

## THE ROLE OF THE TURKISH CULTURE ON THE TURKISH RULERS FROM PAST TO PRESENT

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### ÖZET

#### Geçmişten Günümüze Türk Kültürünün Türk İdareciler Üzerindeki Rolü

Tarihin hiçbir devrinde yeryüzünde belirli bir coğrafyada kendi başına yaşamış bir diğer millete karışmamış saf ve sade bir millete rastlamak mümkün değildir. Türk tarihine baktığımızda Türk milletinin Çinliler, Romalılar, Bizanslılar, Araplar, Rumlar ve daha birçok değişik milletle bir arada barış ve huzur içinde yaşadığı görülmektedir. Hiç şüphesiz yukarıda adı geçen milletlerle en uzun ve en insani ilişkilerin yaşanmasındaki temel faktör; maharetli ve barışçıl Türk idarecilerinin uyguladıkları şuurlu politikalarıdır.

Bu çalışmada Anadolu Selçuklu Türklerinden Osmanlılara, Osmanlılardan Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'ne kadar geçmişten günümüze savaş zamanı, savaş öncesi ve savaş sonrası bazı seçkin Türk idarecilerinin karakterlerinin, hoşgörülerinin, misafirperverliklerinin, dostluklarının, uyumluluklarının, sağlanmasında ve gelişmesinde Türk kültürünün rolünü ve etkilerini örnekleriyle ortaya koymaya çalıştık. Bunlardan Sultan Alp Aslan'ın 1071 Malazgirt (Mangizert) Savaşı'nda Bizans İmparatoru Romen Diyojen'e karşı tutum ve davranışlarını, II. Mehmet (Fatih Sultan Mehmet'in) 1453 yılında Bizans İmparatoru Konstantin Dragasa İstanbul'un fethi sırasındaki davranışlarını, 1916 yılında Halil Paşa'nın Irak Cephesinde esir alınan İngiliz Komutan General Townshend'e karşı davranışlarını ve Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk'ün 1922 yılında Bağımsızlık Savaşı sırasında Yunanlı esirlere ve Yunan Generali Trikopis'e karşı olan tutum ve davranışlarından kısa bir kesit sunmaya çalıştık.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Türk kültürü, hoşgörü, savaş, savaş esirleri.

### ABSTRACT

It is almost impossible to find a pure community or a nation lived alone without associating with another nation on the specified geography in any period of the world history on the Earth. When we look back to the Turkish history the Turks lived together with Chinese, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Greeks and so many other nations. No doubt that the best and long lasting relations have been exercised and managed with the above nations by the skillful and peaceful Turkish rulers and their conscious diplomacy.

In this study, we tried to put out the role and the effects of the Turkish Culture on the Turkish Rulers in the development of their character, tolerance, attitude, hospitality, friendship, cooperation and coordination of some distinguished Turkish Rulers beginning from Seljuk Turks, Ottomans and to the Republic of Turkey before, during and after the war. Such as Sultan Alp Arslan's attitudes and treatments towards Romanos Diogenes, emperor of Byzantine Empire in 1071 AD with the Malazgirt War. II. Mehmet's attitude towards the Byzantine emperor Constantine Dragases in 1453, Halil Pasha's attitude towards the British Commander General Townshend in the Iraq Front in 1916 and Atatürk's attitude towards the war of prisoners and Greece' Armed Forces Commander Trikopis in the independence war of Turkey in 1922.

**Key Words:** Turkish culture, tolerance, war, prisoners of war.

### **The Concept of Culture**

In order to understand the Role of Culture we should know the meaning of culture before the effects of culture on the Turkish Rulers and we have to ask the question: What is culture? Culture comes from the agricultural field – to work on and cultivate the fields and other parts of nature. However, the concept of culture has grown and covers much more than this. Culture is what people have developed together, what they share and how they live together (Kafesoğlu, 2003: 15). One definition says:

“Culture is the ideas, values, rules, norms, codes and symbols a human being takes over from the previous generation, and which one tries to bring further – usually somewhat changed – to the next generation.” (Turan, 1990: 12-13).

