. 3.

[22] *İkdam*, nr. 5462, 3 December, pp. 3-4.

[23] "40 Yıl Evvel İstanbul'da İlk Uçan İki Uçak," p. 10.

[24] *Tanin*, nr. 450, 3 December, p. 2.

[25] "40 Yıl Evvel İstanbul'da İlk Uçan İki Uçak," p. 10.

wheels remained on the ground for a distance of about 20 meters and then it gently rose into the air. The raging dragon suddenly became silent in the distance as the crowd cheered wildly[26]. Indeed, many people ran in the direction from which the aircraft had left the ground.

The Baron went up to an altitude of about 50 meters, or, according to Alus, the height of a minaret,[27] and headed toward the southeast, the direction of the Bosphorus. The strong southwesterly wind, however, prevented him from making much progress. Buffeted by the winds, the Baron tried to fly southeast toward the Bomonti Brewery[28]. The electric lamps on his wings twinkled, making it easy for the spectators to follow him. But as he approached the Bulgarian Hospital, he suddenly descended sharply and crash landed in a meadow on the uneven slope of a hill near the hospital, only 200 meters from where he had departed[29]. Women screamed and the whole crowd rushed to the spot with great anxiety[30]. The Baron escaped injury, but his aircraft was slightly damaged: mainly the wheels and several cylinders of the motor. One propeller was buried in the ground[31]. The strong winds were probably the cause of the forced landing, although *Yeni Gazete* said that the Baron struck some telegraph wires[32]. De Caters promised that after the necessary repairs were made he would attempt another flight[33].

The Levant Herald barely acknowledged the Baron's flight. The *Moniteur Oriental* completely ignored it. In fact, following this flight, which was clearly not successful with respect to crossing the Bosphorus, at least some elements of the European press in Beyoğlu ridiculed de Caters–for

[26] *İkdam*, nr. 5462, 3 December. *Tanin*, nr. 450, 3 December, says the aircraft traveled 100 meters on the ground before becoming airborne.

[27] "40 Yıl Evvel İstanbul'da İlk Uçan İki Uçak," p. 10; and according to *The Levant Herald*, 300 meters, 3 December, p. 1.

[28] On this facility, see *İA*, s.v. "Bomonti Bira Fabrikası" (Vefa Zat).

[29] *İkdam*, 3 December, and *Tanin*, 3 December, on the direction and distance he went. The latter says that at one point he was ten meters above the spectators. The Bulgarian Hospital is now the Türkiye Gazetesi Hastanesi on Darülaceze Boulevard.

[30] *Yeni Gazete*, nr. 457, 3 December, p. 3. *The Levant Herald* confirms that the courageous aviator frightened the crowd, 3 December, p. 1.

[31] *Tanin*, nr, 450, 3 December, on damage.

[32] 3 December.

[33] The headlines of our four Turkish newspapers the day after the Baron's flight were as follows: *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, "The First Flight with a Flying Machine in Our City"; *İkdam*, "Ascent of the Flying Machine"; *Tanin*, "The Aeroplane Flew"; *Yeni Gazete*, "Baron de Caters Crashes."

Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr went to some length to take this press, especially the French newspaper *La Turquie*, to task for insulting Turkish hospitality. The position of *La Turquie* was, no doubt, related to the Baron's rivalry with Blériot. Yet, there was also some mockery of the Baron in the Turkish press. Alus recollected that he was disappointed that this flight had not lasted longer and that satirical magazines, such as *Kalem*, poked fun at de Caters. This magazine stated, "Some scientists agreed that the place chosen for the flight was a poor one. They said it was not possible to fly at Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi (Hill of Eternal Liberty). They claimed that even rubbish could not be made to fly from the place where liberty will remain firmly established forever. If they (sic) want to be successful in flying, they should fly from Yıldız Tepesi (Star Hill), for there, not light things like the Baron's aircraft, but much heavier things have flown–33 years of the nightmare of national despotism."[34] The reference here, while playing on words, was to the Yıldız Palace, which was built over a period of many years, mainly by Abdülhamid II, a few miles up the European shore of the Bosphorus. The main building, the sultan's residence, was on a hill[35].

On 4 December, *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* announced that de Caters' second attempt at flight on 3 December had to be postponed because he had not been able to repair all of the damage from the previous flight. Several thousand people, who had gone to the site to watch, departed in disappointment. Among them were such notables as Talat Bey, the Minister of the Interior,[36] and Halaciyan Efendi, the Minister of Public Works. On 3 December, *The Levant Herald* again stated that the Baron would probably fly with the journalist Mr. Revelis and also with the Consul of Greece and a French writer named Rene Arcos, but he made each of his flights alone.

Finally, two days later, on Sunday, the Baron was ready for another attempt. The weather was again calm and spring-like. A large number of people began to stream toward Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi. By ten o'clock the streets of Şişli were so crowded that they became impassable for horse carts

[34] "40 Yıl Evvel İstanbul'da İlk Uçan İki Uçak," p. 10. On the satire of aviation by certain Ottoman Turkish gazettes, cf. Palmira Brummett, *Image & Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908-1911* (Albany, New York, 2000), pp. 304-08.

[35] See *İA*, s.v. "Yıldız Sarayı" (Afife Batur).

[36] On Talat Bey (1872-1921), who was a member of the triumvirate that ruled the Ottoman Empire during World War I and who became Grand Vizier in 1917, see *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "ṭalʿat Bey" (Feroz Ahmad).

and automobiles[37]. *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* estimated that 10,000 people were present for the flight. Among them were again the royal princes, Salih Pasha, the Minister of War, and the Iranian ambassador. No doubt the partial success of the Baron's first flight and the press coverage helped to bring out the crowds.

At three o'clock de Caters removed his aircraft from its shed, jumped aboard, and sped down the field. He quickly became airborne and went up to an altitude of fifty meters. He then circled the astonished spectators who applauded and cheered. Near the end of his second circuit,[38] the Baron headed west toward the Kağıthane Valley,[39] whose stream flows south into the Golden Horn. The aircraft slowly descended and then disappeared from sight. At first the spectators thought this was a planned maneuver and waited about half an hour for the Baron to return. When he did not do so, they became alarmed and ran in the direction in which he had disappeared. Reaching a nearby hill, they saw the flying machine on a small plateau above the valley, near the Terkos water depot. Ottoman troops and gendarmes were busy towing it away. The reporter from the *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* raced over to the Baron and asked him what had happened. De Caters stated that his rudder wire had snapped and he could not control the direction of the aircraft, so he slowly descended into the valley. When he reached the ground he collided with a flock of sheep and broke one of his wings. According to *İkdam*, the Baron said, "The aeroplane went down because the steel wires on the edge of the rudder snapped. If this had not happened, I would have gone straight ahead and crossed the Bosphorus."[40] Apparently the Baron meant that he could not turn the aircraft because the Bosphorus is in the opposite direction. When asked if he would make another flight, he said that it would not be possible, for he planed to leave the coming Tuesday. Indeed, de Caters took his aircraft aboard a ship and went to Egypt. On 15 December, he became the first man to fly in that country, making several short trips at Cairo[41].

Baron de Caters' flights over İstanbul, although the first, were obviously not overwhelming successes, lasting altogether only a few minutes. The

[37] *İkdam*, nr, 5465, 6 December, p. 3.
[38] *Ibid.*, says this occurred on the third circuit.
[39] On this area, see *İA*, s.v. "Kağıthane" (editor).
[40] *İkdam*, nr, 5465, 6 December, p. 3.
[41] *Flight*, vol. 1, nr. 52, 25 December, 1909, p. 836

disappointment in not witnessing longer flights, not to mention a crossing of the Bosphorus, is clear from the Turkish press. *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* noted that a month earlier the Baron had made a flight that lasted more than four hours. *The Levant Herald* barely gave de Cater's second flight two sentences, being more concerned with the reception planned for Blériot. The *Moniteur Oriental* was equally disinterested; and on 7 December, the day after mentioning this flight, it published a 36-line poem by someone named Guize that mocked the Baron's flight[42]. On 9 December, a certain A. Paviot wrote an article in the same paper saying the advertisements for the Baron's attempts at flight had been overly sensational, that Constatinopolitans had paid high prices to watch these flight but didn't get much for their money, that they were victims of unscrupulous promoters, and that the Baron was an unskilled practitioner who made the mistake of trying to pass for a master of aviation. His aeroplane was an "*aero panne*" (*panne* = breakdown) and his amateur performances did not merit a demonstration of flight[43]. Even Alus and his friends thought the Baron was an imposter. They wanted to watch the real flyer, Blériot[44]. Nevertheless, many spectators, perhaps most, were impressed with what they saw. (See fig. 3)

Blériot, "Ruler of the Skies"

While Baron de Caters was busy making preparations for his second attempt at flight, advertisements began to appear in the press and elsewhere that the world-famous Louis Blériot, the "Ruler of the Skies," was coming to İstanbul. The ads announced that he would fly from Taksim Parade Ground, which was much closer to the Bosphorus than Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi, on 12 December. Tickets were on sale at all fashionable stores and hotels in Beyoğlu, İstanbul, and Galata[45]. Blériot had actually announced his intention to come to İstanbul somewhat earlier. Nevertheless, his impending arrival in İstanbul electrified the European colony, especially, of course, the French.

In the fall of 1909, Blériot was "on tour" in Europe making various exhibition flights. In September, he was in Brescia in northern Italy. In

[42] On 6 December, p. 1, this newspaper, nr. 5527, reported that the Baron made a "splendid" six-minute flight in which he rose to an altitude of 70 meters, but a propeller mishap forced him to land. The poem "Au Baron" was on the front page for 7 December, nr. 5528.

[43] The *Moniteur Oriental*, nr. 5530, 9 December, p. 1.

[44] "40 Yıl Evvel İstanbulda İlk Uçan İki Uçak," p. 10.

[45] E.g., *Yeni Gazete*, nr. 457, 3 December.

October he was in Budapest, Hungary and Bucharest, Romania and made the first flights ever in those countries. Promoters paid him handsomely[46]. He supposedly received 250,000 francs in Bucharest alone[47]. From Romania he continued to İstanbul where he was promised 50,000 francs for a similar exhibition. His aircraft was shipped in advance of his arrival and was put on exhibit in the Ice Skating Palace on the Grand Rue de Pera, now İstiklal Caddesi, from 8 through 11 December. Tickets for this exhibit were on sale at the site.

On Friday 10 December, Blériot and his wife Alice arrived in İstanbul by a ship of the Romanian Maritime Lines. Members of the French colony, various notables from the city, and representatives of the press greeted them at the landing. From there they continued to the Tokatlian Hotel, also on the Grand Rue de Pera, where they resided during their stay in the city. Blériot spent the next morning and part of the afternoon reconnoitering the field from which he would fly. Then at five o'clock the Blériots went to the great hall of the French Union where a reception with wine was held in their honor. The president of the Union, who had invited all of its members and their families, toasted the great aviator and his wife and wished him further aerial triumphs. Blériot in turn thanked the French Union for their hospitality.

The leading Turkish newspapers ignored virtually all the fanfare surrounding Blériot's appearance in İstanbul, although most acknowledged his arrival. Again *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, among the Turkish papers, devoted the most attention to him. Velid went to the Ice Skating Palace to have a look at his machine and later described it in some detail on 12 December, comparing the sleek design of this monoplane with de Cater's unwieldly biplane. He said it reminded him of a large seagull with out-stretched wings. (See fig. 4) In the front was a place for a man where he could control the machine with a motor. Attached to each side of this place was a large concave plane about three and a half meters long and a meter and a half wide. These planes, which could keep the machine and a man weighing 70 or 80 kilograms aloft for hours, were made from a frame of slender pieces of wood covered with American cloth. Extending from the back of the machine was a tail that was also composed of a frame of slender pieces of wood. This

[46] Brian A. Elliot, *Blériot: Herald of an Age* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2000), p. 165.
[47] The *Moniteur Oriental*, 13 December, p. 1.

frame was also about half covered with cloth starting from the place where the driver sat. At the end of the tail were two small planes that flapped like fans. They were horizontal and were attached to a vertical rudder that, together with the two main planes, allowed the machine to take off, gain altitude, and maintain balance. All of these planes and frames were attached to each other with fine steel wires. In front was a powerful motor that drove a propeller made of mahogany. The propeller had two blades, two and a half meters long and no wider than 30 centimeters. Velid also included in his report a summary of Blériot's lecture at the Ice Skating Palace on the evening of 11 December.

On 11 December the *Moniteur Oriental* described Blériot's aircraft in somewhat different terms. It stated that this machine had the appearance not of a bird but of a gigantic flying fish whose wings extend and bend graciously and whose struts were delicate and of minimum size to reduce weight. The body of the craft consisted of a steel casing in the shape of an elongated, truncated, four-sided pyramid with a lobster tail. The total length was 7 meters and the wing span was 8.4 meters, but the surface area was 14 square meters. The wings were mounted on two lengths of ash laminated with mahogany covered with rubberized fabric. The motor had 25 horsepower, three cylinders, and an automatic carburetor. The propeller placed in the nose of the machine produced a pull of 100 kilograms and 1500 rpms. It measured 2.65 meters in diameter and had two blades. The aircraft weighed 200 kilograms and could reach a speed of 64 kilometers per hour depending on the direction of the wind. The landing gear, mounted on three wheels, could withstand a stress of several hundred kilograms on tires of extra strong rubber[48]. (See fig. 5)

On 12 December, Velid went into further detail on Blériot's lecture. He described Blériot as a bit bashful and hesitant, rather unlike a celebrity or political speaker. Blériot recounted the evolution of flying machines in Europe and his own experiments with flight, abandoning ornithopters and helicopters to settle on aeroplanes. Blériot summarized his successful flights, especially his crossing of the English Channel, which he illustrated with a *cinématograph*. He ended his lecture by giving his impression of air travel and making some remarks on the future of aviation, emphasizing the importance of being able to land on water, predicting higher speeds and

[48] The *Moniteur Oriental*, nr. 5532, 11 December, p. 1.

altitudes and longer duration of aircraft, and pointing out that flying machines would have a great effect on the future of the world. Velid was impressed by his remark that these machines would improve communications, above all where there were no roads, and make possible discoveries of various kinds on poorly known continents. Despite much advertising, few people were present at Blériot's lecture. Velid noted that no one from the sultan's family was in the audience. The only important government official there was the Foreign Minister along with the mayor of Beyoğlu. Indeed, apart from *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, the Turkish press seems to have ignored the exhibition of Blériot's aircraft and his lecture. Even *The Levant Herald* had little to say about the lecture. In fact, it said more about the poor acoustics in the Skating Palace, which made it difficult to hear what Blériot had to say, than about the content of his talk. In contrast to *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, this paper claimed that a large number of people were in attendance.

During the time between Blériot's arrival in İstanbul on Friday 10 December and his announced ascent on Sunday 12 December, advertising for this sensational event reached a fever pitch. All leading newspapers ran ads. Photos of the flyer, with his distinctive thin curling moustache, and his aircraft, sometimes described as a "balloon," appeared in illustrated magazines. Large bills in French and Turkish were posted on walls or placed in the windows of stores and shops[49]. The ultramodern Cinéma Théatre Pathé Frères, which had opened in İstanbul on 30 January 1908, announced a special showing, for three days only, of their film of Blériot crossing the English Channel[50]. And, of course, souvenirs were available. The fashionable Heyden's on the Grand Rue de Pera offered, as part of its Christmas show, toy models of Blériot's aircraft[51]. Tickets were on sale at all leading stores and hotels as well as at the Taksim Parade Ground. The prices were steep. Box seats went for five gold liras, bleachers for one lira[52]. Meanwhile, the preparations at the site included the construction of a special viewing stand for His Majesty the Sultan, who had expressed a desire to attend Blériot's

[49] Alus, "40 Yıl Evvel İstanbul'da İlk Uçan İki Uçak," p. 10. For a photo of Blériot with his "balloon," see *Servet-i Fünûn*, 2 Dhū al-Ḥijja, 1327, nr. 967, p. 79.

[50] *The Levant Herald*, 11 December, p. 3. On this theater see *İA*, s.v. "Pathe Sineması" (Burçak Evren).

[51] *The Levant Herald*, 11 December, p. 2.

[52] Alus, "40 Yıl Evvel İstanbulda İlk Uçan İki Uçak," p. 10. See also below n. 91.

flight. It is worthy of note that the promoters who had organized Blériot's demonstration in İstanbul also built a special gallery reserved for Turkish ladies, which was described by *The Levant Herald* as "a wonderful gesture for the feminine element of the country."

The Great Day!

At last the great day arrived. "All our hopes," said Velid, "rested on Blériot's single-winged aeroplane." Virtually the entire city had been waiting impatiently for Sunday to watch this French devotee of technology. His visit had been announced for days in the newspapers, in the shining windows of the large stores, and on the street corners; and he had generally been described boastfully as the "Ruler of the Skies" because he had crossed the English Channel like a seagull.

