

"AN ANALYSIS OF ATATÜRK'S FOREIGN POLICY,
1919 - 1938"

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I. INTRODUCTION

Turkey, being located in between the Western and the Eastern worlds, has been for many centuries a bridge connecting the two worlds. Turkey's geographical location alone has provided attraction for international rivalry. This factor by itself gave Turkey possibilities to play off one rival against the other in the last century of the Ottoman period. As a matter of fact, no single power could stand against the rivalry of so many great powers by military means alone. Diplomacy was an inalienable means of safeguarding the sovereignty of any such nation which was the centre of attraction of such extensive international rivalry.

It is therefore understandable why many foreign scholars have often described the Turks as "born diplomats". Indeed, the Turks being in the easternmost of the West and in the westernmost of the East have acquired both the Western talents and the Eastern virtues. In the XIX. century, for instance, Turkish diplomats like the Foreign Minister Keçecizade Fuat Paşa rightfully won the admiration of many foreign colleagues.

Upon this background we find in Mustafa Kemal Atatürk not only the great talents of a military leader, but also the inborn qualities of a far-sighted diplomat. Indeed, it was his diplomatist side that complemented his military genius which in the end won the Turkish nation the Turkish war of independence and in the later years maintained for

the new-born Republic the much-needed peace which facilitated modernization in the real sense so vital for Turkey.

My intention is to analyze the diplomatic side of Atatürk's achievements. This, I think is not a matter of mere academic interest, but also a subject from which many practical lessons can be drawn even at this latter part of the XX. century.

Mustafa Kemal did not, of course, formulate and implement Turkey's foreign policy all by himself. He had by his side, powerful statesmen like İsmet İnönü and Tefvik Rüştü Aras together with the valued diplomats of the Foreign Ministry. However, Atatürk, as the Head of State, and like all other historic leaders of his Age, was the chief architect of Turkish foreign policy. Indeed, this is why our title is "Atatürk's" foreign policy, for the policy Turkey pursued in the twenty-year period between 1919 and 1938.

II. ATATÜRK'S PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Atatürk's education as a staff officer taught him History, Diplomacy, Strategy, and other related subjects. Atatürk, as all his school-mates, witnessed the agonies of a crippling Empire. They wasted their youthful years in the war-fields in the never-ending wars. However, at the expense of their youthful years, they gained in these wars, an immense opportunity of thinking over on the problems the Ottoman State was faced with. Mustafa Kemal was the most prominent personality who gained great experience from these eventful years which served as a unique "laboratory of politics". It not only taught Atatürk the ins and outs of the Ottoman administration, but also gave him great insight into the understanding of the outer world.

Among Mustafa Kemal's early posts was the Balkans where the turbulence of the region, with its relatively free atmosphere helped him in developing his own nationalist and therefore revolutionary views. Also, by serving in the Balkans, where he himself came from, Atatürk came into contact with the neighbouring continent of Europe.

Mustafa Kemal's contacts with the outer world in general and with foreigners individually, gave him sufficient material in reaching a sound grasp of world affairs. He grew the habit of reading a lot about the external intellectual world.¹ Also, due to the fact that he either fought against or on the side of many nations of the world including all the major powers, he reached interestingly sound judgements about those nations and states.²

III. BASIC ELEMENTS OF ATATÜRK'S FOREIGN POLICY

A. *General Elements (Elements of Good Diplomacy)*

1. *Artful Use of Tactics*

To complement all such qualities, one has to note the diplomatist side of Atatürk's character. Indeed, the way he accomplished his being sent over into Anatolia in May 1919, without incurring opposition from the Ottoman Government and the occupying Western military authorities, is a case in point.³ Also, the way he achieved his goals in Anatolia, which he did step by step and piecemeally, again manifested his diplomatic qualities. He knew what and how to keep secret, which no doubt is an essential quality of a good diplomat. Also, he always went only to the extent that he could reach with his real power. He never said at the very beginning any last word which he could not materialize.

For instance, during the War of Independence, Mustafa Kemal was extremely careful not to attack Britain pub-

¹ For an analysis of Atatürk's personal library, see: Milli Kütüphane Genel Müdürlüğü, *Atatürk'ün Özel Kütüphanesi'nin Kataloğu*, Başbakanlık Kültür Müsteşarlığı, Cumhuriyetin 50. Yıldönümü Yayınları: 16, Ankara, 1973.

² See his speech at the Grand National Assembly on July 8th, 1920: *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri*, I (T.B.M. Meclisinde ve CHP Kurultaylarında, 1919-1938), İkinci Baskı, Türk İnkılâp Tarihi Enstitüsü Yayınları: 1, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara, 1961, pp. 83-84.