This definition is descriptive and general; it can apply to any culture. It says that our culture is about the ideas we hold, e.g. of what is right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful or ugly. It also talks about culture as our values, e.g. love for the neighbor, honesty, righteousness, obedience, equality, friendliness etc. What values that are emphasized in each society are an important part of the culture. In some cultures competition is emphasized, in others cooperation, in some the fellowship and in others individual performance. Rules and norms – what is appreciated and what is not allowed in a society-is part of the culture. How to behave when you are happy or sad, when you meet and leave; how to act when somebody is born or has died, when you want to marry or go for a visit. It is all part of culture. What you eat and how you eat, how you meet and how you greet.

The culture represents experiences, values, behaviors, skills, traditions etc. that we have received from the previous generation, from our forefathers. Culture is what they have learned in life and found as good, workable and beautiful. Moreover, they try to pass it on to the next generation so that they should also have a good life (Kincal, 2002; 3-4; Turan, 1990; 11- 15).

## **Culture and Atatürk**

Among the prominent statesman of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, few articulated the supreme importance of culture as did Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Modern Turkish Republic, who stated and underlined that: “Culture is the foundation of the Turkish Republic” his view of culture encompassed the nation’s creative legacy as well as the best values of world civilization. It stressed personal and universal humanism. Culture, he said, “is a basic element in being a person worthy of humanity,” and described Turkey’s ideological thrust as “a creation of patriotism blended with a lofty humanist idea”

To create the best synthesis, Atatürk underlined the need for the utilization of all viable elements in the national heritage, including the ancient indigenous cultures, and the arts and techniques of the entire world civilization, past and present (Renda-Kortepeter, 1986; 26-28). He gave impetus to the study of earlier civilizations of Anatolia-including Hittite, Phrygian, Lydian and others. Pre-Islamic culture of the Turks became the subject of extensive research, which proved that, long before the Seljuk and ottoman Empires, the Turks had already created a civilization of their own. Atatürk also stressed the folk arts and folklore of the countryside as wellspring of Turkish creativity (<http://www.club.ps.edu.7up/ts/infiturkey.html>).

### **Battle of Malazgirt, 19 August 1071 (Byzantine Empire)**

The Seljuk Turks had been threatening the eastern borders of the Byzantine empire for some years, without posing any significant threat, but in 1071 their leader, Sultan Alp Arslan, gathered a huge force, perhaps even as large as 100,000 men, and invaded the eastern empire (Köymen, 1972: 133). The Byzantine Emperor, Romanus Diogenes, had gained the throne through marriage, and ruled as joint emperor with his step-son. He had only been on the throne since 1068. In addition, was not yet firmly established. The Turks had crossed the border, and taken fortresses of Akhlat and Malazgirt. Romanus Diogenes gathered a huge army, although he was still outnumbered by the Turks, and advanced to the border, where he recaptured Akhlat and was besieging Malazgirt when the Turks arrived. The Byzantine army formed up, and advanced towards the Turks, who refused to stand and fight, instead using the mobility of their horse-archers to harry the advancing Byzantines. Eventually after several hours, Romanus Diogenes ordered the withdrawal, intending to return to his camp for the night. The withdrawal was not as smooth as the advance, and some gaps opened in the line (Çetin, Kutluay, Avlar, 2002; 68-69). The Turks harried the retreating columns, until the Emperor gave the order to turn and fight. At this point treachery played apart in the disaster. The rearguard, commanded by Andronicus Ducas, an enemy of Romanus Diogenes, simply continued back to the camp, ignoring the order to turn, and leaving the main army to its fate. Once the rearguard was gone, the Turks were able to outflank the Byzantines, and eventually surround them. To

make things worse, one flank of the Byzantine army was sufficiently detached from the main force for it to be forced to fight separately. The Byzantines held out until dark, but eventually that were overwhelmed. The Emperor himself was captured, and the bulk of the army destroyed.