From early Sunday morning in Beyoğlu the excitement was extraordinary. Although two o'clock had been announced as the time for the takeoff, people began arriving at Taksim Parade Ground at six o'clock, and by nine o'clock the streets were teeming with people streaming toward that site. Trams going in that direction overflowed with people. As one approached the Parade Ground, the streets became impassible for trams or horse carts. Indeed, people could not walk shoulder to shoulder. Among them, as with de Cater's demonstration, were a great many school children[53]. Fearing losing a seat or missing part of the show, many people had foregone breakfast. This resulted in a "gold mine" for street vendors who further contributed to the congestion. As people poured into Taksim Parade Ground, they smothered the field and choked all four entrances. They quickly filled the viewing stands and invaded the grassy areas. Latecomers could not reach the ticket booths, much less buy a ticket. Some tried to storm the grounds. Within the grounds, military officers sat precipitously on the roofs of the Taksim Barracks in an attempt to get a grand view of the field. Indeed, even the upper windows, balconies, terraces, and roofs of houses adjoining the Parade Ground and those of houses across the way to the north on the heights of the suburb of Tatavla, now called Kurtuluş, were black with spectators[54]. In the stands were people of every class and kind. Most leading newspapers reported in particular that the upper crust of the capital was fully represented by the royal family, heads of other distinguished

[53] *Tanin*, nr. 460, 13 December, p. 3.
[54] *Ibid.*, and the *Moniteur Oriental*, 13 December, p. 1.

families, leading state officials, the officer corps, and the diplomatic corps. The French Ambassador Mr. Bompard, although he was ill, and his wife made a point, of course, in coming. It was estimated that 10,000 people were in the Parade Ground. Another 10,000 were on balconies, terraces, and roofs and yet another 10,000 were in the streets. If every spectator had paid a fee, Blériot's flight would have been profitable indeed!

It was chilly that Sunday with gusty winds. Many people, faces purple from the cold, paced back and forth, if they could move at all, in an attempt to keep warm. As the hours slowly ticked by, the low temperature and wind contributed to the restiveness of the crowd. Many spectators speculated about the likelihood of actually seeing a flight, or joked among themselves saying, "De Caters crashed into a flock of sheep. God grant that this fellow does not crash on our heads." Some people released balloons to break the tedium. Several inventive people attached a paper figure of Karagöz, the main figure in Turkish shadow puppet shows, to balloons and made him dance with wings that would not allow him to fly. From time to time the cries of hawkers selling postcards and other souvenirs could be heard. The police tried to ensure order and keep the crowd calm. A military band provided entertainment[55]. Gendarmes also patrolled the area while Army troops, joined hand to hand and standing in rows, formed a solid wall around the place of ascent.

As two o'clock approached, Blériot and his wife arrived in a car decked in the French colors[56]. He greeted the French Ambassador and his wife in their lodge and took them over to his machine and explained it to them. Shortly thereafter, Blériot changed into his "balloonist" uniform, as described in the Turkish press, had his aircraft brought out of the hangar, and got in the cockpit. His crew gave the propeller a few turns and the engine started. Moments later, however, Blériot turned off the engine and descended to the ground. The crowd followed all of these actions with great interest and their emotions ran high. They thought a mechanical problem was delaying the flight and grew increasingly impatient.

What they did not know was that the famed French pilot was anxious about the weather, not his machine. According to Velid, who went to see him, he had a worried look on his face and spoke diplomatically with a

[55] *Tanin*, nr. 460, 13 December, p. 3.
[56] The *Moniteur Oriental*, 13 December, p. 1.

forced smile. Velid realized that the wind conditions had given him a bad feeling about attempting a flight. Indeed, the *Moniteur Oriental* reported that Mrs. Blériot begged her husband not to fly, believing it to be an act of folly. He agreed to a brief delay. But pressure mounted on the pilot, both from the crowd and from his promoters. The latter questioned him aggressively, making comparisons and asking if other fliers had not flown in stronger winds. And they pointed out that, if he did not fly, all of the receipts would have to be refunded; and they touched on the issue of compensation. Blériot appears to have become a bit unnerved.

Finally at 3:45 he shouted, "Clear off the field! There will be an accident."

"No, there won't be an accident, you can take off," retorted one of the organizers.

"OK, then. It will be your responsibility," replied the flier[57].

Blériot calmly placed himself in the seat of his machine and put on his cap and goggles. His crew turned the propeller and the motor started. The plane shook and rolled on its wheels for a dozen meters. Then its tail section sprang from the ground. (See fig. 6) The machine raced across the field for another 30 meters on two wheels and then, reaching its top speed, gracefully rose into the sky as the last rays of the setting sun reflected on the surrounding hills. All eyes were on Blériot. The crowd was momentarily breathless and then became ecstatic. Everyone clapped, cheered, and shouted, "Bravo Blériot! Bravo!"[58] Ascending several hundred meters and passing over the crowded roofs of Tatavla to the north, his craft became increasing difficult to follow as it sped into the distance. By the time it was over Tatavla, it seemed to take on the appearance of a bird. Blériot maintained perfect balance. He banked to the left at the corner of the hill at the northern end of the Parade Ground, and then suddenly disappeared. (See fig. 7)

Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed, but there was no sign of the intrepid flyer. Some spectators began to murmur, "He has fallen from the sky." Others claimed, "He is making a good maneuver," or "He will come back

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] *Tanin*, nr. 460, 13 December, p. 3; and *Yeni Gazete*, nr. 467, 13 December, p. 2. *İkdam* barely mentions this flight.

this way." As the time passed, and Blériot did not reappear, the crowd became increasingly agitated. Some people started to head in the direction of Blériot's flight. The police tried to prevent this and shouted, "Don't leave the field! He will come back here."[59] Mrs. Blériot, who had had a premonition of disaster, anxiously scanned the horizon. Then she herself started running in the direction of her husband[60]. Suddenly there was an uproar from the top of a hill at the northern end of the Parade Ground. Word spread that Blériot had crashed. The crowd then stormed the police barrier and began running toward that hill. Velid went with them. Meanwhile, a horseman arrived to inform Mrs. Blériot that there had been an accident.

Following the crowd for several kilometers, Velid eventually came to a house on Sandalcı street in Tatavla. In its garden he found Blériot's aircraft smashed to pieces. It had come to rest there after tearing through the roof of the house and shattering many windows. It also slightly damaged a neighboring house. By the time Velid arrived, Blériot was nowhere to be found. Miraculously, he had managed to survive the crash. Reportedly, he got up shaken, but smiling, from his demolished aircraft. The lady of the almost equally demolished house, who was no doubt equally shaken, tried to help him. Blériot got to his feet and asked directions to the nearest pharmacy[61]. Several young men from the neighborhood quickly came on the scene and directed the aviator to the nearby Hercules Gymnastic Club,[62] which he was able to reach on his own power. There he lay down and waited for doctors, who were immediately summoned. Soon a German and four Greek physicians were attending him. They determined that he had a contusion of the kidneys and another of the hand.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Blériot had jumped in a car with a marine from the French Embassy and drove with great speed toward Tatavla. When she reached the site of the crash and saw the utterly destroyed aircraft, she feared the worst and was overcome with grief. Those at the scene tried to console her and assured her that no harm had come to her husband. She then raced to the Hercules Club where she found her husband and

[59] *Tanin*, nr. 460, 13 December, p. 3.
[60] The *Moniteur Oriental*, 13 December, p. 1
[61] *Ibid.* and *Tanin*, nr. 460, 13 December, p. 3.
[62] This Greek club, founded in 1896, was fairly well known, see *İA*, s.v. "Kurtuluş Gençlik Kulübü" (Cem Atabeyoğlu).

embraced him with great emotion. The doctors reassured her about his injuries but advised that he neither walk nor be moved by car because his injuries might be exacerbated by excessive jolting. Consequently, Blériot was provided with a sedan chair and porters who carried him to the French Hospital near the southern edge of Taksim Parade Ground. As he passed through the streets of Tatavla, the populace shouted "Vive Blériot! Vive Madame Blériot! Vive la France!"

Mrs. Blériot left her husband at the hospital and returned to the Tokatlian Hotel where they had been staying. The French Ambassador Mr. Bompard was there and introduced her to a doctor who offered his services. "They should not have allowed him to fly," she said. "They should have clung to his machine, broken it, but not let the man go to certain death. It's an act of folly that he has just committed. He knew that I would not have let him take off. You see, that's why they tried to keep me at a distance and I was far from the airplane when I heard the noise of the motor and, turning around, I saw my husband take off. Too late, alas, to stop him."[63]

Back at the crash site, Velid found only the remains of the unlucky aircraft. Gendarmes were busy dispersing the people who had rushed to the scene. A number of French soldiers arrived and wanted to remove the demolished machine. By then the lady of the house had overcome the initial shock of the crash and had begun to come to her senses. "What are you doing?" she shouted. "You have destroyed my house! You must pay for it! Then take your balloon!" Although she may not yet have realized what had smashed into her house from out of nowhere, she certainly knew she was owed damages. It probably never dawned on her, or anyone else, that her house had the dubious distinction of being the first to be destroyed by a falling aircraft. (See fig. 8)

What had caused the crash? Almost all the newspapers that mentioned the crash agreed with Mrs. Blériot and attributed it to bad weather, that is, strong winds. It was almost impossible for the spectators to determine what had happened. Velid simply said Blériot rose to about forty meters, passed over the Parade Ground, turned toward Tatavla, and passed out of sight. According to *Tanin*, he started to zigzag after takeoff, went up to about ten meters, passed over the depression at the end of the Parade Ground, began

[63] The *Moniteur Oriental*, 13 December, p. 1.

to descend, and then went up and down again. Unable to control the rudder, he headed somewhat toward the left and then disappeared[64]. *Yeni Gazete* reported that once Blériot was airborne he approached the ground once or twice but then went up in the air again each time. When he left the circuit of the Parade Ground, he headed toward Tatavla, passed over the Church of Aya Constantine and almost struck a building in that area. Then, on the upper side of Çeşme (Fountain) Square in Tatavla he crashed[65]. The *Moniteur Oriental* stated that Blériot's takeoff was normal, but there was a strong westerly wind. A gust struck him broadside. He struggled to keep his heading and managed to climb. But the winds became stronger and Blériot began to falter. Suddenly he plunged, veering toward the Valley of Papaz Köprüsü (Priest's Bridge). He managed to come back up and slowly passed over the houses of Tatavla. Then "the great white bird gave up in mid flight." In short, it appears that he stalled[66]. *The Levant Herald* simply said that Blériot never gained sufficient altitude to get above the hills crowned with houses in Tatavla. Moreover, it attributed at least part of the cause of the crash to Blériot's poor knowledge of the terrain, pointing out that he had but glanced twice at the part of town over which he planned to fly[67]. Indeed, if Blériot had planned to cross the Bosphorus on this flight, one would have expected him to carry out a far more thorough reconnaissance of the route and, if he had intended to touch down in Asia, potential landing grounds. Curiously, none of our press accounts of this flight specifically mention the Bosphorus in any fashion, although *Tanın* noted that Blériot had a much better aircraft than de Caters and said, somewhat sarcastically, that this great flyer, who crossed the English Channel, couldn't fly from Taksim to Kasim Pasha Deresi, which was about a kilometer to the west and would require crossing one or two narrow streams[68].

[64] *Tanin*, nr. 460, 13 December, p. 3.

[65] *Yeni Gazete*, nr. 467, 13 December, p. 2.

[66] The *Moniteur Oriental*, 13 December, p. 1.

[67] *L'Aérophile*, December 1909, p. 557, echoed this. It also said he tried to turn right, toward the Bosphorus, but the wind was too strong.

[68] The headlines were as follows: *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* "Blériot's Aeroplane and His Flight Yesterday"; *İkdam*, which gave only a few lines to this event, "The Crash of Bleriot"; *Tanin*, "Blériot Too . . ."; *Yeni Gazete*, "Blériot's Aeroplane," with the subheadings "At Taksim Square–Spectacle of the Aviation Hero–Thousands of People–Can't Blériot, Who Flew Over the English Channel, Who Crossed from France to England by Air, Fly?–He Flew–Alas! He Crashed–İstanbul's Weather Does Not Allow People to Fly." In *The Levant Herald*, we simply have "The Sunday Flight," then the subtitles "The Accident" and "Madame Blériot." As for the *Moniteur*

There was in fact some other criticism of Blériot's exhibition in the press. *Yeni Gazete* wondered why Blériot had failed and asked, mockingly, if the beauties of Tatavla had simply drawn him like a magnet[69]. The *Moniteur Oriental* was mainly critical of the organizers of his exhibition, saying, for example, that the charges for admission were too high and that the grandstands were set up as for an agricultural exhibit. One saw nothing from there but rows of other spectators on the grass[70]. Local comedians found the crash to be good material for their routines. Alus mentions that Henri Yan, who had opened a cabaret like those in Montmartre in Paris, wrote an article in the satirical magazine *Kalem* in which he wittily remarked how the French verb *voler*, "to fly," had come to mean "to strike the ground." Yan also compared Blériot, the "King of the Skies," with Çakırcalı, the "King of the Mountains." The latter was a contemporary "bandit" who lived in the mountains around Izmir. According to Alus, readers roared with laughter at Yan's article[71].

Nevertheless, virtually all newspapers expressed their concern about Blériot's health, and most published the bulletins describing his condition issued by the French Hospital. On 14 December, Blériot's doctors reported that all danger of complications and internal injuries had passed. Still, the patient had to remain immobile and could not receive visitors. The next day *The Levant Herald* reported that Mrs. Blériot graciously received all those who inquired after her husband and that among them was Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, the Grand Vizier. On 16 December *Yeni Tesvîr-i Efkâr* said the Sultan himself had extended his sympathies to Mr. Blériot as had Mahmud Shevket Pasha. *İkdam* noted that the French Ambassador went to the hospital and that Talat Bey, the Minister of the Interior, and Halaciyan Efendi, the Minister of Public Works, had inquired after the flyer[72].

While Blériot recuperated in the hospital, his mechanic went to Tatavla to retrieve what remained of his flying machine. On behalf of Blériot, the mechanic thanked the residents of Tatavla for their assistance. Mr. Caroizieris of the Hercules Gymnastic Club requested a photograph of the

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Oriental, its headline was "Attempt at Flight," with the subheading "Exciting Flight– The Crash– Blériot Injured–What Madame Blériot Had to Say."

[69] *Yeni Gazete*, nr. 467, 13 December, p. 2.

[70] The *Moniteur Oriental*, 13 December, p. 1.

[71] "40 Yıl Evvel İstanbul'da İlk Uçan İki Uçak," p. 10.

[72] *İkdam*, 13 December, p. 2.

flyer that could be placed in the main hall of the club. Subsequently, the club held a special meeting and decided to admit Mr. Blériot as an honorary member.

Finally, by 17 December Blériot had seemingly regained his health completely. And that afternoon he and his wife returned to Paris on the Orient Express. En route he suffered a relapse and, upon arriving in Vienna, was rushed to a hospital. His condition was soon announced to be good, however, and he and his wife continued to France. Blériot may have suffered from the consequences of his crash for the rest of his life. Thereafter, he rarely made flights in public and never made another major exhibition[73].

Epilogue

As mentioned above, high-ranking officers in the Ottoman Army, not to mention the troops on duty at Taksim Parade Ground, witnessed Blériot's exhibition of flight. Many officers certainly took a close look at his flying machine before it took to the air and others may have examined it when it was on display at the Ice Skating Palace. It is unclear, however, if a commission was formed to investigate its potential military use, as was the case with de Caters' aircraft. In the event, little more than a year later, in 1911, at the direction of Mahmud Shevket Pasha, the Ottoman General Staff sent a circular to the Army, stating that two officers would be sent to Europe to learn to fly. They were also to make a study of the profession of aviation and, upon their return, lay the basis for it in the Ottoman Army. Officers who wished to learn to fly, who had nerves of steel, who were familiar with motors, and who knew French were requested to apply.

In May, Captain Fesa, a cavalry officer, and Lieutenant Kenan, a fortification engineer, were selected. In July, they were sent to the Blériot Aviation School at Etampes near Paris. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Colonel Süreyya, who was in the second echelon of the General Staff, was given the task of working out aviation matters in the Army. Knowing little about the subject, he requested the Ottoman military attachés in Paris, Berlin, and Vienna to collect books and articles on this subject and send them to him. As these materials arrived and were analyzed, he soon realized that establishing

[73] Elliott, *Blériot*, p. 166.

an air arm would be a major task, requiring a fundamental change in military organization and considerable funding. Süreyya recommended that a flying school and flying center be set up as soon as possible. He also recommended that a commission be created to deal with matters of training pilots, purchasing aircraft and balloons, and building aviation facilities. In fact, he was eventually named to head this commission. Thus began the Ottoman Air Force.