³ See: Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, *Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri, 1919-1926*, A.Ü. SBF Yayınları No: 412, Ankara, 1978, pp. 59-61.

on Turkey's fate in San Remo on April 26th, 1920. Even after then, he was tactful enough to leave the door open for a better relationship with Britain. In an interview to the correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* in May 1920, he said :

"We still have full confidence in that Britain and its allies will realize that the peace conditions are ridiculous and unreliable. But if we lose our hope... we are ready to accept willingly any foreign assistance."⁴

As time went on, however, Mustafa Kemal's attitude towards Britain softened in parallel with the military and diplomatic success of the Anatolian movement.⁵

Mustafa Kemal's artful use of tactics, prevented the discordant Allies from uniting against Turkey.

On the internal front, too, Mustafa Kemal's step-by-step approach towards a modern Republic again manifests his genius in the use of tactics.

However, one has to note the fact that, Mustafa Kemal's use of tactics was not an insincere job. He never resorted to bluffs or any other means of the like for his ends. He was honest in his dealings and even the justness of his cause could not seduce him to resort to unjust means.

On the other hand, Atatürk was adept at tinging his conciliatory attitude with his formidable determination. For instance, when discussing the Sanjak dispute with the Ambassador of France in Ankara on December 10th, 1936, Atatürk said to him :

"This question has to be solved in such a way as to maintain and strengthen our friendship. I do hope that the French delegates in Geneva won't say anything like 'what do you

licly until İstanbul came under British occupation on March 16th, 1920 and especially until the Allies reached a decision

⁴ From : Nimet Arsan (Der.), *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri*, III, (1918-1937), İkinci Baskı, Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Yayınları : 1, T.T.K. Basımevi, Ankara, 1961, p. 14 : "Milliyetperverler ve Harici Yardım", *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 10.5.1920.

⁵ Britain's attitude, too, changed towards the Anatolian Movement in the course of time. Kürkçüoğlu, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-145.

want? we don't accept that you have any such rights.' Because, such an eventuality will not give good results and if anything of the like happens, I can't know what will happen then."⁶

2. *The Usefulness of Personal Contacts*

Atatürk firmly believed in the usefulness of personal contacts in the establishment of good relations with the outer world. Although he did not travel abroad as Head of State, he hosted many foreign leaders. One other element of Atatürk's personality was to study in detail the historical and other social aspects of the country whose leader he was going to host. On many occasions, he would surprise and win the admiration of his guests by knowing more about their countries than the guests themselves did. This would no doubt contribute to the achievement of an even more cordial friendship.

On the usefulness of personal contacts, Atatürk said to the visiting Romanian Prime Minister Mr. Tataresku in Ankara on October 28th, 1937: "...Direct talks is the most effective means in the solution of questions concerning any two countries."⁷

On another occasion, concerning the visit of King Edward VIII to Turkey in 1936, Atatürk said in his annual opening address to the Turkish Grand National Assembly on November 1st, 1936:

"There is no doubt that the friendship which has been attained with... the Great King of the English whom I was pleased to meet, will have, in parallel with the inclinations of our nations, favourable effect upon the cordial relationship developing between our two governments."⁸

3. *Dialogue Even With The Enemy*

One other aspect of Atatürk's foreign policy was never to close all doors to dialogue. Indeed, even during the

⁶ Bilâl N. Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Yabancı Devlet Adamlarıyla Görüşmeleri, Yedi Belge (1930-1937)", *Bellekten*, Cilt: XLV/1, Sa.: 177 (Ocak 1981), p. 200.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

⁸ *Söylev ve Demeçler*, I, op. cit., p. 391.

days of War, he did not cut off all ties with Britain. At times, he sent out peaceful feelers for dialogue. This he did first unofficially and indirectly.⁹ His intention was to let them learn the true character of Anatolia's aims. Thus, without withdrawing an inch from the basic aims of the Anatolian movement (the *Misak-ı Milli*),¹⁰ he did, however, leave sufficient ground to his adversaries to come to terms with him without losing much face. This again is a basic principle of good diplomacy. That is to say, another requirement of good diplomacy is to let one's adversaries be well informed about one's real intentions in such a tactful way that they should be able to come to terms without losing face.

For instance, as he was discussing the Sanjak dispute with the French Ambassador Henri Ponsot in Ankara on December 10th, 1936, he said: "I want the solution of the Sanjak question in such a way that will save the face of both sides. I am not demanding annexation. It can be put under the joint control of Turkey and France..."¹¹

4. *No Total Confidence On Friends and The Outer World*

While he never closed all doors to dialogue even with the enemy, Atatürk, never placed too much confidence in friends, or the outer world as a whole, for that matter.