The main result of the battle was to leave Asia Minor totally at the mercy of the Turks. Their bands were able to devastate what is now modern Turkey almost at will, while what was left of the Byzantine army was involved in the civil wars that followed the defeat. What had been flourishing, fertile, long settled areas in the heart of the Byzantine Empire became virtual desert. Within ten years of the battle of Malazgirt, the Turks had reached Nicea, within sight of the capital of the Empire. Very few battles had such dramatic and far-reaching effects (Çetin, Kutluay, Avlar, 2002: 68-69), (Gülcan, 2003: 98-100)

Emperor Romanus Diogenes taken as a prisoner of war, and a huge bulk of the army destroyed. There is a historical dialogue between prisoner Romanus Diogenes and Sultan Alp Arslan. The dialogue continues as followings:

Sultan Alparslan (Köymen, 1968: 130-140):

– Didn't I send you an envoy to improve the friendship among our nations? However, you refused. Even I sent you a representative and requested you to come back and improve relations with us. However, you rejected our invitation. Even you spent a lot of money and formed a huge army to attack us. How did you find the result of challenging to us? (Romanus Diogenes have been cuffed from legs and standing in front of Sultan Alp Arslan and a huge of garden of Tulips)

– What's this?

Romanus Diogenes: (Taneri, 1975: 71-74).

– I collected soldiers from different tribes and spend a huge amount of money to form an army. My state and my fortune are in your hands. Whatever you desire you have right to do it on me and even my state. Don't appreciate don't be merciful!

Sultan Alp Arslan:

– What did you do if you win the war and capture me?

Romanus Diogenes:

– Either slaughter your neck immediately or hang you in the gibbet.

Sultan Alp Arslan: (Alp Arslan mumbles to himself).

– You confessed the truth. You are a frank and intelligent person. Your dead punishment is not valid from now on. You are free and I for give you.

“With a loud voice” What do you think I will do you?

Romanus Diogenes:

There are three alternatives:

First, you will kill me, second you will display me in the states that you will attack. The third alternative is not important to tell because you will not full fill it for me.

Sultan Alp Arslan:

– “What’s that?”

Emperor Romanus Diogenes:

– “Forgiveness” You should accept the money I’ll offer you. You accept me as a friend, slave, or return me to my country as an emperor.

Sultan Alp Arslan

– I didn’t think anything else accept the forgiving you. You do buy yourself!

Emperor Romanus Diogenes

– “Sultan should order what he desires?”

Sultan Alp Arslan:

– Ten Million dinar”

Emperor Romanus Diogenes:

– If you forgive me. You have right to demand even my state. However, I spent all the money for the sake of war. The people of the my state became poor”.

After the agreement with Emperor Romanus Diogenes, he was released and sent to his country back. While he was returning to his country, Mihael Ducas made himself emperor of Byzantine. Moreover, the ex-emperor Romanus Diogenes was caught by the soldiers of Ducas and punished by drilling his eyes (Anonim, 2002: 69-70). After some time the ex-emperor Romanus Diogenes died and the agreement between sultan Alp Arslan and Romanus Diogenes abolished automatically.

## **Mehmet II**

Mehmet II was born on 29 March 1432, in Edirne. He was the son of Sultan Murad II. His mother was Huma Hatun. He was a tall, strong and muscular man.

Mehmet II was a statesman and a military leader. He was also interested in literature, fine arts and monumental architecture. Famous scholar Aksemseddin educated him. Mehmet was speaking seven languages fluently. Another worthy tribute to the Ottoman ruler is the famous portrait of him by Gentile Bellini. He also interested in philosophy and science. He invited Ali Kuscu the famous astronomer to the observatory in Istanbul.

Mehmet II was ascended the throne in his 20<sup>th</sup> year. He took the name “conqueror” (fatih) after the conquest of Istanbul on 29 May 1453 (Gülcan, 2003: 185-189).

The conquest of Istanbul spelled the end of the Byzantine Empire and entered a phase of urban revival under the wise and tolerant administrations of Mehmet and his immediate successors. The capture of Istanbul was followed by a long succession of campaigns, which resulted in a tremendous extension of direct Ottoman rule. Among those areas that fell to Mehmet II were Serbia, Greece, the Empire of Trebizond, Wallachia, Bosnia, Karaman, Albania and several Venetian and Genoese maritime establishments (Taneri, 1975: 102).

He ruled the Ottoman Empire for 30 years and joined 25 campaigns himself. He was a very strict statesman and a very brave soldier. He commanded his army during the battles and he encouraged his soldiers (Tansel, 1971: 100-109).

