

A FAREWELL TO IMPERIAL ISTANBUL

A compelling tale of family, duty, and resilience unfolds amidst the magnificence and splendour of Imperial Istanbul during the twilight years of the Ottoman Empire.

For over six centuries the history of the Turks and their vast and powerful Empire was intertwined with the Ottoman Dynasty.

1922-1924: As the Ottoman Empire crumbles in the wake of the Great War, so too do the fortunes of the House of Osman and their Imperial capital of İstanbul.

Emboldened by victory in the Turkish War of Independence, the Turkish Nationalist Government abolishes the Ottoman Sultanate, bringing an end to over six centuries of Ottoman rule. Although the Ottoman Caliphate endures for now, İstanbul is stripped of its Imperial mantle and mourns its lost glory. Amidst this tumultuous period, Prince Nihad navigates the shifting political landscape with deep concern for his nation and the fate of the Imperial family. Meanwhile, his son, Prince Vâsib, envisions a peaceful future following the Treaty of Lausanne and yearns to see his city liberated from foreign occupation.

A Farewell To Imperial Istanbul was written as a personal homage to the author's family, to commemorate the centenary of the exile of the Ottoman Imperial family from Türkiye in Spring 1924.



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Information Sheet

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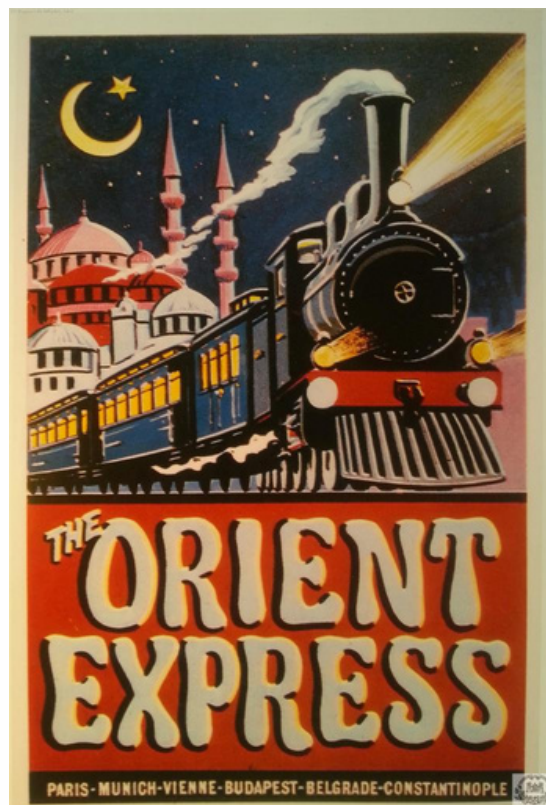


Excerpt

Onboard, armed police officers prowled the narrow corridors, their presence a chilling reminder of the coercive forces driving the mass expulsion. Vâsib shuddered as he noticed the revolvers holstered at their sides and the rifles slung over their shoulders, intended to ensure strict compliance of those forced to forsake their homeland. Assigned to accompany the train until it reached the Bulgarian border, many officers found themselves conflicted. Tears welled in the eyes of some, torn between their sworn duty and respect and empathy for the exiled passengers. Vâsib avoided eye contact with these men as he navigated the corridors, eventually locating his compartment.

The interiors of the carriage dazzled with art deco splendour, boasting rich colours, luxurious fabrics, and highly polished surfaces that epitomised the opulence of the Simplon-Orient-Express. As the final preparations concluded, a guard on the platform raised his whistle to his lips and blew a screeching note, a haunting prelude to the imminent departure. With a noticeable jolt, the train surged into motion, each rhythmic movement marking the beginning of a journey fraught with apprehension. The carriage gently swayed, and the steady clatter of wheels on tracks formed a mournful backdrop as the train pulled out of the station and began its solemn voyage.

Vâsib emerged from the compartment and stepped back into the corridor, forcefully lowering the carriage window, inviting the crisp İstanbul night air to sweep through. As the train gained momentum, he leant into the chilled breeze, casting a fleeting gaze at the shimmering lights twinkling in the homes across the city and whispered a final farewell to Imperial İstanbul.



🕒 Imran Mulla

AUTHOR & JOURNALIST for MIDDLE EAST EYE

“The book, ultimately, is a paean to a lost and largely forgotten world. The writing is elegant and often lyrical; towards the end it is imbued with a suitable air of tragedy.”

“Devastatingly beautiful and endlessly evocative, in *A Farewell to Imperial Istanbul* Princess Ayşe has produced a veritable masterpiece.”