He said, for instance, on the score of the early days of the Turkish War of Independence: "...our nation's fault... is to have manifested over-confidence in the honesty of Europe."¹² In a letter from Bursa to Hamit Bey-Ankara's representative in Istanbul during the National War-dated 18.10.1922, Mustafa Kemal said: "the Turkish Grand Nati-

⁹ Kürkcüoğlu, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-137.

¹⁰ For text, see: J.C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, A Documentary Record: 1914-1956*, Vol. II, D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., New York, 1958, pp. 74-75.

¹¹ Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Yabancı...", *Yabancı.....*, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

¹² *Nutuk (Kema! Atatürk)*, Cilt: III (Vesikalar), Türk Devrim Tarihi Enstitüsü, Milli Eğitim Basımevi, İstanbul, p. 1185.

nal Assembly takes into consideration every possible attempt directed against the Turkish State."¹³

Many years later, at a time when Turkey's relations with Britain had much developed towards an alliance, Atatürk said to the visiting Prime Minister of Greece, Metaxas, in Ankara on October 19th, 1937 :

"...You and we, are both friends of the English... You say that England will not let others touch us [Turkey]. All right. But [England] may think of taking up a convenient attitude towards those who would touch us... [England] may show such tolerance for the purpose of winning time and more freedom in its operations by engaging us with a large enemy force. In other words, it may tolerate an enemy landing in our shores. Didn't it act like that towards Ethiopia?... We took into consideration even such a probability. We have taken measures in this direction. That was the essence of our recent manoeuvres in the Aegean..."¹⁴

5. *Discreetness*

One other important element of a diplomatist, namely, discreetness was a basic aspect of Atatürk's diplomacy. In his criticisms of the attitude of the Istanbul Governments towards the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, he underlines the harmfulness of imprudent acts and utterances of Tefik and Ferit Pashas.¹⁵

He knew it well that a representative of a nation was obliged to be even more careful in his words and deeds, to avoid playing into the hands of the enemy.

6. *Honour and Dignity*

These two ethical elements can also be found in Atatürk's foreign policy. In a letter he sent from Sivas to the Minister of War of the Istanbul Government, dated 10.10.1919, he criticized the Grand Vizier Ferit Pasha's entreaty before the Paris Peace Conference for mercy to Turkey and said that such action would only draw insult

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 1237.

¹⁴ Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Yabancı...", *op. cit.*, pp. 191-192.

¹⁵ Nutuk, III, *op. cit.*, pp. 1080-1081 and 1184.

and ridicule on Turkey as indeed was the case in the French Premier Clemenceau's reply address to the Conference.¹⁶ Instead, what the Istanbul Government should have done was, according to Mustafa Kemal, "to tell the truth in a manly way."¹⁷

Atatürk's attachment of great importance to honour and dignity can also be seen in his attitude towards the enemy even at the zenith of victory. For instance, when in 1922 the commander of the Greek invading forces in Anatolia, General Tricoupis was taken prisoner by the Turkish forces and taken to Mustafa Kemal, he showed gentlemanly courtesy to the enemy commander. Later, when the Turkish forces re-captured İzmir on September 9th, 1922, Mustafa Kemal refused to walk on the Greek flag which was put on the ground as a ceremony carpet by the citizens of İzmir who were most enthusiastic to welcome their victorious leader. Mustafa Kemal said that a flag was the honour of a nation and as such, it was to be respected even by a victorious power. When he was reminded by the crowd that King Constantine of Greece did walk on the Turkish flag when he came to İzmir on June 12th, 1921, Mustafa Kemal still refused to do the same thing to the Greek flag.

7. *Difference Between Personal and Government Affairs (Continuity of Foreign Policy-No Dependence Upon Passing Individuals)*

A good statesman or diplomat should always bear in mind the difference between his official duties and his own personal questions. Atatürk attached great importance to this principle. For instance, during a visit to a Teachers' School in Balıkesir on January 21st, 1933, he attended a history class and said later to the teacher that "the Turks in Central Asia did not revolt in the past for a mere marriage affair but that they did so to gain their freedom."¹⁸ He went on to tell the story of Mete Khan, who, despite

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1112.