The modern Turkish Air Force, the successor of the Ottoman Air Force, traces its origin to these events of 1911. The Ottoman military did not take flight, however, until 1912, after Fesa and Kenan returned with the *brevet* of the Aéro Club de France. In January of that year the first airfield was established near Yeşilköy southwest of İstanbul, now the site of Atatürk International Airport, and in March the first aircraft, two Deperdussins, arrived from France. Fesa and Kenan had planned to fly them in the coronation ceremony of Sultan Mehmet V, but they were severely damaged in a storm. Afterwards another aircraft, a red R.E.P. (the initials of the manufacturer, Robert Esnault-Pelterie), was purchased from France. On 20 April, Gordon Bell, an English test pilot, brought it to Yeşilköy[74]. A few days late, on his second flight from there, he flew across the Bosphorus.(See fig. 9)

Appendix
Yeni Tesvîr-i Efkâr
The Subject of Flying Machines
Nr. 126, 4 October, 1909, p. 8

The subject of flying machines is an important issue that today, in the Western world, is especially preoccupying public opinion, publications, every branch of knowledge, science, and technology {*fenn*}, and even government and political circles. It may be the most important issue, but for some reason this subject has not received the attention of our local newspapers, which are more than preoccupied with coverage of the usual concerns of our domestic

[74] Mazlum Keyusk and Sıtkı Tanman, *Türk Havacılık Tarihi*, 1912-1923 [The history of Turkish aviation, 1912-1923] (Eskişehir, Turkey, 1950-53), vol. 1, pp. 14-30; Kansu et al., *Havacılık Tarihinde Türkler*, pp. 117, 124-27; Pierre Oberling, "The State as Promoter of Technology Transfer: The Early Years of Ottoman Aviation," *Journal of Turkish Studies*, 8 (1984), p. 211; Elliot, *Blériot*, p. 173. See also Stuart Kline's exhaustive chronology of Turkish aviation, *Türk Havacılık Kronolojisi/ A Chronicle of Turkish Aviation* (İstanbul, 2002), pp. 58-65.

and political affairs. The importance of this subject for the future of the world has neither been described nor explained in the extraordinary manner that it deserves. Nor have the stages of progress and development through which {this innovation} has passed been described and explained technologically. Indeed, if one were to look at any daily newspaper in French, English, or German, he would find that the front page was full of long lead articles on this subject and that they presented the views and analyses of learned men {lit. men of the pen} and specialists of all kinds. If one were to look at any weekly periodical, he would see that most of its contents and illustrations were devoted to air travel and airships.

The subject of air travel, with regard to the direction that it is currently taking in the world of science and technology, is quite wonderful and has important implications. It was only ten years ago that regular, controlled, balloon flight began. Yet, this subject {of human flight} is in fact very old, as old as the creation of man. It {the desire to fly} fostered mankind's first endeavors in the name of science and technology.

If one were to study the history of civilization, he would find that in ancient times our forefathers were far from imagining the invention of the railroad, telephone, telegraph, and automobile, but the wish and strong desire to fly in the air like birds always filled their thoughts.

Historical tales, such as Icarus' attempt at flight, which is described in the myths of ancient Greece, stories about the ascent and flight of Hanuman {the deified chief of monkeys in Hindu mythology} in ancient India, and the tale of the famous blacksmith Wayland in Iceland {i.e., in early Icelandic literature}, who escaped from confinement with a flying machine that he invented, are all evidence confirming that mankind has been concerned with solving the problem of flying through the air since very early times. Since then, there has been virtually no period in which inventors have not attempted to create flying machines. Nevertheless, despite all the effort that has been devoted up to now to this problem, constituting mankind's first undertaking in the field of science and civilization, and despite all the attempts at flight that have been made and all the means that have been used for this purpose, progress on solving this problem began only at the beginning of this century because of the erroneousness of the method that had been adopted as the basis of experiments. In addition, the time was not

yet conducive to this progress with respect to the enormous changes that have taken place over the face of the earth.

Three or four years earlier, when it was still impossible to fly with heavier-than-air craft, the late, well-known, French scientist Marcelin Berthelot (1827-1907) described in an article the influence on mankind of the discoveries and inventions that would result from scientific development. As he stated, "Tomorrow or the next day, thanks to mechanical, chemical, and rational progress, engineers will undoubtedly find a way to operate flying machines throughout the sky as they wish. When the subject of such aerial navigation leaves the realm of conjecture and imagination and enters the realm of possibility, I wonder what immense, fundamental changes will confront us with respect to world trade, tariffs, international relations, and civil and military affairs?" He showed in this multifaceted question how important and necessary it is to address this subject. Indeed, by being able to control the skies, that is, by subjecting to our command powerful flying machines that will bring about control of the air with the same ease with which we have taken control of the surface of the earth with railroads, automobiles, boats, steam ships, and *kanu* (*qānū?*) automobiles, the way will undoubtedly be open to a number of instant, radical changes in the world that are in fact so great and far reaching that their extent cannot now be imagined or determined. Indeed, it is very likely that these revolutions will be so fundamental that the important issue of "world peace and reconciliation," which some are attempting to achieve by such things as recommending disarmament, holding peace conferences, and creating peace courts, will solve itself; that personal and national enmity and contention, which are mankind's greatest causes of disaster and ruin, will perhaps be transformed into universal brotherhood and love; and that the well-known, hoped-for principle of people regarding each other as members of the human race will finally be established among nations and individuals.

It is well known that ever since the creation of man and the formation of peoples, humans have traced many imaginary lines called borders across the face of the earth, sometimes for racial or national reasons and sometimes as the result of the tyrannical rule of a victorious people. They have divided up the world with these borders. Indeed, these imaginary lines have been the sole reason for the continuous conflicts and strife that have, above all, caused the peoples on one side to become the inveterate antagonists and

deadly enemies of those on the other. And because one could not cross from one side to the other, this sometimes became the pretext for numerous great wars that have led to the death of countless thousands of people, the destruction of countless homes, that have left countless mothers and fathers in mourning and misery for the rest of their lives, have left countless young women helpless and unprotected, and have left countless poor little children friendless and orphaned. And to the everlasting disgrace of human dignity, these imaginary lines have caused countless conflicts and incidents of bloody slaughter, have transformed countless cities into ruins, and have wreaked destruction on countless countries. Yet, despite so much turmoil and jealousy, these lines are still theoretical and therefore could be changed at any time. As for recent centuries, the significance of borders has increased dramatically. We have reached the point at which they can in fact be considered the lifelines of every country. One day the livelihood of all peoples will depend on trade. Consequently, the primary objective of all governments will be devoted to ensuring the increase and promotion of national trade. In order to obtain sources of trade, civilized peoples today give the highest possible priority to protecting their borders and to controlling and strengthening them. Landlocked governments create strong barriers and steel fortresses on their borders to separate their lands from those of neighboring countries. Governments with access to the sea build mobile fortresses (i.e., warships) to protect their coasts. Borders, which supposedly are made impassable by such extraordinary measures, become irrelevant the moment that travel through the air with flying machines is assured. These machines are currently being rapidly perfected. Within three to five years, they will be able to operate anywhere at any altitude day or night. Consequently, the effective protection of borders will be absolutely impossible. It will not be possible to prevent either smuggling or espionage. It is highly likely, therefore, that this will result in the removal of borders, the universal spread of the ideas of "world peace and reconciliation," and eventually the transformation of these ideas from theory to reality. Thus, after all peoples have abandoned enmity and envy, they will live a life of equal and mutual friendship and brotherhood.

These then are the consequences to which Marcelin Berthelot alludes in the question that I cited above. No more than two or three months had passed after he wrote these words when on 13 November (sic, 12 November) 1906, (Alberto) Santos-Dumont, who was famous for his successes in

ballooning, made the first flight in Europe with a heavier-than-air machine. In his first attempt, he traveled a distance of two hundred meters[75]. Because this was such a short distance, there were some who objected to calling this a flight and asserted instead that, at the most, Santos-Dumont's effort should be

The machine that Santos-Dumont used to make the first flight in Europe (See fig. 10)

Santos-Dumont considered a hop. Nevertheless, leading research scholars and scientists did not hesitate to claim that this success opened a new era, an important period, of air travel in the world and that such events even opened a new chapter in world history. The numerous and successful attempts at flight that were carried out continuously, within a short time afterwards, confirmed their bold judgement.

It is well known that some time before Santos-Dumont's flight, the American Wright brothers solved the problem of aerial travel with heavier-than-air machines and that these brothers, with a machine that they had invented, remained aloft for one or two hours and traveled distances of many kilometers. Because the Wright brothers did not give much scope to public access, by carrying out their attempts at flight while virtually alone in a fairly deserted place, and refrained from publicly announcing their attempts at flight, their accounts of their successes were not widely believed and their claims were considered to be "fabrications" peculiar to Americans[76]. In any case, shortly after Santos-Dumont's first flight, Wilbur, the older of the Wright brothers, went to France and began to carry out attempts at flight, again with a machine that they had constructed, and within a short time his extraordinary successes astounded the whole world.

Before describing Santos-Dumont's flight, the continuous successes of the Wright brothers and the numerous attempts of others who imitated them, it would not be out of place here to provide some information on

[75] Santos-Dumont made his first "hop" on 23 October, covering a distance of about 50 meters. On 12 November, he made several "flights," the last of which covered 220 meters. See Stéphane Nicolaou, *Santos-Dumont, Dandy et Génie de l'Aéronautique* (Le Bourget: Musée del'Air et de l'Espace, 1997), p. 71, with excellent photographs, and Paul Hoffman, *Wings of Madness: Alberto Santos-Dumont and the Invention of Flight* (New York, 2003), chap. 13.

[76] See Fred Howard, *Wilbur and Orville: A Biography of the Wright Brothers* (New York, 1987), chap. 17, "Fact and Fiction," pp. 141-47, and p. 258

heavier-than-air flying machines, which are divided into many types and classes.

There are basically three types of the new airships that the French call "aeroplanes." The first is called the "ornithopter." It ascends by means of moving wings, like a bird. In other words, these machines imitate birds in their manner of flight.

The second type is called the "helicopter." Its means of ascent and flight are by one or more propellers. As for the third, it is called an "aeroplane." This machine is composed of flat or semi-concave planes (*satıh*). Usually driven by propellers on the front or back (of the planes), it moves through the air by soaring rather than flapping its wings like a bird.

Each type has its proponents and each has its problems. The ornithopter is the oldest. From ancient times to the first half of the last century, men have tried to fly exclusively with this kind of machine. All the effort and experimentation to fly with such machines has been fruitless, so there is no longer insistence on using only this method. The most difficult problems of this method have been to fabricate for ease of use and reliability the moveable places, that is, the joints, of the wings that will move up and down and to find motors that are powerful enough to make them operate. Consequently, because of the inability to overcome these problems, it has been extremely difficult to build an ornithopter. The weight of such machines that have been built to date has always been excessive and their lift (*mukavemet*, endurance, resistance) has been insufficient.

As for helicopters, they also have their problems. In addition to vertical propellers that they use to rise into the air, they also need horizontal propellers in order to go forward. The need for these two kinds of propellers has made such machines heavy and complicated. Attempts to lessen the weight have resulted in the loss of power (because powerful engines are heavy). Furthermore, it is very difficult to ensure balance with these machines. In any case, having no concern for wind, because they have no high overhanging structures like parallel or single wings or planes, these are unique machines. If a means could be found to simplify them, then in the future these machines will really control the skies.

With regard to aeroplanes, they are currently the most successful (flying machines). Indeed, with these machines, men first rose into the sky as they

wished and succeeded in circling about and operating, landing, and taking off.

Most aeroplanes have two large parallel planes. These planes are made by covering a strong frame (*çerçev*) with cloth (*bez*, linen or cotton), or they are constructed from other light materials.

Aeroplanes are also divided into two types. The first are biplaned, that is, they have two, or even more, planes. In French they are called *biplanes* (*sathataynli*) and *multiplanes* (*sutûh kesîreli*). As for the second, they have one plane, which is called (in French) *monoplane*, and which we would call *vahîdü'l-satıh* (single-planed). They are the simplest type. (Louis) Blériot used such a machine in his recent crossing of the English Channel, going from France to England. In fact, from the start, that is, since Santos-Dumont's first ascent, he has relied on a single-planed machine for all of his attempts at flight. At that time, it was considered difficult, if not impossible, for even dual-winged machines to take to the air. Thus, there were those who thought Blériot's attempts at flight, and the system on which he relied, to be completely useless. Nevertheless, despite the lack of success of his initial attempts and the general criticism from the balloonists, Blériot did not despair or become dispirited, but continued his experiments with perseverance and zeal and ultimately achieved brilliant triumphs.

The bases of the successes that have been achieved today with various heavier-than-air machines, with regard to flying and circling about the endless skies at will, must be sought in the development of the automobile. It is well known that just twenty years ago the automobile was in a rudimentary stage of development. Indeed, in 1893 or 1894, it never occurred to anyone that the automobile would reach its current stage of development and become one of the most important means of transportation in the civilized world. However, as soon as the principles of the current motors were discovered, automobiles began to develop with lightening speed. As automobiles developed, their motors naturally improved and thus both automobile and motor improved daily. Eventually motors were built that were very small yet very powerful. It was at that moment that the problem of controlling the direction (i.e., driving) of lighter-than-air balloons was solved, for up to that time this could not be done with any assurance. Santos-Dumont had the first success in this regard with his experiments ten or twelve years ago.

Thanks to motors, balloons, which could not resist the slightest wind because of their extremely large size and bulkiness, could be driven with ease. Indeed, when it was seen that (balloons with such motors) could even stand up against fairly strong winds, it seemed that these motors could make heavier-than-air machines fly. This then greatly stimulated engineers to make such experiments with them. These motors did not, however, have enough power to lift heavier-than-air machines.

The Flying Machine of the American Wright Brothers (See fig. 11)

Wilbur Wright

Anticipating a number of breakthroughs because of the development of balloons and automobiles, Colonel Runar (apparently Charles Renard, 1847-1905), who had acquired some fame in this respect and who was the inventor of a series of automobiles named after him (*Runartreni*?), stated the following in 1903: "As soon as light motors are built that can produce one horsepower for every three kilograms of weight, people will be able to circle about the sky by means other than balloons." Colonel Runar succeeded in fulfilling this hope and prediction (with respect to motors) within three or four years. Indeed, motors developed at an even faster rate. The motors used in aeroplanes today generate one horsepower for every kilogram of weight and sometimes even more. The present stage of development of motors is the greatest accomplishment and evidence of the extraordinary inventiveness and creativity of highly skilled and intelligent people. In order to show the amount of power of these small propulsion motors, whose level of power is extraordinary given their shape and size, let me make the following comparison: As is known, the average person weighs 60-65 kilograms. A 60-kilogram motor made of iron is not much larger than its gas tank. Moreover, such a small machine the size of its gas tank can produce 60 horsepower. One horsepower is considered to be the power of four men. Thus, a small machine having the weight of a man, but being one-fourth his size, has exactly the power of 240 men.

Consequently, as soon as it was possible to build such extremely powerful motors, it became feasible to fly with heavier-than-air machines. The level of development that such machines (i.e., flying machines) will

reach will no doubt depend, as was the case with the automobile, on the advances and changes in the production of motors.

To be continued. *waw. alif.*

The Subject of Flying Machines
(continued from yesterday's issue)
Nr. 127, 5 October, 1909, pp. 3-4

The time between the first successful ascent in Europe with flying machines and the recent first place award to (Henri) Farman at the Reims air races (22-29 August, 1909) can be divided into four periods with respect to the development of the aforesaid machines.

The first period began in November 1906, when Santos-Dumont, as I mentioned briefly above, made the first successful ascent and flight in Europe.

Santos-Dumont, who was of Brazilian origin, was born in 1873. He went to France at a young age to study for a month and then settled there. Thus today he is considered a Frenchman, or, more precisely, a Parisian. During his schooling, he became especially interested in air travel. Thus, with great perseverance, he devoted great effort to this and carried out many experiments. Consequently, thanks to the developments in motors, as I mentioned above, he found the solution to the long-desired goal of driving and controlling balloons. Indeed, in 1901, with one of the balloons that he had made, he succeeded in taking off from a place that was some distance from Paris, flying around the Eiffel Tower, and returning to his starting point all within a certain time. As a result, he won a prize of 100,000 francs that someone named "Devij" (Henri Deutsch de la Meurthe) had established. After this success in ballooning, Santos-Dumont began to experiment with aeroplanes. And as I stated above, he achieved his first success in 1906.

I shall quote verbatim the information about, and description of, Santos-Dumont's flying machine and his ascent from an illustrated periodical that was published at that time:

"Santos-Dumont's flying machine is composed of three different sections. First, there is the long part that protrudes at the front. This could

be compared to the neck of a bird. There is a wing attached to each side of this part. These wings are what cause flight in the Hargrave system. Each one (i.e., wing) is composed of three cells (like box kites). In front of this section, a separate square-shaped box is inserted. This fulfills the function of the rudder (and elevator). This would correspond to the head of a bird. Between the two wings is a special basket for the motor and the machine operator. Behind the basket is the place for the propeller that drives the machine. The bottom of the machine resembles a rectangular cart. Three wheels are attached to the bottom of this cart. The aeroplane first travels on the ground for a while on these wheels. Then, as it picks up speed, it slowly rises into the air and begins to fly.