From the moment of his accession all Mehmet’s thoughts were directed to the great enterprise of giving the mortal blow to the Byzantine Empire and transferring the seat of his government to Istanbul, as the natural capital of a dominion situated on both sides of the Golden Horn (Halic).

Fatih was aware of the fact that, the capture of Istanbul would bring a commercial and cultural richness to his Empire. Moreover, he would take control of the straits and the Black Sea. The famous engineers of the time, as Musluhiddin and Saruca Sekban designed new cannons. Those huge cannons had a great role during the conquest.

On the European side, about five miles above the city, where the channel is the narrowest, Sultan Mehmet raised a fortress opposite to one on the Asiatic side, which had been erected by his predecessor Yildirim Bayezid. These fortifications were called the castles of Europe (Roumelia) and Asia (Anatolia). They were intended to command the intervening waters and to secure a point constituted by nature on the high road for both continents.

During those preparations, the peace treaties with Walachia and Serbia were renovated and a peace treaty was signed with the Hungarians (Osmanlılar Albümü, 1999: 45-47).

The Byzantine Empire was preparing as well. They were stored food for a possible long term siege and they were restoring the city walls. The Byzantine Emperor Constantine heard of the rise of massive towers in his neighborhood and his anxiety had increased. He asked for the help of the Christian World, but the Pope desired to unify the Orthodox and the Catholic Churches together and the struggle between two Churches had been raised, the Emperor had to forget a new Crusade.

## **The Siege and the War**

After the preparations had been completed Vezir Mahmut Pasha has been sent as an envoy to Byzantine emperor of Constantinople, Constantine XI, to surrender Constantinople without any blood shed. The inhabitants of Constantinople will remain in the city without any problem and their property; life will be under the protection and guaranty of the Turkish rulers. However, this offer has been rejected kindly. After the rejection of the Ottoman's, offer the final preparations of war started on sixth of April 1453.

In April 1453, Sultan Mehmet invested the city with an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men, desolated the environs and confined the inhabitants within their walls. The army was divided in to three sections, central, left and right. In April 19, the first attack was made. Roller towers were constructed to reach the city walls.

There was a very bloody war going on and the Venetian and Genose navies were helping the Byzantine Empire. Mehmet had realized that unless the Ottoman Navy did not involve in the war, it would very difficult to capture the city. However, the entrances of the Golden Horn (Istanbul Strait) were surrounded with huge chains and it was impossible to enter. As a genius commander, Sultan Mehmet had designed a mechanism to slide the ships from the land to the sea. Huge slides were built, they were oiled, and the ships were moved downwards, on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 72 Turkish ships were located on the Golden Horn and began to bombard the city walls.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 1453, some huge holes have been opened on the walls of Constantinople castle by the attack of Ottomans army. After the serious exhaustion of the Byzantine army, Mehmet II sent an envoy for the second time to surrender the city before final attack. Moreover, the followings offered to the Byzantine emperor of Constantinople, Constantine XI, in order to surrender Constantinople without any objection. If Constantine XI surrenders the city, the emperor will be permitted to go any where in the world by taking his property, his treasure with his family. Even he wishes he can be appointed as an Autocrat of Rome. The inhabitants of Constantinople can leave the city without any restriction taking their valuable materials. If they want to stay in the city, their property will be under the safety and guaranty of the ottoman rulers. Unfortunately, the Byzantine emperor of Constantinople, Constantine XI, also rejects the second offer.

Because of the long and bloody wars, the Ottoman Army began to lose faith, but, Sultan Mehmet never lost his faith and bravery, he made an oration to his soldiers and declared that on May 29, the fatal attack will be made and Istanbul will be captured. As he told, 29 May the fatal attack was made and a company led by

Hassan of Ulubad crossed the ruins in the ditch, gained the breach and mastered the position. The Emperor Constantine fell in defending it. Finally Istanbul has fallen.

The siege took 53 days; there were four great attacks of Sultan Mehmet's army; one in April 19, one in May 6, one in May 12 and the last one in May 29. In the end, 1125 years old, Byzantine Empire had ended and Istanbul became a Turkish city.