¹⁷ *Idem.*

¹⁸ Kâmil Su, "Atatürk Bir Tarih Dersinde", *Bellekten*, Cilt: XLV/1. Sa.: 177 (Ocak 1981), p. 432.

the advice of his council of war, bowed to the insulting demands of a neighbouring enemy leader who sent for his horse and subsequently his wife. Mete Khan said that these were his personal belongings and that he would not drive his people to a war for a personal affair. However, when on the third occasion his adversary demanded from him a small piece of arid land, and despite his war council's opinion that this worthless piece of land might be ceded to avoid a war, he demurred, saying that the land was a national property and not a personal belonging and subsequently opened war against the enemy and won it.

This impersonal approach of Atatürk to state affairs can also be detected in his belief that foreign policy was an institutional and continuous issue and that it should not change with every change of the persons. On one occasion, for instance, during the Greek Premier Metaxas's visit to Ankara, Atatürk said to him on October 19th, 1937:

"...In this connection, I would like to tell you that your work with [the new Prime Minister] Celâl Bayar will not be different at all from your work so far with [his predecessor] İsmet İnönü. Celâl Bayar and İsmet İnönü and İsmet İnönü and Celâl Bayar are all one and the same. In other words, it is a custom of ours among all the friends in the revolution and it is indeed natural that we should be in cordial co-operation. In the system that we are following, a change in the person does not mean a change in the task. As a matter of fact, the fundamentals of our external and domestic policies are conformable to the program which was fixed and determined long before. Every friend who comes into office continues with the same program..."¹⁹

B. *Particular Elements*

1. *Careful "Reading" of the World*

a. *Ability to "Read" the Past, the Present and the Future*

(i) *Atatürk and the Past*

Atatürk knew how important it was to draw lessons from the past. He read a lot on history and reached sound

¹⁹ Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Yabancı...", op. cit., p. 193.

conclusions, as regards the world in general and the Islamic world and the Ottoman State in particular.

On one occasion, during a speech in Arifiye on January 16th, 1923, he said :

"Our history shows that we have scored endless victories so far... But after each victory everything is left aside and our ancestors have always neglected to pick up the fruits of any such victory."²⁰

Reading and thinking on history taught him what to criticize and what to praise in Turkish and Islamic history. He said on one occasion :

"...Our nation, developing from a small tribe, established an independent state in our motherland and later thrust into the lands of the enemy and founded an empire there with the greatest difficulties. And [our nation] has administered this empire with all greatness and majesty for 600 years. A nation which has succeeded in this, certainly has high political and administrative talents. Such an achievement could not come into existence only by the force of the sword..."²¹

As to the causes of the decline of the Ottoman Empire, he drew many lessons from history. He believed that as every attack would incite a counter-attack, Ottoman attacks into Europe gave rise to European counter-attacks against which the Ottomans had not been able to take the necessary measures, which in the end led up to the collapse of the Empire.²² On the other hand, trying in vain to keep together vast areas and much different nationalities of the West and the East, also became a cause of the collapse. The discontent and the revolt of the Islamic world also manifested that-like in the past before the Ottomans assumed it-the Caliphate was not devoid of divisive influences.²³ He

²⁰ From: Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, II, (1908-1938), Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Yayınları : 1, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara, 1952, p. 53 : Hakimiyet-i Milliye, 24.1.1923.

²¹ Nutuk, III, op. cit., p. 1182.

²² Nutuk (Kemal Atatürk), Cilt : I (1919-1920), Türk Devrim Tarihi Enstitüsü, İstanbul, pp. 434-435.

²³ Idem. and Söylev ve Demeçler, III, op. cit., p. 70. Atatürk's knowledge of the History of Islam can easily be detected in many of

said to his French interviewer M. Maurice Pernot on October 29th, 1923: "The happiest era of our History was when our Sultans were not Caliphs."²⁴ He believed that the Turks should realize that they were no longer the arbiter of the world and that they had to shed blood only for their own liberation and not in remote areas any longer as in the past.²⁵

(ii) *Atatürk and the Present*

With his continuous interest in the outer world, Atatürk achieved a remarkable power to grasp the essence of international politics.²⁶ During the War of Liberation, he read the world well. He saw the weaknesses of the victorious powers of the World War. He also cleverly grasped the elements of discord among them.²⁷

The Turkish War of Liberation had to be fought against the victors of the First World War. Although we can now see that the power of Europe in international politics was

his speeches. See for example, his speech at the Assembly on November 1st, 1922, on the occasion of the abolition of the Sultanate: *Nutuk*, III, *op. cit.*, pp. 1239ff.

Also, he said on another occasion on January 21 st, 1923 that he was very much interested in the History of Islam and did indeed supervise the editing of the highly-qualified chapter on this subject in the second volume of the four-volume publication of History issued by the Ministry of Education in 1931. *Su*, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

²⁴ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, *op. cit.*, p. 70: "Kültür Hakkında", *Tanin*, 11.2.1924.