"In the event, this flying machine was ready and waiting for flight on 13 November (sic, 12 November), 1906 at Bagatelle in the Bois de Boulogne at Loncasan field (?). As soon as the propeller began to turn, the machine rose about 40 centimeters, traveled a distance of 50 meters, and then landed.

"Half an hour later, it took off again, making two more flights, one after the other, of 40 and 60 meters.

"At 4:00, a third attempt was made. The aeroplane flew 50 meters and then 82 meters. These 82 meters were flown in 7 seconds, which meant that it had an average speed of 42 kilometers per hour.

"At 4:45, Santos-Dumont went aboard his flying machine again and took off once more. The machine first traveled a distance of about 40 meters on the ground and then, with a movement, back and forth, of the rudder on the front, it began to rise into the air. This time he was not so low and went as high as skylarks (*tarla kuşu*) that fly just before daybreak and with the first hours of the sun. After ascending to six meters, he passed over the heads of the spectators. Operating with a continuous noise, the motor turned the propeller at full speed. The flying machine traveled with ease as if it were running along an invisible surface. The spectators below became quite excited. They began to applaud, clapping and shouting 'Bravo' spontaneously. The machine continued to fly at great speed. When it lost altitude somewhat, however, it was in danger of striking the spectators on their heads. Consequently, Santos-Dumont had to turn off the motor and land. The machine had remained in the air for a full twenty seconds and

had traveled a distance of 220 meters. In other words, it traveled at an average speed of 37 kilometers per hour.

"This time the machine really took to the air on its own like a bird. It flew in a normal manner, swooping over a rather long distance. Following this [latter] success, Santos-Dumont received from the Aéro Club de France a prize that was to be given to the one who flew 100 meters in a heavier-than-air machine.

"When he landed, everyone surrounded the indefatigable Brazilian, shook his hand, and congratulated him. This was an initial success, an initial triumph, that could be considered a good omen of the ultimate result to be achieved."

While a newspaper published in Europe in 1906 used this language to describe a 200-meter flight as an extraordinary success, the American Wright brothers had solved this problem much earlier. These two brothers began their efforts in 1900 and after three years of continuous experiments were finally successful on 17 December 1903. On that day, a machine that the two brothers built themselves was able to be airborne for the first time for 12 seconds. The time of this flight was not, in fact, very important. But when we consider that on that day a human rose into the air for the first time with a heavier-than-air machine, then we must admit that this flight, no matter how short its duration, was an event of very great significance and in fact represented the beginning of a new era in history.

The next year, the Wright brothers continued their experiments, again with a flying machine that they had made themselves and one that was equipped with a 25-horsepower motor. During 1905, they had a series of very great successes. As word of the successes of these two Americans traveled far and wide, no one wanted to believe it. In 1907, the two brothers went to Europe and wanted to enter business agreements with various governments. But according to popular opinion, the two brothers were completely concerned with manufacturing rights, so that no one wanted to sign an agreement with them[77].

[77] The Wrights wanted to negotiate sales contracts with several European countries, especially France, but had difficulty coming to terms. See Howard, *Wilbur and Orville*, chap. 25, "The Brothers Abroad," pp. 215-28. It is worthy of note that *Fly* magazine, June 1909, p. 11, states: "From Berlin it is announced that a company with a capital of 500,000 marks (about £25,000) has been formed by the General Electricity Company for the purchase and

Finally, when the two Americans were satisfied that their rights were not in jeopardy, they decided to carry out some public demonstrations in France. On 8 August 1908, Wilbur Wright, the older of the two, using a machine that they had built themselves, made his first attempt at flight in Europe. Flying alone, he was able to remain in the air for a minute and 45 seconds and traced a semi-circle[78]. Subsequently, on successive days, he made flights of half an hour, an hour, and an hour and a half[79]. Indeed, on 8 October, Wright took a friend along and the two flew around the sky at great speed for a full hour and a half[80]. And finally, on the last day of January {sic, this was 31 December} in 1908, in cold snowy weather, he surpassed the longest time that he had previously spent in the air by flying exactly two hours and twenty minutes and traveling a distance of 124 kilometers[81]. Wright then ended his demonstrations in France.

Thus, these demonstrations by Wright, which continued from the beginning of August to the end of December 1908,[82] constituted the second era in the world of ballooning {sic}; for Wright operated the machine that he was riding exactly as he wished and flew around the sky with great ease. His success greatly stimulated the construction of aeroplanes and attempts at flight in various countries. A great many new inventions appeared and those who had been preoccupied with this matter for years renewed their efforts and experiments with great enthusiasm and vigor.

Blériot's crossing of the English Channel last July 25 {1909} began the third and most important period in the history of aeroplanes. After this event, the {Turkish} newspaper *Tan* {i.e., *Tanin*} published a special article on it stating, "It could be asserted without exaggeration that the crossing of the English Channel for the first time by an enterprising man in a heavier-

exploitation of the Wright patents in Germany. It is further stated that the company is paying the Wright Brothers 200,000 marks for the patents in Germany, Norway, Sweden, Luxemburg, Denmark, and Turkey, to include any improvements which may be made in the future."

[78] He made two circuits of the racetrack near Le Mans, see Howard, *Wilbur and Orville*, p. 258.

[79] Two days later, he made two flights of 42 seconds and of several minutes, *ibid*., p. 259. On 10 September, he flew 22 minutes. Not until 16 September did he fly 39 minutes, *ibid*., p. 269 . He first flew an hour and a half on 21 September, *ibid*., p. 284.

[80] He first took a passenger in the first week of October and did not approach his previous record of a hour and a half, *ibid*., p. 284.

[81] *Ibid*., p. 289.

[82] Wilbur made flights in France from time to time until 19 March 1909. He flew in Italy in April, *ibid*., pp. 292-94.

than-air machine constitutes {the beginning of} a historical period unprecedented in the chronicles of world technology and civilization. The world knows that the one who found a cure for the illness of rabies was a technological genius. Now everyone sees that Monsieur Blériot has been able to take an enormous step forward in the efforts to control the skies. The success that he has achieved is one of those few events that will change the bases of the living and social conditions of the world." By saying this, *Tan* wanted to state that it was necessary to attribute great significance to Blériot's aerial journey.

Blériot's Crossing of the English Channel in a Monoplane

Blériot's journey to England by crossing the Channel {in a monoplane} was indeed of great importance. Not only did this event make the English appreciate technology; but the fact that for the first time someone had reached their island by means other than a sea-going vessel also gave them much food for thought.

Up to now, the English had all believed that, thanks to the sea, their island was completely safe and protected from any form of attack. But Blériot's arrival {by air} was evidence that they could no longer enjoy the security that they had had in the past. From that moment, it was obvious that the world had truly entered a new age, had begun a new chapter in history. It is well known how much the English have avoided connecting their island to Europe. Two years ago when the French wanted to renew efforts to dig a tunnel under the English Channel, virtually all the people of England {i.e., Great Britain} protested against this with one voice. It goes without saying that when a people, especially their military leaders, who were so cautious that they feared that even a narrow tunnel line would threaten the security of their island realized that the routes to their country were now limited only by the number of airships that were built, they became extremely uneasy.

When Blériot crossed the English Channel, the information that our newspapers published on this event consisted mostly of the translation of brief telegrams that news agencies transmitted. Therefore I shall provide a more detailed account of how important this aerial journey was in the eyes of Europeans.

The first to propose crossing the English Channel with an aeroplane was a man named {Hubert} Latham. He was a leading authority on airships and, like Blériot, a proponent of the monoplane, that is, a single-planed machine. About two weeks before Blériot, he tried to cross the English Channel with a monoplane of his own invention that differed little from Blériot's. However, on his first attempt he was able to go only about half way. On his second attempt, two or three days later {the second attempt occurred after Blériot had crossed the Channel}, he was able to go far enough to see the coastline of the British Isles. He had only a short distance to go to reach the ground when a minor problem caused his motor to malfunction. He landed in the sea, and so this attempt too ended in failure. It was thus following Latham's unsuccessful efforts that Blériot decided to try the same feat. On Sunday, 25 July, at 4:10 am, just before dawn, after checking his preparations at the Les Baraques between the towns of Calais and Sangatte, Blériot made a test flight of almost ten minutes and then returned to his starting point. Satisfied with this test, he informed the "torpedo" {the French destroyer *Escopette*} that was going to escort him at sea {that he was ready} and then at 4:35 flew out to sea on his way to England.

As soon as he cleared the coast, he saw the destroyer and it set out in the direction that he was going. His flying machine flew perfectly at an altitude of 100 meters. Within a few seconds he was on the same bearing as the destroyer. In order to go in exactly the same direction, he turned a bit to the right. The destroyer was then traveling at its top speed of 25 miles per hour (46 kilometers per hour). Within a short time, however, Blériot's machine left the destroyer behind and disappeared from sight.

While he was turning a bit more to the right, the wind blew from the left and forced him completely off course. Consequently, instead of going to Dover, his original destination, he went about seven kilometers to the right toward Deal at the mouth of the Thames River.

When Blériot saw the coast of England in the morning mist just as the first rays of the sun were slowly beginning to break, he realized that he had gone to the wrong place. Still, he had in fact reached his goal, England, and was able to land immediately. When he began this feat, he had intended to land at Dover and so did not want to change his plan. Then, like a bewildered traveler, he searched from the air for the right route to take. He saw several ships below him and, assuming they were going to Dover,

immediately turned the machine to the left. When he changed course, however, the wind came up from the opposite direction and he was forced to struggle with it.

He began to follow the coastline fairly closely. Encountering many difficulties in the face of the wind, which was blowing about 25 kilometers per hour, and rocking to and fro, he tried to go forward. Finally, he was able to spot Dover and turned a bit to the left in order to land on the shore across from the port. However, the coast was steep and high and the wind current there badly shook his machine, so it was impossible to pass over the cliffs. He looked to the right for a while and then immediately dove, like a bird fleeing from the wind, and was able to come to a broad meadow a short distance ahead. At the meadow was the correspondent of the newspaper *Le Matin* who signaled to him with the French flag[83]. Keeping an eye on this flag, he began to descend very slowly. But while landing he encountered a sudden heavy downpour and was forced to put the machine down quickly. The wheels and the propeller of the flying ship were broken, but Blériot suffered no injury. The time was 5:13. He had taken off from Calais at 4:35, so that the aerial journey had taken exactly 38 minutes. The distance between Calais and Dover was 40 kilometers and 144 meters. Because Blériot had deviated somewhat from his course and went toward the city of Deal, he had gone 8 kilometers farther. Thus, he actually traveled a distance of 48 kilometers in 38 minutes. In other words, with the help of a tailwind at the start of the journey, his machine traveled at an average speed of 70 kilometers per hour[84].

In this way, Blériot crossed the English Channel and won the 20,000-franc prize that had been established by the *Daily Mail*. In any case, the real cause of pride and glory for him was that, thanks to his effort, he opened an important era in the history of airships by brilliantly demonstrating before the eyes of the world the extent of the progress and development in heavier-than-air flying machines. He thus achieved international fame.

We come next to the fourth period, which began with the {aircraft} races at Reims, France held continuously for eight days between 22 and 29 August.

[83] The correspondent of *Le Matin*, Charles Fontaine, appears to have concocted the story that he guided Blériot with a large French flag. In fact, he did not see Blériot land. See Elliot, *Blériot*, pp. 132-33.

[84] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 114.

Exactly 38 aeroplanes of various classes and types and from different countries registered to participate in these races. Not only were the first such races of airships conceived and organized, but for the first time the leading figures associated with flying machines–those who had attracted attention with their flights in various places in the year after Wright's successes in France–were also brought together and made to compete with each other. For these reasons, the historical significance of the races at Reims is undeniable. In addition, thanks to these races, aircraft, all kinds of which had been built.

Photo of Blériot who crossed the English Channel in a Flying Machine (See fig. 12) were classified and arranged according to their speed, time (they could spend aloft), and range. If another competition were organized at the same time next year, this would make it easy, for example, to track and determine the progress and innovation that had occurred within the year. It is well known that these kinds of races do much to encourage inventors and experimenters and help them quickly reach a state of perfection in their inventions and applications that are still in the early stage of development and experimentation. Thanks to the great (automobile) races that were organized every four or five years in the famous cities of Europe–and attracted great interest–automobiles reached the advanced stage of progress and development in which we find them today. There is no doubt that the races at Reims, which were held for the first time this year, were the first step toward rapidly obtaining the wondrous results expected from airships, which are still in the discovery stage.

As for range and time aloft in these races, first place was taken by Makarman (i.e., Henri Farman) who, after Santos-Dumont and Wright, had won the greatest fame in Europe. Using a dual-planed (*sathataynli*) machine, he flew for exactly three hours and four minutes and traveled a distance of 180 kilometers. He won a prize of 50,000 francs that had been established for first place[85].

Latham, whose early attempt to cross the English Channel had ended in failure, used his same single-planed (*vahîdü'l-satha*) machine to fly for two

[85] See Stéphane Nicolaou, *Reims–1909, Le Premier Meeting Aérien International* (Le Bourget: Musée del'Air et de l'Espace, 1999), p. 71, with excellent photographs.

hours and thirteen minutes and travel a distance of 150 kilometers, and thus took second place. He received a prize of 25,000 francs[86].

By this success, Latham reaffirmed that the single-planed machine was by no means inferior to the two-planed (*iki satıhlı*) ships. Indeed, he showed, to the contrary, that it was probably to be preferred and was superior to them because it was sleeker and lighter.

Third place was taken by someone named (Louis) Paulhan, a relative newcomer. He used a two-planed machine and the Wright system to fly for two hours and 43 minutes and travel 131 kilometers. He won 10,000 francs[87].

It is worth mentioning and noting here that these three flights were forced to come to an end because the gas supply for the motors was exhausted. In other words, if the flyers had been able to carry more gas, they probably would have had even greater success.

In addition, speed trials over distances of twenty and thirty kilometers were carried out. The American (Glenn) Curtiss took first place over both distances traveling at an average speed of 73 kilometers per hour. Blériot took second at a speed of 70-72 kilometers per hour[88].

Other races have been held, but they were of relatively little importance. Consequently, I see no need to describe them here.

With respect to the first ascents and flights of heavier-than-air machines, this then is a summary of the different stages through which they have passed up to the present, their different types and classifications, and the progress in their development. Balloons, that is, lighter-than-air means of flight, are outside the scope of our subject. Balloons today are, in fact, given an important role in military operations. In Germany the Zeppelins and Parsevals and in France the La Patries and Ville de Parises can be steered and fully controlled. It was obvious that the old circular balloons, which had very limited use, were rather primitive. Still, despite all the progress and development (in their design and operation), no solution has been found to their giant size, which constitutes their primary danger. Consequently, the great benefits and advantages that were immediately expected from balloons

[86] *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60, two hours and seventeen minutes and a distance of 154.5 kilometers.

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 83. Curtiss flew at 75.693 kilometers per hour and Blériot flew at 75.298 kilometers per hour.

have been in vain. In any case, I shall soon write a special article describing the stages of development through which steerable balloons have passed up to the present and their current state of progress.

As for aeroplanes, because of our complacency regarding the revolution and changes in civilization that have resulted from this ability to fly like birds–as mentioned at the beginning of my article–which is quite simply the greatest product of human intelligence and knowledge, I shall follow systematically in our newspaper all progress and innovations in airships. *waw. alif.*

Baron de Caters and His Attempt (to Fly) with a Flying Machine

Nr. 181, 30 November, 1909, p. 2

Baron (Pierre) de Caters has arrived in our city in order to attempt to make a demonstration of flight in place of the famous Blériot, who, it had been announced, will come to İstanbul (later) to fly by means of a flying machine. He had decided to make his flight today, but the rain that has continued for several days has not allowed him to complete the special *baraka* (from the French *baraque* = shed) to protect the machine at Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi. Consequently, it is highly unlikely that he will carry out his attempt today. Yesterday a member of our editorial staff interviewed Baron de Caters at the Pera Palas (Hotel). We will publish in tomorrow's newspaper the information he obtained (from him) on flying machines and the attempt at flight that he will carry out.

Flying Machine and Baron de Caters in Our City

Nr. 182, 1 December, 1909, p. 4

Baron de Caters, who has been in our city for several days and who is planning to carry out some attempts (at flight) with the dual-winged flying machine that he brought with him, has not yet completed the shed that he wanted to construct to protect the machine at Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi, which he has selected as the place of ascent, as I wrote in yesterday's issue. Because of this and especially because of the bad weather that has continued since the previous day, he was not able to carry out yesterday the attempt to fly that he had decided upon a bit earlier.