After the Conquest of Istanbul, Mehmet the Conqueror had many campaigns in Europe. He invaded Serbia (1454-1459), Morea (1460), Walachia (1462), Moldavia (1476), Bosnia, Albania and he marched Morea Italy and captured Otranto but after his death, the city was lost again (**Osmanlı Albümü**, 1999: 57).

### **Mesopotamia (Iraq) front During The First World War**

One danger presented by the Turks was that they could disrupt Britain's oil supply from Persia. To prevent this, the India Office sent a force under by General Nixon to secure the head of the Persian Gulf, and by the end of November 1914, they had captured Basra. This secured the pipeline, and should perhaps have been the end of this campaign, but Nixon and his subordinate, Major General Charles Townshend, wanted to advance further up the Tigris towards Baghdad. They gained permission to do so, and Townshend was sent up the river, advancing to Kut-ul-Amara, well over half way to Baghdad, where he defeated a Turkish army, battle of Kut, 27-28 September 1915, and occupied the city (Karal, 1996: 486). Townshend wanted to stop here, but now the India office decided on an attack on Baghdad, and from 11-22 November Townshend marched up the river before reaching Ctesiphon, where he was turned back by the Turks (battle of Ctesiphon, 22-26 November 1915), and forced to retreat to Kut, where he was soon besieged by the Turks (7 December 1915-29 April 1916). After three attempts to relief him failed, Townshend was forced to surrender, along with some 8,000 men, remaining in Turkish captivity for the rest of the war. In August, Nixon was replaced by General Frederick Maude. By the end of 1916, he had rebuilt his force, and with 166,000 men started another advance up the Tigris. On 22-23 February 1917 he won the second battle of Kut, on 11 March captured Baghdad and on 27-28 September 1917 after an advance up the Euphrates won the battle of Ramadi (27-28 September 1917), but before he could continue north up the Tigris towards the oilfields of Mosul died of Cholera (18 November 1917). General William Marshall replaced him, but no more significant campaigning happened until October 1918, when a successful attempt was made to capture the Mosul oilfields before the war ended, with Mosul itself captured on 14 November 1918, after the end of the war.

### **The Siege of Kut-Ul Amara, 1916**

Following the failure of the Anglo-Indian attack Ctesiphon in November 1915 Sir Charles Townshend led his infantry force the 6<sup>th</sup> Division, on a wearisome retreat back to Kut-ul -Amara, arriving in early December.



Aware too that this force was exhausted and unable to retreat further Townshend resolved to stay and hold Kut, a town of key importance to the British presence in the region. In this regional Commander in Chief Sir John Nixon supported him. The War Office in London however favored a retreat still further south; however, by the time this news reached Townshend he was already under siege.

Consequently, the defense of Kut-sited in a loop of the River Tigris-was set in train ahead of the arrival of the besieging Turk force of 10,500 men on 7 December. However, Kut's very geographical formation in effect meant that Townshend and his men were effectively bottled up.

Nevertheless the division's cavalry were dispatched back to Basra the day before the arrival of the Turkish force 6 December 1915, since they were likely to prove of little use and yet a drain upon scarce resources during siege operations.

Leading the Turks were Nureddin and the German commander Baron von der Goltz. Their instructions were straightforward if steep: to force the British entirely from Mesopotamia.

Consequently Nureddin and von der Goltz attempted to pierce Kut's defences on three separate occasions in December; all however failed. Thus, the Turks set about blockading the town while dispatching forces to prevent British relief operations from succeeding in reaching Kut.

In Britain, as in India, the news of Townshend's setback had stunned the government, which resolved to immediately send additional forces to the region, diverted from the Western Front. Consideration was given to regard both Palestine and Mesopotamia as a single front.

Townshend was led to expect rapid relief. He himself calculated that there were enough supplies to maintain the garrison for a month, although this assumed full daily rations.

Informed that a relief operation might take two months to assemble Townshend proposed instead breaking out and retiring further south: Nixon however insisted that he remain at kut and therefore tie up as many Turkish forces as possible (Burak, 2004: 73).