²⁵ *Nutuk (Kemal Atatürk)*, Cilt: II (1920-1927), Türk Devrim Tarihi Enstitüsü, Milli Eğitim Basımevi, İstanbul, pp. 711-712.

²⁶ We can even find certain theoretical elements of international relations in Atatürk's words. For instance, he was well aware of the complex relationship between external and internal relations. He said: "Gentlemen, what foreign policy is mostly interested with and is indeed dependent upon is the internal organization of the state. Foreign policy must be compatible with the internal organization. A state which brings together, in the east and in the west, elements of much different cultures and aspirations mutually opposed to each other can have only a rotten internal organization of no foundation. And as such, its foreign policy, too, cannot be solid and secure..." *Nutuk*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 435.

²⁷ *Kürkçüoğlu*, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62 and 107ff.

already on the decline right at the beginning of those years, yet to all appearances, Europe and the victorious Western European powers seemed to be at the zenith of their world supremacy. Britain, in particular, enjoyed an undisputed dominance all over the world.

However, all around the world, nations were faced with many political, economic and social questions. Britain, France, Italy and the USA were no exception to this. The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia on the other hand, had introduced ideological rift as a new divisive element into international relations.

On the other hand, disputes had arisen among the victorious powers themselves. Britain and the USA would not like to support French intransigence in imposing every possible strangulation upon Germany to prevent any resurgence of German power. The USA, was also returning to its self-imposed isolation from European affairs. Italy, on the other hand, was full of disappointment as regards the outcome of the war as indeed its allies had not met all its territorial aspirations.

This turbulent era in international relations urged Britain in particular, to reach peace settlements as quickly as possible. It had, on the other hand, become very difficult to impose these settlements by force, due to so many divisive influences. While on the other hand, like its former allies, Britain was not prepared to give up its war spoils.

Mustafa Kemal's ability "to read" the international world now comes into the picture. He saw it well that Western nations were not prepared to fight yet another war. He also shrewdly took note of the disputes among the victorious powers. Indeed, he developed relations with France which was ready to welcome it due to its disharmony with Britain. On the other hand, Mustafa Kemal developed relations with Italy which was on disputing terms with both Britain and France. And, still on the other hand, he entered into dialogue with the USA as against all these three European powers. This multi-lateral

policy needed extreme care for the obvious fact that any blunder in pursuing it, might bring these disharmonious powers well into harmony as regards imposing a harsh settlement upon Turkey. Indeed, he was well aware that all these powers were in conflict with Turkey as regards the full implementation of the basic aims of the Anatolian movement, namely, the *Misak-ı Milli*.

On the other hand, he was extremely careful in not repeating the Ottoman example, i.e. he did not want to depend totally on any single power. The Ottoman "policy of balance" from early XIX. century onwards had been based on dependence on a major power and yet this had not prevented the demolition of the Empire.

Mustafa Kemal's ability to "read" the world can be seen, for instance, in his opening address to the Congress of Erzurum on July 23rd, 1919.²⁸ In his speech, he dwelt upon the retreat of the British before the nationalists in Egypt, together with the revolts for independence in India and the successes in the war against the British in Afghanistan. He also spoke about the discontent of the peoples in Syria, Iraq and Arabia against the British and other foreigners. He later discussed the revolution and the civil war in Russia and the intervention in it of the rival powers of Europe.

Atatürk's ability to "read" the world around him, provided Turkey to avail itself of every favourable element and thus avoid any extra difficulty. This basic element of good diplomacy can again be detected in the directives he gave to Ruşen Eşref (Ünaydın) on his way to Albania as the new Turkish Ambassador in April 1934 :

"...You must follow with great interest daily events in the country you are accredited to, and must make a habit of immediately reporting all the points which you think are concerned with our government, our policy and interests..."²⁹

²⁸ Nutuk, III, op. cit., pp. 926-935.

²⁹ Bilge N. Şimşir, "Atatürk'ten Elçi Ruşen Eşref Ünaydın'a Yönerge, (Türk-Arnavut İlişkileri Üzerine)", Prof. Dr. Ahmet Şükrü Esmer'e Armağan. A.Ü. Söf Yayınları No. 468, Ankara, 1981, p. 313. He went on to say that there should be no fear of erring in those reports since such mistakes might later be corrected.