Baron de Caters' name is almost unknown in our city. Indeed, the subject of flying machines, which has preoccupied the civilized world and

the world press following the consecutive successes in numerous races and attempts at flight that have been carried out in Europe in recent months, has not been adequately discussed in our press or our country. In fact, apart from a few telegrams sent by news agencies, one or two letters sent by correspondents, and one or two separate articles, nothing has been written in the newspapers of İstanbul on the attempts at flight that are currently taking place and causing the greatest excitement, that is, on the course of events of the Bétheny races (the course at Reims) that continued for a week in France. Consequently, the great significance of this subject, the invention and appearance of flying machines, the current stages in the progress, development, and designs of flying machines and especially the names of those who have won fame for the successes that they have achieved in recent races are to some degree unknown to our people. Seeing that the Turkish press was not interested in addressing this important subject, I therefore briefly explained and described, in a rather long article that I published in issues 126 and 127 (of this newspaper), the various forms and shapes that flying machines have taken from the time of their appearance up to recent advances and developments; and I described the numerous types into which they are divided today. I wanted to help our people obtain as far as possible a basic knowledge of this subject. But it will not be possible, of course, to achieve this goal and compensate for our lack of knowledge on this subject with a single newspaper and a few articles.

It is true that our general information about flying machines is insufficient, but among the leading personalities associated with flying machines there is one whose name is widely recognized here and that is Blériot. As is well known, four months ago, Blériot crossed the English Channel with a single-planed (*tek satıhlı*) flying machine–which is called a *monoplane* in French and which we translate as *vahîdü'l-satha*–of his own invention. In point of fact, this was not so important except that he had crossed a sea (greater distances had already been flown). This added significantly to his accomplishment and thus his name spread throughout the world. He even gained fame in our country, where his name was often mentioned with awe in Turkish publications. Blériot has, in fact, for long been preoccupied with the matter of flying machines and is an inventor whose specialty is the construction and production of these machines. After crossing the English Channel, he participated in the races that were held at Bétheny, where he won several first places in speed and altitude races. Then

he went to Germany and participated in the Frankfurt races. In these races, using a graceful, single-planed flying machine, he also exhibited skill and had success. But this time a competitor appeared whose name is mentioned in this headline, Baron de Caters.

Unlike Blériot, de Caters is an enthusiast whom the French call an *amateur* and was not raised from the cradle as an engineer or inventor. Nevertheless, during the past two years, during which aeroplanes, that is, flying ships, have acquired the true capability for flight, he has taken a rather important place among those who are experts in flying machines because of his serious interest in them. Still, because he is Belgian, did not conduct many attempts at flight in France, and did not participate in the Bétheny races, the French newspapers have rarely mentioned him and thus his name is completely unknown here. After his recent participation in the Frankfurt races, he began to win true fame.

In these races, Baron de Caters, emerged above all as a rival to Blériot and surpassed the celebrated French conqueror of the English Channel with respect to both time (aloft) and altitude. He also won the all-around first place in these competitions and received a large prize of 70,800 marks or about 3,500 Ottoman liras.

After I read in the newspaper headlines that the Baron had come to İstanbul and was going to attempt some flights, I went yesterday to the Pera Palas Hotel in İstanbul where he was staying in order to meet him. Indeed, I wanted to see him in person and learn more about the powerful airships in which I had had an interest for many years.

Baron de Caters is of Belgian nobility and a great landholder. He is about thirty-five years old and a young, energetic, and excellent man from the class that the French call, according to English custom, a *sportman*, that is, *spor ehli*. This man, who has been especially interested in sport since youth, participated in automobile races at the time when automobiles were still in the development stage and won first place in several major races. Upon the appearance of *qānū* (?) automobiles, which are a natural result of automobiling, he also took an interest in this branch of the sport and once received the title of *recordman du mond*, that is, *sermusâbık-ı âlem*, at the Monaco races.

As for his present preoccupation with flying machines, this began two years ago. As I mentioned above, the Baron is not an inventor, but only a leading enthusiast. Thus, the machine that he is using is not a creation of his own. It is a machine using the Voisin system, [named after] the French inventors.

As will be seen in the illustration that we will publish of this machine within a few days, it is of the type of aeroplane that we call a "biplane," that is, *sathataynli*. In this respect, we naturally find it to be only slightly superior to Blériot's flying machine, which has one plane and is smaller and has less air resistance.

Following the Frankfurt races, and acting before his rival Blériot, Baron de Caters came to İstanbul. As soon as he acquired the necessary permit and completed his preparations at Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi, he prepared to make a flight. In order to bring his machine here, he had to spend more than 16,000 francs, that is, 750 [Ottoman] liras, of his own money.

The attempts at flight that he will carry out in İstanbul will not be limited to one or two. Weather permitting, he will continue his attempts at ascents here until he matches the extent of his successful flights in Europe. Thus, the people of İstanbul, who lack knowledge and information about aeroplanes, will have acquired, within a short time thanks to these flights, an idea and understanding of flying machines that could not be provided by any newspaper or illustration. In this way, they will be able to see [such a machine] for themselves and evaluate its importance.

Following Baron de Caters' arrival in İstanbul, he was busy obtaining a permit and, in the course of this, met Mahmud Shevket Pasha the Commander of the Hareket Ordusu. His Excellency the Pasha ordered a commission of qualified government officials to study the flights that were to take place with the view toward determining the usefulness of aeroplanes for military purposes.

As I wrote in yesterday's newspaper, Monsieur de Caters has not yet completed the shed that he was building at Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi to protect his flying machine. Meanwhile, the weather has continued to be unfavorable for several days. Consequently, a specific day and time have not been set for his flying machine to make an ascent. In order to be able to rise into the air, these machines are dependent above all on calm, serene weather.

The Baron had complained that he had not been able to find a sufficiently wide and level place in İstanbul from which to make an ascent. This shortcoming, combined with poor weather, naturally made it impossible to determine the exact day for the flight. Consequently, it appears that we will have to wait a few more days before we will be able to see this brave flyer gracefully circling about the sky high above our celebrated city using the most recent innovation in technological progress.

I wrote above about some of what I learned at my first meeting with the Baron. As for the information that I shall obtain on the technological and mechanical aspects of flying machines, I shall present it as soon as possible to the eyes of our readers along with the necessary illustrations after the flights begin. *waw. alif.*

Baron de Caters' First Attempt with the Flying Machine

Nr. 183, 2 December, 1909, pp. 4-5

Yesterday, because the weather was spring-like, beautiful, and clear, and there was absolutely no wind, Baron de Caters could have carried out his first attempt at an ascent with his flying machine, for which he had been preparing for a number of days. (see fig. 13) However, as I wrote yesterday, the shed that the Baron had ordered to be constructed and the lack of which has prevented him from flying up to now, is still not finished, so he was not able to assemble the flying machine. Early yesterday morning, when the weather was clear, he set about preparing the machine. It was not possible, however, to be ready at 2:00 *ala franga* (i.e., European time) in the afternoon as previously announced. He was busy until evening with such things as setting the screws and wires, putting the cloth (covering) in order, and making minor adjustments. He also had to install the motor and attach the propeller to it. By the time the flying machine was ready, it was 12:00 *ala turka* (i.e., Turkish time, 12:00 = sunset)[89]. It was then, of course, too late to

[89] At that time in the Ottoman Empire and other Muslim countries, sunset to sunset was reckoned as the civil day. Sunset was 12:00, one hour after sunset was 1:00, and so forth. After 12:00 in the morning, the hours were again named one, two, three, etc. See Edward Lane, *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (1836; rpt. London, n.d.), p. 226; Karl Baedeker, *Konstantinopel und das Westliche Kleinasien* (Leipzig, 1905), p. 76; and J. Würschmidt, "Die Zeitrechnung im Osmanischen Reich" in *Deutsche optische Wochenschrift*, 1917, pp. 88-100.

fly. Nevertheless, Baron de Caters started the newly installed motor and, in order to test it, twice gave the flying machine the way and each time it gained momentum and "flew" along the ground for about 100 meters. The machine covered these distances at an extraordinary speed and almost went up into the air. During this operation, the machine traced a circle two or three times. These maneuvers were carried out with amazing ease, as easily as driving an automobile or (horse-drawn) cart. It appears that a machine, which operates so easily powered by a propeller (on the ground), could be driven with equal ease in the air. By the time the Baron had completed his test and put his machine inside the shed, it was 1:00 (one hour after sunset). If today's weather is as calm and clear as it was yesterday, the real attempt at flight will take place this afternoon at 2:00 *ala franga.*

About five or six hundred spectators came to watch yesterdays' attempts. Because of the rain that has fallen for the past few days, however, the endlessly (*ebediyet*, a pun on the name of the site) long roads to Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi were transformed into a sea of mud that made it very difficult to go there and return.

The difficulty of reaching, and returning from, the site also resulted in the rather small crowd of spectators.

The observations of our reporter, whom we sent there yesterday especially (for this event), and the description of the attempt at flight that will be carried out today will be included together in tomorrow's issue (of our newspaper).

The First Flight with a Flying Machine in Our City

Nr. 184, 3 December, 1909, p. 4

Yesterday there finally occurred for the first time in our city the flight of a flying machine, which is the most amazing human invention and the latest innovation in technological progress.

After several days of wind, rain, and cold, the weather yesterday turned calm and clear. It was perfect. Indeed, it was that exceptionally serene, and rare, glorious fall day. Favorable weather for the ascent of a flying machine is not normal in this season. But this suddenly beautiful and unseasonable winter weather began to change by the afternoon. The wind gradually picked up and began to create a rather important obstacle (to the ascent).

Nevertheless, because the Baron was under some pressure from the criticism that had been directed against him, reasonably or unreasonably, he did not hesitate because of the partially unfavorable weather, or pay any attention to the late hour. At about 12:00 (European time), he quickly carried out his first attempt at flight.

They brought the aircraft from the shed and put it outside on a field that was two hundred meters long. A row of soldiers was lined up on each side of the field.

When the aircraft reached the right place, Baron de Caters started the engine. That small generator of movement, which came into view as an attractive, bright yellow, wonder of science, caused such a tapping sound that the horses of the carts at the demonstration site were frightened and difficult to control. The power of 70 horses, which, in some unknown manner, could be contained technologically in an object of that small size, gave a booming sound and, in fact, shook and beat the ground. It pushed the machine forward. The propeller that was driven by the motor seemed to be hidden from sight, from its first revolution, by the giant wings, but (in any case) the speed of its revolutions prevented one from seeing it. Nevertheless, the awesome whirlwinds that it caused, and which blew dust and smoke high into the air in all directions, made one aware of its existence. The machine moved ahead quickly. Its wheels remained on the ground for a distance of about twenty meters and then it very gently turned upward and began to ascend. That frightening machine, which a moment ago had raged before us with the terror of a dragon, now became silent and with great dignity rent the layers of air and climbed high into the sky. The machine flew a considerable distance to the southeast. It went up to an altitude of about fifty meters. Then, taking a level position, it quickly left behind hawks, kites, eagles, perhaps all birds known to us, and advanced with the force of a thunderbolt and headed toward Bomonti factory. The wind, which had blown strongly and ceaselessly since morning, had not subsided one bit. Consequently, the machine swerved or lurched to the right or left according to the direction of the wind. Sometimes the wind lifted its tail, but Baron de Caters, thanks to his skill in using the rudder, immediately regained control of the direction of the aeroplane. A number of electric lamps attached to the wings and the front (of the machine) twinkled so that one could see the machine.

The aeroplane approached the Bulgarian Hospital. Then it suddenly headed toward the ground and began to fall sharply. It would be appropriate to say descend rather than fall, for when the aeroplane landed on the uneven slope of the hill near the Bulgarian Hospital, not even the wings, which were very slender and susceptible to breaking, were damaged or dented. Only the wheels were bent somewhat as a result of colliding with the ground. The machine certainly went off in a dangerous direction (i.e., down) and landed with excessive speed because of unfavorable wind conditions.

This was the season of the *lodos* (southwesterly wind). When the aeroplane headed toward the southeast, it was going almost directly into the wind and was subject, above all, to violent downdrafts. When we consider, on the one hand, the amount of time that passed and the opposition and strength of the wind, and, on the other hand, that the uneven contour of the land was very much unknown to the owner of the machine, then we must declare that the first attempt at flight certainly ended with the desired success. We congratulate Baron de Caters on escaping unharmed from this dangerous ascent and descent. We express our thanks to him for showing us what aeroplanes, which we had hoped to see and learn about, are and we extend to him our most sincere wishes for more brilliant successes in future attempts at flight.

Let me mention the detailed information that our reporter obtained from Baron de Caters on his machine.

The motor is the E.L.V. (sic, should be E.N.V.) brand and has eight cylinders. The power generated by these small cylinders amounts to 70 horsepower. Because the aeroplane does not weigh more than 500 kilograms, he estimated that there was one horsepower for every 7 kilograms. He indicated that recent technological advancement makes it possible for such a powerful force to be applied to such a light weight in order to provide the right amount of power.

The motive force is obtained from gasoline. The tank of the aeroplane can hold 80 liters of gas. The motor burns 26 liters per hour, so 80 liters of gas run the motor for three hours. Thus, the aeroplane can fly three hours at the most. Its average speed is between 40 and 50 kilometers per hour. During races, however, it can reach a speed of 76 kilometers per hour.

At the place where the attempt at flight was made yesterday, no less than 2,000 people were present. The box seats and roofed viewing stands that the prefecture had set up were completely full. In addition to the Italian ambassador and notables from the other embassies, Prince Ziyaeddin Efendi, Necmeddin Efendi, Ömer Hilmi Efendi, Prince Salahaddin Efendi and several other royal (sultanal) personages were there as well. The princes asked Baron de Caters a great many questions and obtained information about this amazing technological innovation.

Baron de Caters' arrival in İstanbul and his effort to carry out demonstrations of flight were a civic event the like of which has rarely been seen in our city. But no matter how much publicity there was in the circles of Beyoğlu on the importance of this event, our colleagues (there) have passed over this subject with a noteworthy silence for three or four days. Indeed, to the extent that they mentioned the Belgian flyer, it seems that they published several paragraphs in which they mocked or ridiculed him. A few sentences in yesterday's issue of our sister newspaper *La Turquie* mentioned in rather strong language that the Baron had not flown as promised the previous evening and stated that a great many people had gone up to the ridges of Kağithane (Valley of the Sweet Waters of Europe–the tip of the Golden Horn) to watch, but they were not able to see anything and so returned. They also said that the people of İstanbul were worthy of a little more respect and esteem. Furthermore, they suggested rather arrogantly that the Baron had to answer for this delay.

One cannot blame Baron de Caters for not being able to fly at the announced time, for, as we have mentioned before, in order for flying machines to ascend, the weather must be perfect. The slightest wind or normal bad weather can prevent the operation and flight of these machines. In addition, one must realize that various sections of flying machines are very delicate and the most insignificant mishap or collision can also prevent them from flying.

While publishing statements ridiculing Baron de Caters, our sister newspaper *La Turquie* should have considered the capacity in which the Baron has come to our city. Baron de Caters is a foreign guest who has come to our capital to show the Ottomans one of the most important technological discoveries in the world today and to teach them about it. Everyone knows that it is among the excellent innate qualities of the Turks

to honor and respect greatly their guests. Therefore, they would naturally not look favorably on behavior whereby one would dare to be angry unnecessarily with this person who, without any doubt, acted in good faith and with good intentions. Moreover, a foreigner who suddenly encountered such undeserving behavior would feel indignant toward anyone who deemed this behavior proper. One could perhaps agree that all the people of İstanbul were ignorant of this, but we are of course aggrieved at such a situation that reflects poorly on our venerable and well-known hospitality. Consequently, in the future, we would expect our sister newspaper *La Turquie* to publish articles on such matters in a manner more in line with known principles of moderation.

{Aircraft illustration}

Flying Machine of Baron de Caters {using the} Voisin System

Baron de Caters' Aeroplane

Nr. 185, 4 December, 1909, p. 2

It was announced yesterday at 3:00 *ala franga* that because Baron de Caters' attempt at flight on Thursday was not a complete success, he will try again. Taking advantage of the Friday holiday {Muslim day off} several thousand people went to watch this marvel of technology and ingenuity. However, because he was not able to repair some damage that occurred during the previous flight and descent, and which would not have occurred to balloons, the next attempt at flight will be carried out next Sunday. Among those who went to Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi to watch were Talat Bey Efendi, who was the Minister of the Interior, Halaciyan Efendi, who was the Minister of Public Works, and other notables.

Baron de Caters' Aeroplane

Nr. 187, 6 December, 1909, p. 6

It is known that Baron de Caters had decided to make a third attempt at flight yesterday. Encouraged by the calm weather, which was reminiscent of spring, promenaders and sightseers began to go in rather large numbers toward Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi starting in the morning. By the time of the ascent, there was a crowd on hand of around 10,000 people.