In due course, the first British expedition to raise the blockade was set underway from Basra in January 1916, led by Sir Fenton Aylmer. Their efforts were repeatedly repulsed however with heavy loss, at Sheikh Said, the Wadi and Hanna in January 1916 and again two months later in March at Dujaila.

April brought a further relief operation, this time led by the skeptical Sir George Goring. Despite meeting von der Goltz and his Turkish Sixth army, piercing their line some 30 km south of Kut, the expedition ran out of steam and was abandoned on 22 April.

With no further hope of relief-a final attempt by the paddle steamer Julnar to reach the town with supplies having failed- Townshend requested and received an armistice pending surrender talks on 26 April.

The Turks agreed to send 10 days of food into the garrison while the six-day armistice was in effect. While the talks were in progress the British took the opportunity of destroying anything of value in the town, aware of imminent surrender.

An additional 23,000 British casualties have been suffered during the relief efforts; the Turks lost approximately 10,000 men.

Although Halil Pasha, Bagdad's military governor, proved unsympathetic to Townshend's offer of 2 million pound in order to be released himself and his troops. Halil Pasha has rejected the offer after discussion the situation with Enver Pasha. Minister of war Enver Pasha instructed Halil Pasha that Townshend should be surrendered unconditionally (Kara, 1996: 487).

Later on Townshend has been released upon a guarantee given that none of his men will be used again in fighting against the Ottoman Empire-effectively buying parole.

It was the greatest humiliation to have befallen the British army in its history. For the Turks – and for Germany- it proved a significant morale booster, and undoubtedly weakened British influence in the Middle East.

Approximately 8,000 Anglo-Indian troops were taken prisoner (many weak through sickness), as was Townshend himself. He was treated as something of an honored guest. Ultimately, he was released to assist with the Ottoman armistice negotiations in October 1918. He and his men were treated friendly.

The troops of general Townshend has been carried on the horse provided by the Turkish commanders and the Turkish troops walked on foot and Townshend has been sent to Istanbul to reside there with his family. He has been treated friendly an honored guest and most welcomed, by the Turkish authorities (Sorgun, 2007: 28).

### **Who's Who: Sir Charles Townshend**

Sir Charles Townshend (1861-1924) led the Anglo-Indian force in siege in 1915-16 which finally surrendered on 29 April 1916.

Coming from a military background Townshend's army career prior to war in 1914 was distinguished. He earned himself a "lucky" nickname following success commanding the garrison at Chitral in 1895 (after which he was awarded the CB). To this, he added the DSO for his role in Lord Kitchner's Nile expedition in 1898.

With the British declaration of war in August 1914, Townshend was appointed to command of the sixth Indian Division in Mesopotamia (Present-day Iraq) in April 1915.

Reconfirming his pre-war reputation for luck Townshend quickly engineered a spectacular success at Kut-ul-Amara followed by victory at Sina. Recommending to Commander-in-Chief Sir John Nixon a policy of consolidation he was instead ordered to push on up the Tigris with the capture of Baghdad in his sights.

Townshend considered an honored guest by the Turkish captor's Halil Pasha, and was treated with lavish hospitality; meanwhile his 10,000 troops were largely subjected to friendly treatment (Akyüz, 1988: 287-288).

Townshend assisted with the negotiations of the Turkish armistice at Mudros in October 1918 but his reputation continued to suffer as news of the maltreatment of his force spread. He died in 1924.

### **The Turkish War of Independence**

The Turkish war of Independence (Turkish: Kurtuluş Savaşı or İstiklal Savaşı), sometimes called the “rebirth of the Turkish nation”, was part of the political and military events that began with the establishment of the Turkish national movement. And it continued with revolts, the Greco-Turkish war (1919-1922), The Turkish – Armenian war (1920), the Franco-Turkish war (1920-1921), Turkey's international recognition as a new nation through the treaty of Lausanne (July 1923), and the declaration of the republic of Turkey (October 1923). On the political front, it instituted relationships and ideas among the Turkish revolutionaries that led to the end of the millet system, and the Ottomanism of the Ottoman Empire. This was followed by Atatürk's reforms, which defines the modern Turkish nation.