(iii) *Atatürk and the Future*

Atatürk's ability to "read" well the past and the present, gave him a remarkable power to see into the future. For instance, what he said to General MacArthur on November 27-29th, 1932³⁰ needs special attention. Atatürk said that the Versailles Treaty did not eliminate the causes of the (First) World War; it only increased the old rivalries and deepened the existing rifts. The victors, while imposing the peace upon the losers of the war did not take into consideration their ethnical, geo-political and economic peculiarities and acted only out of feelings of hostility. He said: "that is why the peace era we are living in to-day, is only an armistice period." He added that "had the United States not kept itself from Europe and had it put into force the Wilson program, this armistice might turn into a lasting peace." He said that as was the case yesterday, the future of Europe tomorrow would again be dependent upon the attitude of Germany. If this industrious and well-disciplined nation of 70 millions with its extra-ordinary dynamism is, at the same time, carried away by a political movement aimed at stimulating its national aspirations, it will, sooner or later, attempt to eliminate the Treaty of Versailles. Germany can organize an army which will be able to invade all Europe except Britain and Russia. The war will start between 1940-1946. France is no longer in a position to establish a strong army. Britain, can no longer depend upon France in the defence of its islands. As to Italy, if Mussolini, who has indeed achieved great developments in Italy, can manage to keep his country out of the coming war, he may well play a leading role at the peace-table with all his outward grandeur. Atatürk added, however, that he thought that Mussolini would not be able to save himself from playing the role of Caesar and would at once realize that Italy was still too far away from becoming a strong military power. As to the United States, Atatürk said that it would again be impossible for it to

³⁰ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., pp. 93-95: *Cumhuriyet*, 8.11.1951.

remain neutral and that Germany would be defeated only upon American intervention. He added :

"Unless the European statesmen take into their hands the important political questions —which cause the main discord— with a last minute effort with all their good-will, free from every kind of national egoism and aimed at the realization of public benefit only, I am afraid it will not be possible to avoid calamity. Indeed, the European question is no longer a matter of disputes among Britain, France and Germany. Today, a new force has arisen in the east of Europe... The main winner of a future war in Europe will neither be Britain, nor France, nor Germany. It will be (Russia) alone..."³¹

When the exchange of thoughts ended, Atatürk said to MacArthur: "There is a complete agreement between our views. But let's hope that we are mistaken about the real state of affairs and that those who keep the fate of the world in their hands are proven right."

On another occasion, in a speech in Bursa on March 11th, 1933, Atatürk said that he did not believe that the Maginot-line would be a successful one since if an army went under the ground, it would only lose its own ability to manoeuvre and would thus be doomed to defeat.³²

As to the fate of Mussolini, Atatürk said as early as in 1934: "Mussolini will be killed by his own people."³³

On the other hand, Mustafa Kemal believed that the Islamic world was going to win its independence. He said: "I have the greatest pleasure to feel even at this very

³¹ *Idem.* On another occasion, he said to his close friend Ali Fuat Paşa in 1938: "Fuat Paşa, we are on the eve of a second great war. The adventurers (Hitler and Mussolini) will not hesitate to plunge the world into a sea of blood. Our ancient friend, Russia, will profit by their actions. The result will be the complete upsetting of the balance of the world... One should see the truth as it is..." From: Gotthard Jäschke. "Des Mots Importants de Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk)", *Bulleten*, Cilt: XLV/1, Sa.: 177 (Ocak 1981), p. 56; Ali F. Cebesoy, *Siyasi Hatıralar*, II, 1930, p. 252; Ali F. Cebesoy, *Sınıf Arkadaşım Atatürk*, 1959, p. 56.

³² *Söylev ve Demeçler*, II, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

³³ From: Jäschke, *op. cit.*, p. 54; *Tasvir*, 8.5.1945.

moment that when this is achieved, the status of the Islamic world will be very formidable indeed. I can see that the success of the undoubtedly awaking Islamic world will be very high and that is why my faith in this gives me the greatest pleasure of conscience while I express my feelings about it."³⁴ On another occasion, he said in a speech at the Azerbaijan Embassy on October 18th, 1921 :

"...Anatolia is defending itself against all attacks and aggressions and is confident that it will succeed in this. Anatolia, by this defence, is not only carrying out the duties concerning its own life. It probably puts up a barrier against attacks on the whole East. Gentlemen, these attacks will certainly be stopped. All these aggressions will certainly come to an end. And, only then will there prevail real peace, real affluence and humanism in the West and in the whole world..."³⁵

b. *Importance of World Public Opinion*

Mustafa Kemal saw clearly the importance of world public opinion and attached great significance to letting the world learn about the true character of the National War. He often differentiated the public opinion of any country from the government in power.