Baron de Caters removed his aeroplane from the shed at 3:00 *ala franga* and then, while the people watching were in a state of great excitement, he flew it. He went up to an elevation of about 50 meters and then made a circle around the area from where the people were watching. During this circuit, the applause of the people was so loud and prolonged, like the buzzing of the propeller, that it reached heights beyond the altitude of the Baron. After the first circuit, the aeroplane began a second one of much greater circumference, but after going two-thirds of the way around the circuit, the machine headed for Kağithane Valley and was seen to slowly descend toward the valley floor. Because the aeroplane continued in the same direction and slowly descended toward the ground, the spectators thus saw no sign of a serious accident. Concluding that this action was a planned maneuver by the Baron, the spectators waited about a half an hour for him to reappear. When he did not do so, their excitement changed to alarm and everyone began to run toward where he had gone down. When they reached the opposite hill, they saw that the flying machine was on a small plateau above the valley and was being pulled by several people.

Our reporter went to the place where the Baron went down and asked him what had happened and why.

According to what the Baron stated, during the second circuit, the steering wire, that is, the rudder wire, snapped and because he could not, of course, control the machine he was forced to descend slowly into the valley while flying straight ahead. When he reached the ground, he collided with a flock of sheep that were grazing there and one side of the wings was broken.

Baron de Caters said that broken rudder wires could result in a major accident and added that he was lucky that, despite the defective wire, the mishap was not more serious. The Baron will make no further attempts at flight and will depart our city with his flying machine next Tuesday.

As I previously explained, the Baron's machine is a "biplane," that is, a dual-planed machine. This machine, which first flew in Europe, has been one of the most successful to date.

Indeed, the flyer, using the famous "Farman" system, which also uses two-planed machines, succeeded in making a flight lasting four hours and twenty minutes one month ago. This was the greatest success obtained up to now.

Unfortunately, Baron de Caters did not have the success (here) for which we had hoped. Nevertheless, the people who were present yesterday at Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi for his ascent and circling about were greatly impressed with the ease with which he controlled his machine.

In a few days we will watch Blériot make an ascent. Blériot's machine has a single plane. Compared to the Baron's machine, this kind of aeroplane has been less successful. Nevertheless, when it comes to flying these machines, everything depends on chance. Despite our great hope, Baron de Caters was not able to fly more than five minutes, but Blériot might be able to fly for a half hour or an hour in a smaller aeroplane and one with a single plane. We would like this to happen because rather few people witnessed the Baron's attempt at flight, so that most still do not have a clear and basic understanding of aeroplanes.

Among those who watched yesterday's ascent were, in particular, the royal (sultanal) princes, Salih Pasha the Minister of War, the Iranian Ambassador Riza Danish Khan, and other notables.

Advertisement

Nr. 191, 10 December, 1909, p. 8

Monsieur Blériot, who successfully traveled by air across the English Channel separating France and England, will carry out his first attempt at flight in our city, weather permitting, on Sunday 29 November (old calendar, 12 December) at the Taksim Barracks Parade Ground.

(Illustration of Blériot and aircraft as above)

Monsieur Blériot and His Attempt to Fly Today with a Flying Machine

Nr. 193, 12 December, 1909, pp. 6-7

A series of attempts at flight with flying machines is being carried out in our city. Before our local press has had time to publish the necessary explanation of the nature and importance of flying machines for the people of İstanbul, we will have had the great fortune of watching, one after another within a short time, two famous European flyers rise above the horizons of our city not in lighter-than-air, large, spheres full of hydrogen like balloons, but by flying in several heavier-than-air, and relatively small, machines.

Last Sunday we witnessed the Belgian Baron de Caters fly from Hürriyet-i Ebediye Tepesi–after attempting to fly in the course of several days with his machine using the system that is called "two-planed" (i.e., biplane)–and gracefully trace a few circles in the air. This (coming) Sunday, we will be able to watch Monsieur Blériot fly, weather permitting, with a small, sleek, single-planed machine.

Yesterday I went to have a look at Blériot's machine, which has been on exhibit for several days at the Ice Skating Palace in Beyoğlu. In a previous article that I wrote on "aerial navigation," I provided some information on Blériot's flying machine. Compared to Baron de Caters' machine, this one is both smaller and sleeker.

On the whole, this machine reminds one of a large seagull with outstretched wings. In the front, there is a place for a man where he can control the machine with a motor. Attached to each side of this place is a large concave plane about three and a half meters long and a meter and a half wide. These planes, which can keep the machine and a man weighing 70 or 80 kilograms aloft for hours, are made from a frame of slender pieces of wood that is covered with American cloth (*bez*).

Extending from the back of the machine is a tail that is also composed of a frame of slender pieces of wood. This frame is also about half covered with cloth starting from the place where the driver sits. At the end of the tail are two small planes (that flap) like fans. They are horizontal and attached to a vertical rudder that, together with the two main planes, allow the machine to take off, gain altitude, and maintain balance. All of these planes and frames are attached to each other with fine steel wires. On the front is a powerful motor that drives a propeller made of mahogany. The propeller, which causes the flying machine to fly, is composed of two blades (lit. wings) that are only two and a half meters long and no wider than 30 centimeters.

Monsieur Blériot gave a lecture yesterday night at the skating rink. He described and explained the manner in which flying machines appeared and were built in Europe; why he became interested in flying ships; how, after seven or eight years of continuous failure, his attempts at flight finally resulted in success with his crossing of the English Channel; and the historical significance of this aerial journey. At the end of the lecture, while in his flying machine, he used a *cinématograph* to show scenes of his first

successful flight and of his crossing the English Channel and his arrival in England[90]. This lecture was very beneficial, but despite several days of prominent announcements in the Beyoğlu newspapers {*evrâk-i havâdis*}, very few people were present. As most newspapers reported yesterday morning, no one from the sultan's family went to the lecture; and among important government officials only the Foreign Minister {Mehmed Rifat Pasha} and the governor {*mutasarrif*} of Beyoğlu were on hand.

In this respect, I would like to bring to the attention of our competitors {lit. opponents}, rather, our neighboring colleagues, who for some reason published many false and unworthy articles about Baron de Caters, who had come to our city without any intention of doing business but simply to show our people one of the most novel inventions of technological progress and who carried out his attempts at flight virtually free of charge, that for several days people have been charged ten *kurush* a head just to have a look at Monsieur Blériot's machine. For those who want to watch the attempts at flight on Taksim Square, steep fees from one *mecidiye* up to five liras have been set[91]. This is also something that should be looked into.

As I have mentioned, Monsieur Blériot will fly today at Taksim Square, weather permitting. Because the flying machine truly has great significance for the future of the world, we wish success to the famous French flyer. Tomorrow we will publish details of the lecture that he gave yesterday night.

Blériot's Lecture the Previous Evening

Nr. 194, 13 December, 1909, p. 7

In yesterday's issue I promised that I would give in today's column the important details, in brief, of the lecture that Monsieur Blériot gave at the skating rink in Beyoğlu Sunday evening.

[90] A cameraman from Pathé Frères had been present to record Blériot's departure from France. See Elliot, *Blériot*, p. 110.

[91] The Ottoman Empire had a bimetallic system based on the silver *kurush* and gold lira; one hundred *kurush* equaled one gold lira. A twenty-*kurush* piece was called a *mecidiye*. One US Dollar was equal to .229 liras. See Şevket Pamuk, "Money in the Ottoman Empire, 1326-1914," in Suraiya Faroqhi et al. ed., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), vol. 2, pp. 971-72.

With respect to Baron de Caters' arrival in our city and his effort to carry out flights, our newspaper has tried–as far as possible in one or two articles that were previously published–to enlighten our readers on the great importance that Europe has given the appearance of the aeroplane and to explain fairly clearly the likelihood that these flying machines, which have confirmed the theory that "conquest of the air will be possible with heavier-than-air machines" in brilliant fashion as a result of the developments and progress within the past few years, will soon cause a great political and social transformation in the civilized world.

Consequently, when I learned that Monsieur Blériot, who arrived in our city a few days ago, was going to give a lecture on flying ships, I was not, of course, going to miss this opportunity to acquire more details (on this matter) and thus be able to provide more extensive information on this subject to our readers.

It had been decided to give the lecture at the skating rink, which for three or four days had become well known as the place where Blériot's flying machine was on display. As part of the necessary preparations for Sunday evening, armchairs and seats were arranged in rows; a dais draped with a small carpet, on which the French coat-of-arms was designed, was set aside for Monsieur Blériot; and a large cloth curtain was hung on which to show *cinématograph* scenes.

At the appointed time, Monsieur Blériot entered the salon and took his place. He seemed a bit bashful and hesitant, like someone who has spent most of his time supervising workers in factories and workshops instead of speaking and giving speeches to assembled groups of men and women.

Monsieur Blériot divided his lecture into two parts. He first described briefly how flying machines appeared in Europe and then he went into some detail recounting his own experiments and attempts to fly.

In Europe, a few years before the discovery of modern aeroplanes, certain engineers, such as (Clément) Ader, (the American Hiram) Maxim, the German (Otto) Lilienthal and (the Frenchman Octave) Chanute, began to experiment with flight. Thanks to their series of experiments, the (theoretical) basis of current flying machines was slowly discovered. This has made it possible (for these machines) to reach the present stage of development.

Monsieur Blériot began to be interested in the mechanics of flight after seeing the flying machines at the Exposition Universelle {in Paris} in 1900 and a short time later he set to work on various experiments. Trained by excellent engineers and craftsmen at the {École Centrale des} Arts et Métièrs in Paris, that is, the industrial arts school, he built his own machine for use in these experiments. When he began his first experiments, he did not know which of the three different types of aeroplanes he would adopt. After hesitating for a while, he sought the advice of many specialists.

The first of these types was a machine called an "ornithopter," which exactly imitated birds in flight.

The second was called a "helicopter," which flew by means of horizontal propellers. As for the third, it was the aeroplane that we know, of which there are two kinds–with one or two planes.

Most of the experts on airships to whom Monsieur Blériot first had recourse were advocates of ornithopters. They said that in order to fly it was necessary to have wings that moved exactly like those of birds. Consequently, Blériot also began to build ornithopters for experiments. Realizing, however, that no positive results could be obtained with these machines, he soon abandoned this system of flight and began to experiment with helicopters. It is true that both the means of ascent and the means of steering and movement that were the expected advantages of heavier-than-air machines were to be obtained from this second type of propeller-driven machine, but the right motors that could make this possible had not been built. Thus, the time he spent experimenting with this kind of machine was to no avail. So, after some effort and a few experiments, he also gave up on these machines. Finally, he turned his attention to the third type, aeroplanes.

Blériot built his first aeroplane, number one, in 1905. Subsequently, he built ten more and slowly perfected them.

Among these machines, Blériot first succeeded in flying with number eight on 11 January {sic}, 1908[92]. Afterwards, he made a series of successful flights, and at one time even traveled a distance of 40 kilometers, whereupon

[92] The first four did not fly. Number five got off the ground. Numbers six and seven made several very short "flights," the latter beginning in November 1907. Blériot's first successful flight in number eight, took place on 21 October 1908. It was first shown to the press in February 1908. See Elliot, *Blériot*, pp. 56-64.

he won a prize that had been established by the (French) government[93]. Finally, on 26 (sic, 25) July of this year, he succeeded in crossing the English Channel. His real fame began on that date.

Monsieur Blériot ended his lecture by giving his impressions of air travel and then making some remarks on the future of flying machines. According to the French flyer, when the problem of landing and operating flying machines on water is solved, a great step will have been taken in their development. To date the fastest speed that has been reached by aeroplanes is 80 kilometers per hour, and the highest altitude reached has been 300 meters. Recently the well-known flyer (Henri) Farman remained aloft without interruption for a full four hours and traveled a distance of 180 kilometers per hour. Up to now, this was the longest distance traveled in the shortest time.

Monsieur Blériot also stated that a speed of 80 kilometers per hour was not very much, that we should expect a speed of 150 kilometers per hour or even higher, and that flying machines will have a very great effect on the future of the world.

In the course of his remarks, Monsieur Blériot made the agreeable point that countries that lack means of communication and social intercourse will especially benefit from the perfection of flying machines. The correctness of this wonderful prediction was especially guaranteed to delight us. If flying machines soon reach the state of perfection, thanks at least to the Blériots and Farmans, one of the excellent consequences will no doubt be their use as apothecaries for immediately remedying the illness, suffered in the past and present, of the absence of roads that cannot be built. These last words of Monsieur Blériot yesterday evening therefore brought joy to our hearts. The celebrated French flyer ended his talk by stating that flying machines would be especially useful in making discoveries on unknown continents.

[93] Apparently a reference to the Prix du Voyage awarded by the Aéro Cub de France on 13 July 1909, *ibid.*, p. 96.

(Published side by side with the previous story)

Blériot's Aeroplane {*tayyâre*} and His Flight Yesterday

Nr. 194, 13 December, 1909, p. 7

All our hope rested on Blériot's single-planed aeroplane. Flights into the heavens, about which we have heard from afar, by aircraft as successful as Monsieur de Caters' biplane, despite his unavoidable crash, and which seem like fairy tales, have begun to provoke some thought among the people. Virtually everyone has been waiting impatiently for Sunday in the hope of seeing this devotee of technology, whose visit to our city has been announced for a number of days in the newspapers, in the shining windows of the big stores, and on the street corners, and who has generally been boastfully described as the "Ruler of the Skies" because of his July crossing of the English Channel like countless seagulls. The trams going to Taksim were overflowing with people. As one approached the takeoff site, the streets became so crowded that one could not walk through them shoulder to shoulder. The people there had smiles of hope on their faces and they gave inquiring and anxious glances to each other. All of this was evidence of how great an interest and desire the people had in seeing the ascent. When I entered the exercise ground {at Taksim}, I saw only one or two thousand spectators around it. They were strolling about. They showed their tickets to the officials and looked for their places. Within an hour, spectators really began to pour into {the site}. They fully occupied the box seats for five liras each and the bleachers for one lira each. The announced hour {for the flight} came and it was time for Blériot to appear. I noticed that more and more people said that he would fly. But, unfortunately, as one of our viewers said, "No nest and no eggs were in sight" {*ortada fol yok yumurta yok*}. Only the cries of the hawkers could be heard selling post cards and programs {-*superyur*, i.e., souvenir programs?}. The wind gradually blew stronger from one direction. While this caused some people to lose hope {that they would see a flight}, others joked and laughed saying, "Caters fell on a flock of sheep. God grant that this one does not fall on our heads." The clamor of the people outside rose to a level of the sky that even Blériot had not reached. The crowd reached full capacity. More than ten thousand spectators were assembled in the grounds and an equal number of noisemakers were in the streets. One anxious person let loose an ordinary

10-*para*[94] red balloon. Those who saw it cheered. There was still no sign of Blériot. Next, several people let loose the same kind of balloon to which they had attached a paper puppet of Karagöz (the main figure of Turkish shadow puppet shows). The one who flew the balloon then made him dance for a while with wings that would not allow him to fly. The sound of a motor caused the crowd to be silent for a moment, then their noise gradually increased.

The police tried to ensure order and keep the crowd calm. Gendarmes patrolled the area in order to (be able to) carry out immediately whatever orders they received. Private soldiers of the cavalry, who were standing in rows, joined hands and formed a solid wall of soldiers all around the place of ascent. I looked over the spectators assembled here who were shivering from the cold more than anything and had come in the expectation of seeing one of the extraordinary results of technological (lit. sublime) progress. With collars raised, hands in pockets, and faces purple from the cold caused by the blowing wind, most people left their places and walked to and fro in order to get warm. I walked straight ahead, wanting to see the machine. (from a recent photograph of Monsieur Blériot) (see fig. 15).

Blériot was speaking with a French Marine corporal. He was a tall, solid man with attractive features. But he had a worried look on his face and he spoke diplomatically with a forced smile. I realized from the obvious wind conditions that he had a bad feeling about making a demonstration of flight. It was approaching 11:00 (Turkish time, an hour before sunset). It seemed that Blériot felt that he was ready to fly. All eyes looked in his direction and breathing almost stopped out of excitement. All at once, the wings of the machine quickly turned.

At that moment, a flock (lit. a convoy or caravan) of birds appeared and flew around the machine as if trying to identify a member of their own kind whom they did not know. Before the eyes of more than ten thousand spectators, the machine rose proudly and disdainfully as the last rays of the western sun reflected on the hills of Şişli. Blériot was operating in these ruby streaks of daylight. The machine went very high, ascending almost forty meters. It passed over the parade ground and turned toward Tatavla (today the section called Kurtuluş). People could be heard saying, "He has fallen

[94] Forty copper *paras* equaled one silver *kuruş*. See, e.g., Baedeker, *Konstantinopel*., p. 75.

from the sky," "He is making a good maneuver," or "He will come back this way." A bit later, everyone was certain that the machine had descended to the ground; and streams of people set out for Tatavla. I went with them. The aeroplane had crashed violently, head first into the house of the carpenter Andon in Tatavla. It tore through the roof, broke a number of windows, and came to rest in the garden. Suffering injuries to some degree to his hand and leg, Blériot was lucky, in fact, to have survived the crash. When I reached the crash site, I found the Gendarmes busily dispersing people who had rushed to the scene. The unlucky flying machine lay motionless and insensible in the garden, completely broken, or more correctly, crushed and shattered. As for Blériot, he was taken to the French Hospital.