### **The Greek-Turkish War of 1919-1922**

War in Asia Minor, or the Greek campaign of the Turkish War of Independence, was a series of military events occurring during the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire after the World War I between May 1919 and October 1922. The war was between Greece and Turkish revolutionaries of the Turkish National Movement that would later establish the Republic of Turkey.

The Greek campaign was launched because the western allies, particularly British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, had promised Greece territorial gains at the expense of the Ottoman Empire. It ended with Greece giving up all territory gained during war, returning to its pre-war borders, and engaging in a population exchange between Greece and the newly established state of Turkey through the agreement of treaty of Lausanne (Anonim, 2005: 151)

Turkey finally launched a counter-attack on August 26, what has come to be known to the Turks as the Great Offensive (Buyuk Taarruz). The major Greek

defense positions were overrun on August 26, and Izmit fell the same day. On August 30, the Greek army was defeated decisively at the battle of Dumlupınar, with half of its soldiers captured or slain and its equipment entirely lost. This date is celebrated as Victory Day, a national holiday in Turkey. On September 1, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk issued his famous order to the Turkish army: “armies, your first goal are the Mediterranean, Forward!” Mustafa Kemal Atatürk then isolated and destroyed the segments of the Greek army, chasing the remnants back to Izmir. During the battles, Greek General Tricopis was captured by Turkish forces (Eroğlu, 1990: 189).

On September 2, Eskisehir was captured, and the Greek government asked Britain to arrange a truce that would preserve its rule in Smyrna at least. Balıkesir was taken on September 6, and Aydin and Manisa the next day. The Government in Athens resigned. Two days later Turkish cavalry entered into Smyrna to the cheers of the Turks in the city meanwhile thousands of Greek troops and peasants alike flooded into the city in front of the fast advancing Turkish army. Bursa was taken on September 10. The next day Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s forces headed north for Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles where the allied garrisons were reinforced by British, French and Italian troops from Constantinople. Gemlik and Mudanya fell on September 11, with an entire Greek division surrendering (Eroğlu, 1990: 190-191).

The British cabinet decided to resist the Turks if necessary at the Dardanelles and to ask for French and Italian help enable the Greeks to remain in eastern Thrace. However, Italian and French forces abandoned their positions at the straits and left the British alone to face the Turks. On September 24, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s troops moved into the straits zones and refused British requests to leave. The British cabinet was divided on the matter but eventually any possible armed conflict was prevented. British general Harrington, allied commander in Constantinople, kept his men from firing on Turks and warned the British cabinet against any rash adventure. The Greek fleet left Constantinople upon his request. The British finally decided to force the Greeks to withdraw behind Maritsa in Thrace. This convinced Mustafa Kemal Atatürk to accept the opening of armistice talks.

Turkish troops entered to Uşak and Kütahya and the next day entered Eskisehir on 1 September. At this time, Tricopis has been appointed as a deputy Commander on behalf of Hacıanestis. Commander General Tricopis and his some important commanders have been captured and brought in front of Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Atatürk who has shaken Tricopis hand, offered him cigarette and coffee with a warm welcome and treated him as a general. Even the atrocity of Greece troops on Turkish civilians. Atatürk, the great leader and unique commander is trying to cheer Commander General Tricopis up. In addition, says: “General, war is a chance game; sometimes a most capable commander also can lose the war

and can be defeated. Even the biggest commander such as Napoleon also has been defeated in the battle and surrendered as a prisoner of war. You did your best. Take it easy and calm down! The reason of your defeat is the unluckiness, don't worry, your wife was informed and she is in Istanbul!" (Turan, 1992: 269; Adivar, 1962: 241).

Greeks invaded Anatolia in 1919 with the hope of creating their "Greater Hellen Empire" and the support of the Western powers, killed thousands of Turkish civilians and destroyed many villages and towns along the way, which is well documented. They were defeated by the Turks under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk who spared the life of the Greek Commander Trikopis and established good relations with Venizelos, who later became the Prime Minister of Greece and nominated Mustafa Kemal Ataturk for the Nobel Peace Prize. Turks and Greeks have been able to create a sense of reconciliation and friendship that benefits the people of both countries, which the Armenians should heed to (Anonim, 2002: 150).