He said to the correspondent of *Tasvir-i Efkâr*, Ruşen Eşref, in Amasya on October 24-25th, 1919 :

"[Our] nation... should prove to the world that it deserves its right to live... and it can only then claim it from the world... The world will either respect the life of our nation and ratify its unity and independence or else it will water our land with the blood of our last men and will have to satisfy its cursed aspirations of invasion upon the corpse of a whole nation. In actual fact, the nerves of today's humanity cannot any longer tolerate such wildness..."³⁶

Mustafa Kemal regarded the National War as an "examination" in the presence of the world public opinion.³⁷

³⁴ *Nutuk*, III, op. cit., p. 1190.

³⁵ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, II, op. cit., p. 21: *Hâkimiyet-i millîye*, 20.11.1921.

³⁶ *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 10.

³⁷ *Nutuk*, II, op. cit., p. 646.

On another occasion, in an interview to the correspondent of *United Telegraph* in January 1921, Mustafa Kemal said :

"We wish the public opinion of Europe and America know the true facts. The Entente Powers regard our nation as a horde of animals devoid of all the human rights and they also regard our country as an ownerless open territory. They are busy with applying their ever-increasing cruelties and injustices arising out of their wrong concepts. Whereas our nation is aware of all its rights and duties pertaining to all human beings... and is only defending its existence and all its sacred things... Our nation which is struggling for independence and liberty, refers its just cause to the general conscience of humanity"³⁸

In his address to the National Assembly on March 1st, 1922, Mustafa Kemal said :

"...Gentlemen, as is known by you, our Foreign Minister has been sent to Europe via Istanbul to defend in Europe our national cause —the fundamental lines of which are already known by the whole world— and to reaffirm and prove once again this just cause of ours in the eyes of humanity."³⁹

Upon the occupation of Istanbul on March 16th, 1920 by the British forces, Mustafa Kemal, sent letters of protest to the national assemblies and the representatives of the Allies, the USA and all the neutral powers. He said :

"...we are content with referring the evaluation of this action which is incompatible with the honour and dignity of the nations (these governments belong to) not to the conscience of the official Europe and America but to the culture and science and civilization of Europe and America..."⁴⁰

Mustafa Kemal emphasized in his speeches, the favourable attitude of the French public opinion towards Anatolia, referring to the inspiration all freedom-lovers drew from the French Revolution.⁴¹ He also differentiated between

³⁸ From : *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 19: *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, 17.1.1921.

³⁹ *Söylev ve Demeçler*, I, op. cit., p. 237.

⁴⁰ *Nutuk*, I, op. cit., p. 417.

⁴¹ See for instance : Mustafa Kemal's telegraph to the Governor of Sivas Mustafa Reşit Paşa from Erzurum, 21.8.1919: *Nutuk*, III, op. cit., p. 935.

the British public opinion and the British Government.⁴² However, when attaching great importance to public opinion, Mustafa Kemal never closed his eyes to the fact that what mattered more was a change in the attitude of the governments in power. For instance, in an interview to the correspondent of *Le Petit Parisien* in Bursa in November 1922, he said :

"Before anything else, we would like to see the British diplomats speaking open-heartedly. Although, the greater part of the British nation does not now nourish hostile feelings against Turkey, however, sentiments are not sufficient in politics for the achievement of a result satisfactory for both sides."⁴³

2. *Realism*

a. *Limitation and Declaration of Basic Goals*

Atatürk's foreign policy was one of realism. He was a leader who gave priority to logic instead of the sentiment. In a speech at the National Assembly on July 8th, 1920, he said : "...It is not admissible at all to depart from the basic goal by turning to instant sentiments and to certain judgments contrary to fundamental and definite principles."⁴⁴

Indeed, by fixing and limiting the political aims of the Anatolian Movement in the *Misak-ı Milli*, and by declaring it openly, Mustafa Kemal manifested to friend and foe alike that his was not an aimless movement and that he would continue his struggle until he achieved these goals, not a bit more and certainly not a single bit less than that.

This illustrates another basic element of Atatürk's foreign policy. His policy was not based on unfounded threats or bluffs. His aims were matched with military and political power to achieve them. This fundamental principle of good diplomacy is not observed everywhere in the world and was certainly often disregarded by many others in

⁴² From : Söylev ve Demeçler, III, op. cit., p. 46 : Interview to *Vakit*, 4.10.1922.

⁴³ Söylev ve Demeçler, III, op. cit., p. 50.

⁴⁴ Söylev ve Demeçler, I, op. cit., p. 82.