Then several French soldiers came to the house at the crash site. They wanted to remove the demolished machine. The lady of the house stomped and kicked her feet and scolded them, saying, "What are you doing?" "You have destroyed my house!" "You must pay for it!" "Then take your balloon!" They informed us that Madame Blériot had come. The poor woman was overcome with despair and grief like that of people who visit graves. Everyone rushed to console her and tried to assure her that no harm had come to her husband[95]. It was 12:00 (sunset). I had seen the site of the crash and learned all I could about it. There was nothing left for me to do but leave.

The Flyer Monsieur Blériot

Nr. 197, 16 December, 1909, p. 2

It was reported that His Imperial Majesty the Sultan (Mehmed V) inquired after the health of Monsieur Blériot and extended his sympathies to him. Blériot has been under medical treatment at the French Hospital for certain injuries that he suffered from the crash of his aeroplane at Tatavla after taking off from the parade ground (at Taksim).

[95] Citing *Yeni Tasvîr-i Efkâr* and *Tanin*, Yavuz Kansu et al., *Havacılık tarihinde Türkler* erroneously state, p. 116, that after Blériot was taken to the hospital, French Marines arrived to remove the aircraft, but the carpenter Andon would not allow them to take it until they had paid for the damage. Then Madame Blériot made him calm down.

The Illustrious Grand Vizier {Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha}[96] and His Excellency Mahmud Shevket Pasha, the Commander of the Hareket Ordusu, also inquired after him.

The Flyer Monsieur Blériot

Nr. 202, 21 December, 1909, p. 8

Upon his arrival in Vienna, Monsieur Blériot, who crashed while flying over İstanbul, was taken to the hospital after suffering a relapse from his injuries. It was reported by telegraph, however, that his condition was not critical.

The Levant Herald (see fig. 16)

Aviation in the Orient

Baron de Caters in Constantinople for the Ottoman Fleet

23 November 1909, p. 1

Arriving today in our capital by the Orient Express is one of the most celebrated aviators whose flights always make a sensation. The Baron de Caters, whose name is well known to sports enthusiasts, has succeeded in attaining widespread fame while still young thanks to numerous records that highlight his sporting career. He was one of those who devoted themselves to cars and embraced this marvelous mode of rapid locomotion and popularized it in his homeland Belgium. Disposed of a vast fortune, living at Anvers in a sumptuous palace where the painting gallery includes several masterpieces by Rubens, married to a charming wife, who is, besides, a direct descendant of this celebrated painter, the Baron is passionate about sports. He became interested in the first experiments in flight. Not content to patronize inventors, he soon dedicated himself to aviation and quickly saw success crown his bold endeavors.

Baron de Caters took part in numerous flying competitions, but his greatest triumph occurred last September at Frankfurt on Main where he won the grand prize for beating Blériot on several occasions as well as the less well-known Latham. It is this famous record-setter whom our citizens will

[96] On Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha (d. 1922), see *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "êusayn êilm' Pasha" (Feroz Ahmad).

have the chance to applaud in the near future on the occasion of the flights that he proposes to make in his aeroplanes.

De Caters comes not to demonstrate a commercial enterprise to the Orientals but aviation. The receipts from tickets sold at the airfield that he set up at Liberty Hill in Şişli barely cover the cost of such a great enterprise. The majority have already been purchased by subscription sales opened for the Ottoman Navy. Baron de Caters, whom we eagerly greeted as he descended from the train, will merit not only the admiration of the Ottoman capital for the marvelous exploits that he will not fail to perform before the inhabitants, but also the recognition of patriots of this country to whom he brings his valuable {aviation} competition for a cause that is so dear to them: the support of the national fleet.

Baron de Caters

27 November, p. 1

We have already announced the arrival of Baron de Caters and the many successes that he won, especially at Frankfurt where he took the grand prize.

Baron de Caters intends to cross the Bosphorus. It is known that he will donate the receipts to the Ottoman Navy. The costs of this enterprise are, however, quite high. The transport of two aeroplanes has cost him approximately 10,000 francs; and the hangars and other construction will require not less than some 25,000 francs. But these great expenses and the difficulties have not been enough to make him give up the idea of being the first to traverse the Bosphorus.

Baron de Caters was received by General Mahmud Shevket Pasha, who assured him of the Army's cooperation. The greatest difficulty is to find a favorable site. A hangar has been built in advance on Liberty Hill and if the weather holds, perhaps the bold aviator will try, beginning next Tuesday, to cross the Bosphorus.

He went to Haydar Pasha {on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus} and surveyed a plain that might well serve as the site of the ascent, but nothing was decided in this respect.

The prices of entry are as follows: reserved seats in the stands, 40 piasters {*kurush*}; reserved seats, 20 piasters; and general admission, 5 piasters.

Aviation

29 November, p. 1

Will Baron de Caters have favorable weather for his crossing of the Bosphorus? We surely hope so, even if we little expect it. Let's announce, since we speak of the intrepid aviator, that our amiable colleague Mr. Revelis, editor of *Le Monde Hellenique*, will fly with him. Good luck to them both.

Aviation

1 December, p. 1

Baron de Caters was not able to fly yesterday, not because the weather was poor for him, but because the rain would have adversely affected the conveyance of spectators to the demonstration sight.

The weather being good today, his takeoff will take place probably between 2 and 3 o'clock.

He will depart from Liberty Hill in Şişli. Tickets are on sale at the Maison Stein in İstanbul and Galata, the Stationary Store of Zellich and Sons on the Grand Rue de Pera, nr. 351, at the Pera Palas Hotel and at the ticket booths at the aerodrome.

Aviation

2 December, p. 1

Today without fail on Liberty Hill in Şişli the flight of Baron de Caters will take place between 2 and 3 o'clock. Yesterday's flight could not take place because the grand stands were not yet finished. Another flight will take place tomorrow, Friday, at the same place. A huge crowd was at Liberty Hill yesterday.

Aviation

3 December, p. 1

Despite a strong wind, Baron de Caters yesterday executed a magnificent flight. He got up more than 300 meters. He was forced to interrupt his demonstration because of the breakdown of his motor

attributable to the violent wind. The courageous aviator made a sudden descent that frightened the attending crowd. We hasten to say that he pulled out without mishap. Today, he will continue his demonstration. He will also fly again tomorrow and Sunday, weather permitting. It has been announced that he will fly most probably with the Consul of Greece, the journalist Monsieur Revelis, and Monsieur René Arcos a French writer.

Aviation

4 December, p. 1

Baron de Caters was again kept from flying yesterday–it was the wind that played him this trick, for it blew violently on Liberty Hill. The public, however, who came in great number and were therefore disappointed, nevertheless realized that this was not the fault of the aviator.

The next flight has been set for tomorrow, Sunday, and we hope that there will be sufficient time for Baron de Caters to make up for the previous delays. We must not doubt that he will succeed. He will succeed in Constantinople as he has done everywhere.

Aviation

6 December, p. 1

We have not been surprised to learn that the French Colony of Constantinople plans on having a reception here for Blériot worthy of his fame on 10 December.

Wherever he goes, Blériot finds a welcome audience. The hospitality of the French Colony in Constantinople is his in advance and will be warmly manifest on his arrival as well as during his stay in Constantinople.

* * *

Baron de Caters has had a run of bad luck. The wind has thwarted his first attempt. Yesterday in splendid weather, he took to the air with ease, but he could not cross the Bosphorus as he had planned. A malfunction forced him to land at Kağıthane after making several successful circuits of the aerodrome.

Aviation

7 December, p. 1

The committee that is organizing Monsieur Blériot's flight has built a viewing stand reserved for Turkish ladies at Taksim Parade Ground. The arrangements for this viewing stand will be made exclusively by women. This is a wonderful gesture for the feminine element of the country. The number of reserved places in the gallery is few, so it will be wise to acquire tickets as soon as possible.

Aviation

8 December, p. 1

We hasten to inform our readers, men and women, that from 8 through 11 December Blériot's monoplane (the one with which he crossed the English Channel) will be on exhibit in the hall of the Skating Rink on the Grand Rue de Pera, from 9 o'clock in the morning to 11 o'clock at night.

Aviation

10 December, p. 1

The celebrated Monsieur Blériot is expected to arrive in Constantinople today, Friday 10 December, by a ship of the Romanian Maritime Lines. He will be received at the landing by the French Colony, representatives of the press, and various notables of Constantinople.

We have learned that Monsieur Blériot has been hired for 200,000 francs to make ten flights in America. A special viewing stand will be constructed for his Majesty the Sultan who has expressed a desire to attend Blériot's takeoff on Sunday.

Blériot

(Here follows an account of Blériot's reception in Paris after his flight across the English Channel. At the end, the article states: Blériot can be assured of the cordiality of our greeting and of the joy that we will have next Sunday to echo the applause of Paris in celebration of his crossing of the Bosphorus after crossing the English Channel.)

Blériot in Constantinople

13 December, p. 1

Thus as we have already said, Blériot spent the morning and part of the afternoon reconnoitering the field from which he would fly the next day.

But one is led to believe that he did it a bit summarily, for it seems to us that, with greater familiarity of the place, the deplorable accident could have been avoided, unless the violence of the wind alone made it unavoidable. Thus, we must regret that the flight had not been postponed.

But we are ahead of ourselves, . . .

At the French Union

At five o'clock Blériot arrived at the French Union where the Colony gave a reception of wine and hors d'oeuvres in his honor. Madame Blériot accompanied him. Their numerous compatriots, many with their families, eagerly received them.

The gathering soon took on the intimate ambiance that the French know how to provide to show their affection. Monsieur Alexis Rey, President of the Union, greeted, in a few hearty words, the bold aviator who had made himself famous by an amazing feat, and wished him further triumphs while including Madame Blériot in his glory.

In a few words, Blériot thanked the Colony for the great honor that they had paid him and formally gave his best wishes for its prosperity.

The Lecture

At nine o'clock (in the evening), Blériot gave a lecture on aviation at the Skating Palace where his monoplane has been on display.

He explained in a few succinct phrases the tentative beginning of his research: his first aeroplane, then his second, his third and so on up to number 11, which is the present monoplane and which is the one he considers to be perfect.

Then he recounted his crossing of the English Channel speaking with great simplicity of this great feat, for this intrepid aviator is quite modest.

His words were a bit lost in the great space of the Skating Palace, which has the worst acoustics imaginable. And as if one had wished to increase the

difficulty, a great curtain pulled in front of the speaker and hanging down just to the little table before which he sat, trapped, as it were, his words and sent them up to the ceiling, only letting a few weak sounds into the hall. Judging by what one could manage to grasp, there would have been great interest in what he had to say if he had been audible. Nevertheless, the large number of people who had come to hear Blériot thoughtfully applauded him.

The Sunday Flight

It was a great day.

From the morning, the excitement in Pera was extraordinary. The streets were crowded by 9 o'clock, for already everyone was heading for Taksim. Nothing was there at that time, but the curious were impatient.

A crowd of street vendors had taken up positions at Taksim and they must have struck gold, for many of the pedestrians had had only a few bites of breakfast for fear of missing the show.

At noon people began to swarm into the Parade Ground and continued to do so until 3 o'clock. The procession was interminable and passed through all four entrances, engulfing the great place. This doesn't count those who entered by various devious methods.

The takeoff was announced for 2 o'clock, but the experienced well knew that it would not take place until 3:30. These demonstrations are expensive, and one had to be concerned with the receipts and to give the latecomers time to arrive in order to take in as much as possible.

The latecomers, unfortunately, rarely reached the ticket booths and were confined to the street where the crowd was so dense one could not pass. The trams could no longer get through. There were people wherever one turned. The terraces, the balconies, and the roofs were full of spectators. On the roof of Taksim Barracks, the officers cast their view on the Parade Ground, the full extent of which they could take in at one glance. Their observation point was excellent but hardly convenient, for the steep slope of the roof made it quite uncomfortable.

Across the way, the slope of the Tatavla heights was black with a teeming crowd. And there the situation was far more comfortable, as one could stretch out on the grass. The inhabitants of Tatavla were quite privileged; they had the Parade Ground at their feet and didn't miss a thing that

occurred there. They could follow the movements of the monoplane, when it was pulled from the hangar, and admire it for a long time at their leisure, for it remained there before their eyes for two hours. The details may have escaped them, but they could console themselves with the fact that they hadn't paid a cent!

It was estimated that a crowd of 10,000 people entered the Parade Ground, and another 10,000 were in the streets, and yet another 10,000 were on the terraces, roofs, and balconies. Thus, there were 30,000 spectators all told. If everyone had paid a fee, the enterprise would not have been in the red, but only a third of those present opened their wallets and that was not enough to cover the expenses.

The bleachers inside were all full. Pera society made a good showing for itself. The diplomatic corps was largely, if not completely, represented as were the leading state officials and the officer corps, in short, the upper crust of the capital.

The French Ambassador had come, despite being somewhat ill, and was accompanied by Madame Bompard. Blériot came to greet them in their loge and took them over to the plane and explained this machine to them.

But time was passing, two o'clock had passed some time ago and the takeoff still didn't appear to be at hand. The crowd gave signs of impatience and wondered if the brisk breeze, which would only increase rather than diminish, wouldn't in the end make it impossible.

And, in fact, several people we know advised Blériot to put it off. Blériot responded that the wind didn't worry him and that he would take off at 3:30.

The Flight

And, in effect, the preparations for the flight were soon made. When the machine was ready, Blériot calmly placed himself in his seat. It was 3:40. The motor started and, just as the noise was faintly heard, the plane shook and rolled on its wheels a dozen meters. Then it lifted off lightly and soared gracefully into the sky.

Everyone applauded.

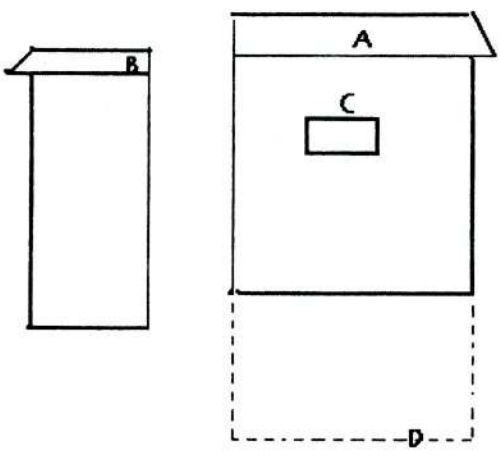
The machine flew at full speed and after a minute became quite small because the speed was so great. Before two minutes were up, he passed over the crowd gathered at Tatavla. From this distance, he truly had the

appearance of a bird, and, despite the wind, he maintained perfect balance. He banked to the left and the corner of the hill at the end of the Parade Ground suddenly hid him from us. That was it. We could no longer see him.

And, alas, we would not see him again!

The Accident

Had Blériot a more exact knowledge of the area, he could perhaps have avoided the obstacles that he encountered along his way. But he didn't have such knowledge. He had but twice glanced around this side of town without having been able, doubtlessly, to implant in his mind the complete topography of the hilly terrain that he would cross, almost totally covered with rather high houses. Furthermore, he was not able to gain enough elevation in the short space of the three kilometers flown, and his altitude, which was not more than twenty meters, could not be maintained while going over a hill. And, after having crossed the valley of Bülbüldere, he had one before him that he had to cross being surrounded by houses on the right and left. Thus, he headed straight on. This hill was also crowned with houses, but he hoped to be able to ascend sufficiently to pass over them. He tried his best to do so ... Unfortunately, he didn't have enough distance in front of him to execute this maneuver and when he reached one of the houses, the plane hit the roof. He couldn't clear it. Stopped in flight, the plane bounced off and fell into the garden a few meters from the house. It fell, fortunately, on the garden fence, which broke the fall.



A.Part of the roof where the plane struck, damaging it.

B. Corner also hit by the plane and slightly damaged.

C.Balcony filled with people who quickly retreated when the plane hit.

D.Point where the plane fell, damaging the fence.

Blériot didn't leave his seat. Being attached to the wings of the plane, he was bruised slightly on the right hand. And the shock, even though broken as we just mentioned, was nevertheless so severe that his whole body was violently shaken. He had no apparent injuries, but did have sharp internal pains.

Blériot got out of the wreckage on his own and was pleased to find himself on his feet in one piece. Several young men directed him to the Greek gymnastic club, Hercules, where he was able to lie down. He went on foot accompanied by the young men. Drs. Gurdjidès, Macridès, Tiverios, Erlanger and Photiadès were on hand and they examined him right away. They determined that he had a contusion of the kidneys and another of the hand.

Madame Blériot

In the meantime, back at the Parade Ground, not seeing the aviator reappear, we began to worry, then to suspect an accident, and finally to believe the worst.

Madame Blériot was not able to sit still, anxiously scanning the horizon. Soon we saw an officer on horseback in the distance. He came to tell us that there was an accident and explained where the aviator could be found.