Biography

Ayşe Osmanoğlu was born and raised in England. She is a member of the Ottoman Imperial family, descended from Sultan Murad V through her grandfather and Sultan Mehmed V through her grandmother. After reading History and Politics at the University of Exeter, she obtained an M.A. in Turkish Studies from SOAS, University of London, where she specialised in Ottoman History. Ayşe lives between Türkiye, France and the United Kingdom with her husband and five children.

Her research and literary works concentrate on the late Ottoman period, exploring narratives embedded in her Imperial heritage.

A Farewell to Imperial Istanbul is Ayşe's second book. Her debut novel, *The Gilded Cage on the Bosphorus*, was published in May 2020 and is the first book in the Ottoman Dynasty Chronicles Series.



Nadia Khan
AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

“This beautiful and emotional story narrates the last days of the Ottoman Empire - a symbol of leadership and protection of the Muslim world. It is ... a very poignant account, as [the author] beautifully shows the human side to the end of the Ottoman Empire, while also delving into important historical events.”

Press Release

**Ayşe Osmanoğlu Launches Second Historical Novel
A FAREWELL TO IMPERIAL ISTANBUL
on 29th May 2024 in Sussex, UK**

For Immediate Press Release

Ayşe Osmanoğlu is delighted to announce the publication of *A Farewell To Imperial Istanbul*, written as a personal homage to the author's family to commemorate the centenary of the exile of the Ottoman Imperial family from Türkiye in Spring 1924.

Ayşe Osmanoğlu's new book, is a compelling tale of family, duty, and resilience which unfolds amidst the magnificence and splendour of Imperial Istanbul during the twilight years of the Ottoman Empire. It tells the intimate story of members of the House of Osman as they navigate the shifting political landscape caused by the abolition of the Ottoman Sultanate and Caliphate, in the wake of the Great War.

The novel is the Top New Release in Amazon.com in various categories including History of Turkey and the Ottoman Empire, Historical Middle Eastern Fiction, and Historical World War I Fiction, and has received numerous positive reviews.



“Devastatingly beautiful and endlessly evocative, in *A Farewell to Imperial Istanbul* Princess Ayşe has produced a veritable masterpiece.” Imran Mulla, Author & Journalist

About the Author: Ayşe Osmanoğlu was born and raised in England, and is a member of the Ottoman Imperial family. After reading History and Politics at the University of Exeter, she obtained an M.A. in Turkish Studies from SOAS, University of London, where she specialised in Ottoman History. Her research and literary works concentrate on the late Ottoman period, exploring narratives embedded in her Imperial heritage. *A Farewell to Imperial Istanbul* is Ayşe's second book. Her debut novel, *The Gilded Cage on the Bosphorus*, was published in May 2020 and is the first book in the Ottoman Dynasty Chronicles Series.

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Interview Questions

What was the inspiration for this book?

2024 marks the centenary year of the exile of the Ottoman Imperial family from Türkiye. This book is my homage to commemorate my family, written to give them a voice and honour them for how resiliently they endured their fate.

In what ways does the setting of Imperial İstanbul play a character role in your story?

The setting of Imperial İstanbul is integral to my story, as it forms its backdrop and showcases the grandeur and power of the once-mighty Ottoman Empire. I wanted İstanbul to speak to readers as a living character, captivating them with its unique beauty – the elegance of the mosques' domes and minarets, the majestic splendour of the Imperial Palaces and waterfront mansions, and the vibrant colours of the ancient trees and blossoming flowers. Anyone who has visited the city knows that it pulses with life through the melodious sound of the muezzin's call to prayer, the shriek of seagulls, and the echo of street vendors, while the air is filled with the evocative scents of incense, rosewater, jasmine, and exotic spices. And flowing through its heart, ever constant, are the waters of the Bosphorus. İstanbul is very much a living, breathing entity, with an allure that I hope will capture the imagination of the readers and inspire them to visit one day.

Who is the main protagonist in your story?

My main character in my book is my grandfather, His Imperial Highness Prince Ali Vâsib, who emerges as a sensitive yet rebellious protagonist, motivated by a desire to challenge the status quo and usher in a new era of progress for his nation. He enjoys pursuits such as riding, hunting, and dancing with beautiful White Russian aristocrats at the thés dansants held at the Pera Palace Hotel! Vâsib's motivations stem from a distaste for the limitations imposed by his position and a frustration with conservative attitudes that resist change and modernisation. His character embodies youthful optimism and a longing for a liberated and more forward-thinking Turkey.

Which scene in your book was the most challenging to write, and why?

The most challenging scene to write was definitely the final one. It was deeply personal and emotional for me because it is based on the experiences of my grandparents at the moment they were forced to leave their homeland and go into exile. It was difficult as I really wanted to capture the depth of their emotions and the weight of their circumstances while creating an ending that was both poignant and reflective. I wanted to leave readers with a sense of closure while honouring the memory of my family.