## CONCLUSION

This brief review of the approach of Turkish rulers towards peoples belonging to different cultures and religions other than its own, illustrated with study of cases and examples from the early Islamic history as well as Ottoman and modern Turkish Republic period, reveals that it had a genuinely "pluralistic" perspective. This is, in fact, the spirit behind the centuries-long peaceful coexistence of peoples of different religions and cultures (Ihsanoğlu, 2004: 9-10). The skillful, genius and unique Turkish rulers have managed the multinational, multicultural and multi religious system that was established and ensured tolerance and harmony among its peoples (Aydın, 1986: 1-5).

In our contemporary world, Turkey is the first and the only secular country in the world of Islam. Not only geographically but also culturally, she is a bridge between Asia and Europe – to be more exact, a cultural bridge between Eastern and Western civilizations. She is a Middle-Eastern country and Balkan state. Being a Mediterranean country, at the same time, she has a unique place in the world. There is no question that, being placed so beautifully among various geographical and historical cultures, Turkey stands a good chance of producing a new cultural synthesis for the coming age of the "Third Wave" (Toffler, 1980: 27).

We have tried to point out that culture is a dynamic process where changes happen in every generation. In our time, changes are more rapid than ever. Three strategies can be applied in dealing with culture and cultural development: freeze and keep, develop and keep, and record and discharge. As faculty members, we are important agents in the transfer of culture. We need insight, experiences in our own, and other people's culture to be able to make a relevant and good selection of culture to transfer to our students.

“Respect for all, even your enemies”. Commander-in-chief Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was surveying the battlefield early in the morning on the day after the victory of the Turkish forces on August 30. The bodies of thousands of Greek soldiers lay strewn among the corpses of the dead horses and mules used to move the artillery. The grisly, hair – raising scene overshadowed the commander-in-chief’s joy at having won the victory and the pain he felt was reflected on his face.

“This scene is an embarrassment to humanity, but defense of our homeland forced us to do it.”

We shift our focus now to the town of Izmir just after it was freed from the enemy. A father and son, whose relatives have been captured by the Greeks, have prepared their house in *karsiyaka* for the commander-in-chief to stay at. Greek generals and even King Constantine had stayed at that house. When the Greek king entered the house, he stepped on a Turkish flag that had been spread out on the stairs. The memory of this derogatory act had been etched in the minds of the father and son and of the people of Izmir. This time a Greek flag had been spread out on the same stairs. Yearning for revenge, they now ask the General Mustafa Kemal step on the Greek flag as he enters the house saying,

“Please, erase the stain of that memory by settling the score!”

General Kemal’s response was not at all, what they expected: “If that is what he did, then it was a mistake. A flag represents the honor of a nation and should not be stepped on. I will not repeat his mistake. Pick that flag up off the ground.” (Soyak, 1973: 135-136).

He had driven the Greeks back into the sea, but he would not permit the enemy’s honor to be trodden under foot.

As we see from the available documents about the Turkish rulers the role of the culture and its impacts are significantly important. The impacts on forming of tolerance on the Turkish statesman and commanders can not be denied. The main characteristics of the rulers and of some distinguished Turkish leaders are almost carrying the same characteristics features. These features are intellectualness, hospitality, forgiveness, braveness, courageous, self-respects, virtues, discipline and truly belief (Taneri, 1975: 49).

It is very rare in world history to be a good friend with your biggest enemy on the battlefield after the bloody war, which takes days and weeks. Sometimes it is unbelievable to improve the relations with your ferocious enemy. Nevertheless, these unbelievable and unimaginable thoughts can be turn into reality under the capable and peaceful leaders and distinguished rulers such as Sultan Alp Arslan, Mehmet II, Halil Pasha and Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The Turkish culture doesn’t allow to any leader to torture a humble person at all. However, the Turkish culture forbidden to any human being to be treated abnormally unless he or she intends to kill you or invade your country.

Turkish rulers have succeeded to improve social, political and personnel relations with their cruel enemies after the bloody war. Moreover, even the leaders have improved the relations to upper level that they trusted their enemies and wanted them to be envoy and arbitrary in the some vital treaties such as Mudros and Lausanne Conferences as volunteers.

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