Madame Blériot jumped in her car with an embassy marine and headed with great speed toward Tatavla. She found him at the Hercules Club and I shall leave you to imagine with what emotion she embraced him

The doctors reassured her about his injuries from the crash.

As a car might jolt the aviator excessively, a chair with porters was offered to Blériot. The doctors recommended that he not walk at all. So it was on this chair carried by porters–to the enthusiastic cries of the populace of Tatavla coming from all sides shouting in unison "Vive Blériot! Vive Madame Blériot! Vive la France!"–that the aviator reached the French Hospital.

At the Hospital

There, the doctors Arié and Remlinger, as well as the embassy doctor examined him thoroughly. At the end of their examination, they issued the following bulletin:

Contusion in the region of the left spleen. Presently in satisfactory condition.

As for the internal pains, the doctors stated that they could not yet determine their cause. Madame Blériot stayed at her husband's bedside.

Such was the Sunday that started out so well, but finished so badly. We express our wishes for the quick recovery of Blériot and the continuation of a career in which he has already shown the way and in which he will have many more triumphs.

The City
News of Blériot
14 December, p. 1

The doctors' bulletin published this morning at eight o'clock states, "All danger of complications and internal injuries are dispelled. But the patient must continue to remain immobile and not receive visitors. Condition satisfactory."

The City
15 December, p. 1

We learned from the best source that Monsieur Blériot's condition is quite satisfactory and that his complete recovery is certain. Here is the bulletin given out this afternoon by Dr. Arié and which is simply a repetition of that of the morning:

"All fear of internal injuries is dispelled. Present and general condition satisfactory. Immobility and rest are still necessary. Thus all visits are forbidden."

Madame Blériot receives most graciously all those who come to inquire after the state of the health of the admired and courageous aviator. The Grand Vizier himself sought the news via one of his aides and was followed by several high officials and ministers.

Monsieur Blériot at Tatavla
15 December, p. 2

Monsieur Blériot's mechanic, having gone to Tatavla the day before yesterday in order to get the airplane, in the name of his boss, thanked the Tatvliotes, declaring that as soon as he is released Blériot will come in person to express his thanks. Monsieur Caroizieris, of the Hercules Gymnastic Club replied that the people of Tatavla had simply done their duty and that they would be pleased if Monsieur Blériot would wish to give them his photograph to be placed in the hall of the gymnastic team as a souvenir of his visit to Tatavla. The mechanic responded that he would gladly make known their desire to Monsieur Blériot.

The gymnastic club of Tatavla, having gathered for a special meeting, decided to admit Monsieur Blériot as an honorary member.

The City
18 December, p. 1.

Monsieur Blériot, having felt completely recovered yesterday morning, was able to say good-by to the hospital where he has been since Sunday evening. Monsieur and Madame Blériot left Constantinople in the afternoon by the Orient Express heading back to Paris.

Fig. 1- Approximate routes flown by de Caters and Blériot

THE LEVANT HERALD AND EASTERN EXPRESS Constantinople, 30 Novembre 1909

Mardi le 17/30 Novembre 1909

entre 2 heures et 3 heures de l'après-midi

Le célèbre Aviateur

BARON DE CATERS

VOLERA

SUR LA PLACE DE LA COLLINE DE LA LIBERTÉ

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Papeterie ZELLICH FILS, Grande Rue de Péra No 351, et au PERA PALACE à Péra

Fig. 2- Advertisement for de Caters' first flight in *The Levant Herald*

Fig. 3- Advertisement for Blériot's flight in *Yeni Gazete*, 3 December, 1909

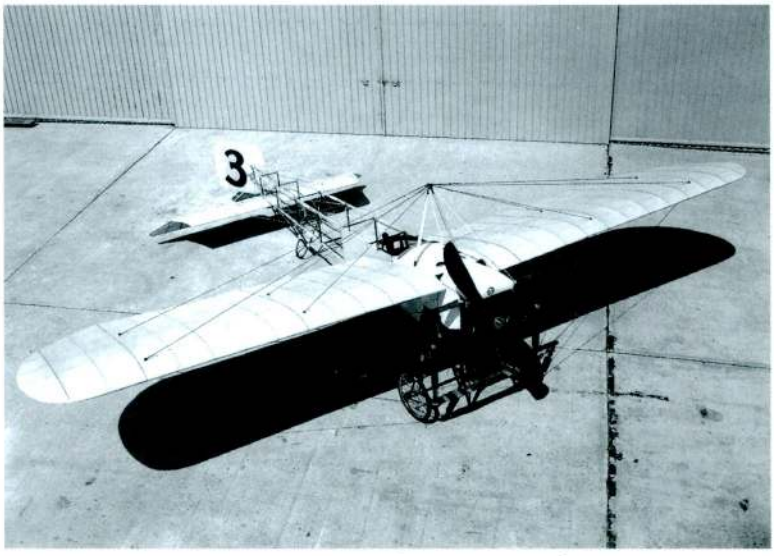


Fig. 4- The Blériot XI aircraft, the type flown over İstanbul. Photo courtesy of the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution, nr. 79-4641

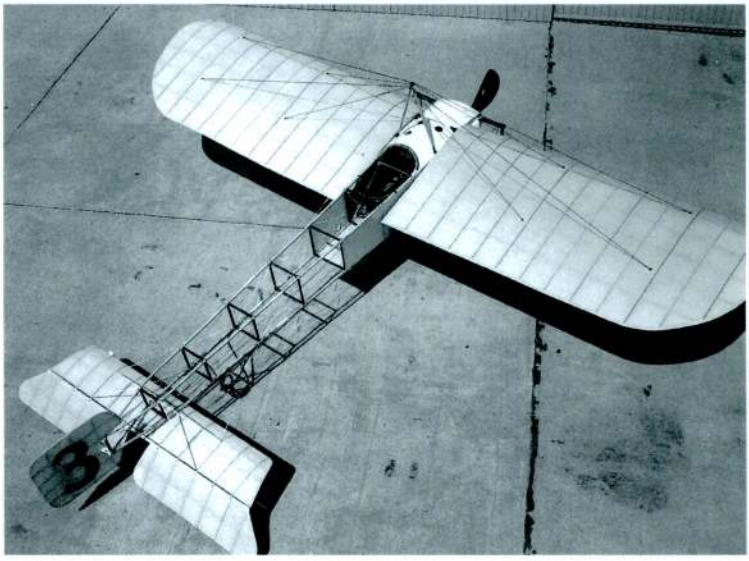


Fig. 5- The Blériot XI aircraft, the type flown over İstanbul. Photo courtesy of the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution, nr. 79-4638

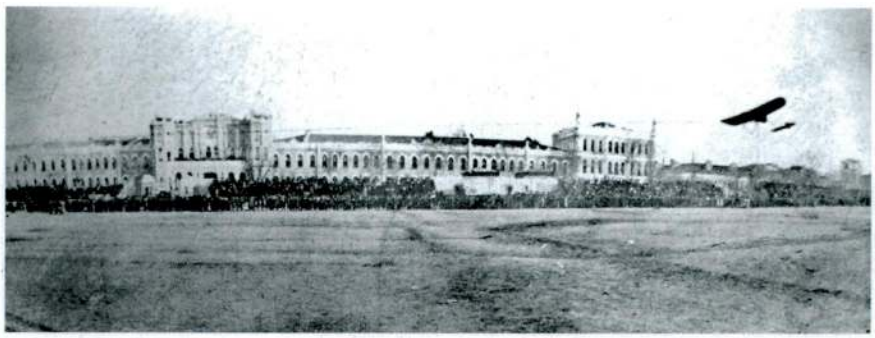


Fig. 6- Blériot's takeoff from the Taksim Parade Ground

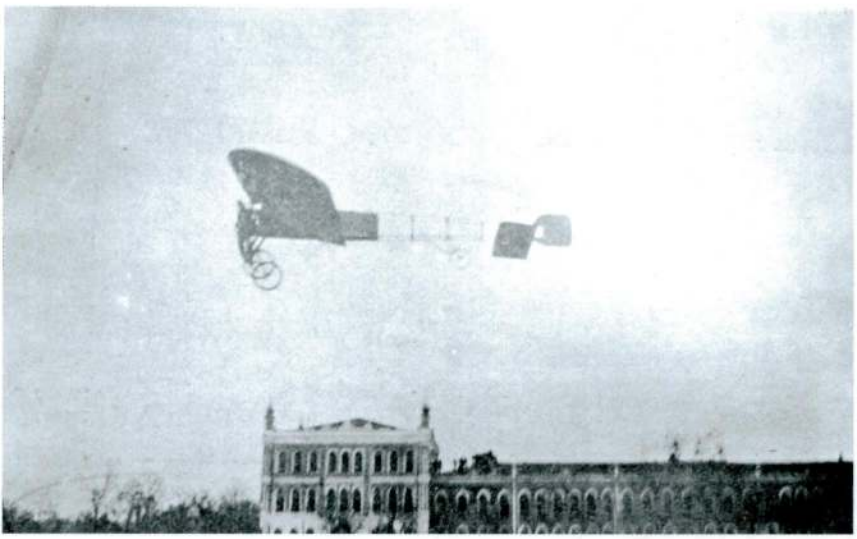


Fig. 7- Blériot's takeoff from the Taksim Parade Ground

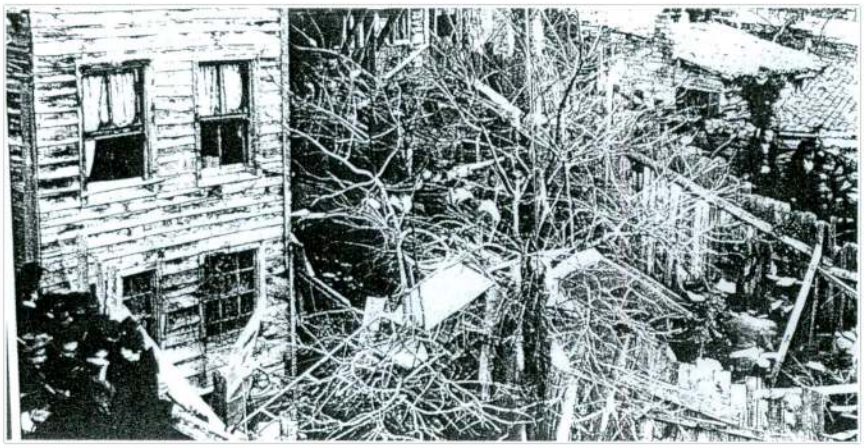
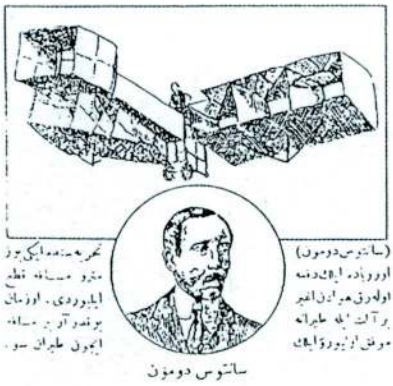


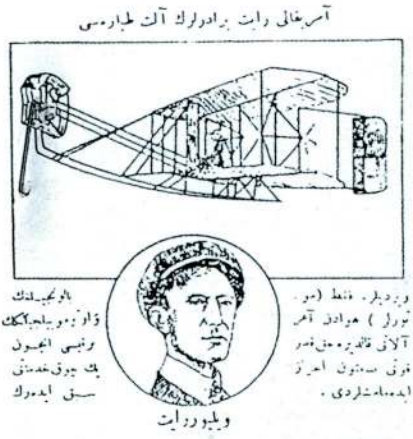
Fig. 8- Blériot's crash site at Tatavla, İstanbul. Photo © Musée de l'Air et de l'Escape / le Bourget, MA29080

Fig. 9- Banner of *Yeni Tesvîr-i Efkâr*



سانتوس دومون

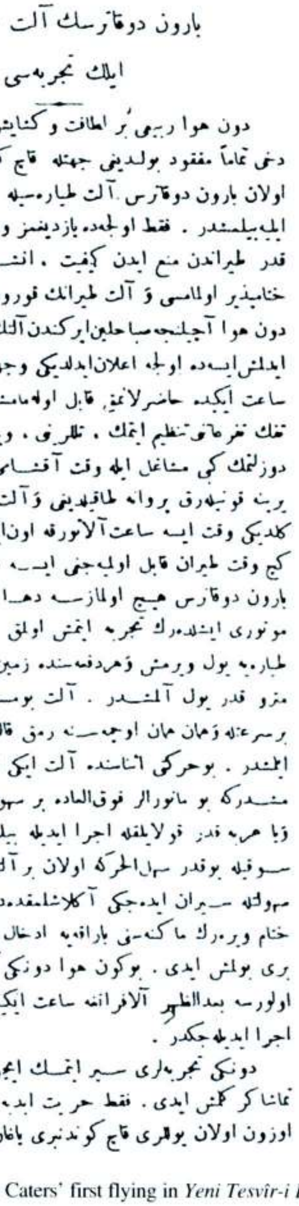
Fig. 10- Santos-Dumont and his flying machine as depicted in *Yeni Tesvîr-i Efkâr*



ویلبور رایت

Fig. 11- Wilbur Wright and his flying machine as depicted in *Yeni Tesvîr-i Efkâr*

Fig. 12- Blériot and his flying machine as depicted in *Yeni Tesvîr-i Efkâr*



بارون دوقاترسك آلت طياره ايله

ايلك تجربه‌سی

دون هوا ربيعی بر لطافت و كنايشی حائز اوله‌رق روزكار
دخی تماماً مفقود بولديغی جهتله قاج كوندنبری حاضرلانمقده
اولان بارون دوقاترس آلت طياره‌سيله ايلك تجربه‌سنی اجرا
ايده‌بيلمشدر . فقط اوليجه‌ده يازديغمز وجهله بارونی شيمدی‌يه
قدر طيراندن منع ايدن كيفيت . انشا ايتديرديكی بارافه‌نك
ختاميذير اولماسی و آلت طيرانك قورولمامش بولنمسی ايدی .
دون هوا آچيلنجه صباحلين ايركندن آلتك تنظيم و ترتيبنه مباشرت
ايدلمش ايسه‌ده اوليجه اعلان ايدلديكی وجهله بعدالظهر آلافرانغه
ساعت ايكيده حاضرلانمق قابل اوله‌مامشدر . حتی آلتك اوفق
تفك تفرعاتی تنظيم ايتمك ، تللرينی ، ويده‌لرينی طاقق ، يللرينی
دوزلتمك كبی مشاغل ايله وقت آقشامی بولمش و موتور دخی
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كلديكی وقت ايسه ساعت آلافرانغه اون ايكی بولمشدر . بو قدر
كچ وقت طيران قابل اوله‌جغی ايسه طبيعی ايدی . مع مافيه
بارون دوقاترس هيچ اولمازسه دها يكی كتيرلمش اولديغی
موتوری ايشلده‌رك تجربه ايتمش اولمق اوزره ايكی دفعه آلت
طياره‌يه يول ويرمش و هر دفعه‌سنده زمين اوزرندن اوچر يوز
مترو قدر يول آلمشدر . آلت بو مسافه‌لری فوق العاده
بر سرعتله و همان اوچه‌جق رمق قاله‌جق بر صورتده طی
ايتمشدر . بو حركتی اثناسنده آلت ايكی اوچ دفعه دائره چيز .
مشدر كه بو مانورالر فوق العاده بر سهولتله و عادتا اوتوموبيل
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سوقيله بو قدر سهل الحركه اولان بر آلتك هواده دخی عين
سهولتله سيران ايده‌جكی آكلاشلمقده‌در . بارون تجربه‌سنه
ختام ويره‌رك ماكنه‌سنی بارافه‌يه ادخال ايلديكی زمان ساعت
بری بولمش ايدی . بوكون هوا دونكی كبی كتاده وساكن
اولورسه بعدالظهر آلافرانغه ساعت ايكيده اصل تجربهٔ طيران
اجرا ايدله‌جكدر .

دونكی تجربه‌لری سير ايتمك ايچون بش آلتی يوز قدر
تماشاكر كلمش ايدی . فقط حريت ابديه تپه‌سنك ابديت قدر
اوزون اولان يوللری قاج كوندنبری ياغان ياغمورلر ايله چامور

Fig. 13- The account of de Caters' first flying in *Yeni Tesvîr-i Efkâr*

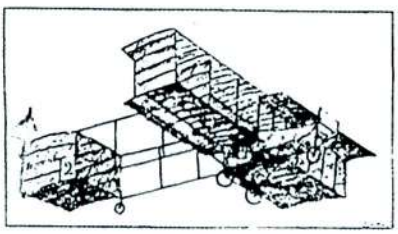

Fig. 14- De Caters' aircraft as depicted in *Yeni Tesvîr-i Efkâr*

Fig. 15- Blériot as depicted in *Yeni Tesvîr-i Efkâr*

Vol. XXXVIII. No. 288 — 10 PARAS — Constantinople, Wednesday, December 8 (Mercredi 8 Décembre) 1909

THE LEVANT HERALD

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Fig. 16- Banner of *The Levant Herald*