Atatürk's period. By strictly adhering to a policy aimed at materializing his basic goals only, Mustafa Kemal has sometimes been criticized for not trying -although he had the power for it- to get more than he eventually did. I think this again manifests the success of Atatürk's foreign policy, in that, while making his adversaries "feel" that he could achieve more, he nevertheless did not venture to gain any more than his fundamental aims. He knew it well that any failure in achieving what would be "more than necessary" might jeopardize the achievement of his very basic aims.⁴⁵

Here, I would like to refer to Atatürk's rejection of Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkist policies. He said:

"...One cannot come across any success and practicability in History of... policies of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism. ...Our political direction which we think is practicable is the national policy."⁴⁶

He went on to say that there would be no greater mistake than being visionary despite the truths of history, realities of science, reason and logic.

When he was criticized for not achieving more territory, he referred to the mistakes of the Ottomans who, he said, acted upon their sentiments without taking the necessary measures after every defeat.⁴⁷ This, he added, caused the loss of all territories including finally the Balkans. "Let us be cautious and abandon our sentiments and ambitions at least while we are saving this last piece of our motherland" he said.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ As to his attitude during the "Chanak" affair in September 1922 and on the causes of Turkish acceptance of the League of Nations' decision on Mosul in June 1926, see: Kürkçüoğlu, *op. cit.*, pp. 239ff.

⁴⁶ Nutuk, I, *op. cit.*, p. 437. Mustafa Kemal said at the National Assembly on December 1st., 1921 that what he understood from Pan-Islamism was to be closely interested with the welfare of all Moslems as they did with that of Turkey. He also added that he did not want to unite the world against Turkey by pursuing Pan-Turanism. Söylev ve Demeçler, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-201.

⁴⁷ Nutuk, II, *op. cit.*, pp. 635-636.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 637.

In a speech at the Grand National Assembly on July 12th, 1920, Mustafa Kemal said that everybody might think about doing this or that but that only materially practicable thoughts could be realized.⁴⁹ "Otherwise, the general outlook of the whole world would be much different" he added.

b. *Priority to One's Own Power But Also Readiness to Enter Alliances*

Atatürk always followed with acuteness the changes in the international world. He showed ability to adapt himself to changes in the world. And in doing all these, he never neglected attaching the greatest importance to developing his own powers. He said :

"...If a nation does not secure its existence and independence by depending upon its own power, it cannot help being a toy (in the hands) of this or that. Our national life and history and our way of administration in the recent past are all perfect evidence to this..."⁵⁰

Atatürk, realizing the fact that good diplomacy was dependent upon real power,⁵¹ believed that by attaching greater importance to the development of its own power instead of basing its security upon a great power, the new Turkish state would be much stronger than its predecessor. In an interview to the correspondents of Istanbul journals, he said on January 16th, 1923 :

"...The world will not have to wait for long to see the difference between the Ottoman Empire and the new Turkey which has ceded... the routes passing from Suez and the Straits and the Caucasia and the economic lines between India and Europe— only which the Ottoman Empire surmised would preserve its ability to live. Indeed, the new Turkey has declared that it does not need these to demonstrate and prove its ability to live..."⁵²

⁴⁹ Söylev ve Demeçler, I, op. cit., p. 85.

⁵⁰ Nutuk, III, op. cit., p. 1185.

⁵¹ He said that just like an individual, nations too, had to prove their power to be able to be respected by others. Unless a nation proved itself in the international arena, which he considered a platform of "examination", there would be no room for expecting success in the diplomatic field. Nutuk, II, op. cit., p. 645.

⁵² From: Söylev ve Demeçler, II, op. cit., p. 57; Vakit, 20.1.1923.

While Atatürk gave priority to one's own power, he nevertheless, did not totally reject the possibility of entering an alliance for the reinforcement of the national power. For instance, he said at the National Assembly on July 8th, 1920 :

"...[our aim is] to save and secure our goal, life and honour by depending upon our own power and existence. However, the whole Western world —including America— which attack violently upon us, present naturally a great force. We, on our part, while, doubtlessly, depending only upon our own force, will, at the same time, spare no effort in making utmost use of all the forces who are interested in our life..."⁵³

After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Turkey not only acted in alliance with Britain during the Abyssinian crisis in 1935-1936, but also proposed a direct treaty of alliance to Britain in 1936, which was not accepted on account of the policy Britain was pursuing in those days. On the other hand, Turkey also wanted to enter into a treaty of alliance with the Soviet Union in 1936, which again did not materialize since Turkey wanted to get the approval of Britain before concluding such a pact with the Soviet Union—a condition which the latter did not much sympathize with.⁵⁴

While Atatürk's Turkey was in favour of entering into treaties of alliance with foreign powers, it was not, however, closing its eyes to practical realities. For instance, when Greece consulted with Ankara, on the score of the Italian offer to Greece immediately after the establishment of the Balkan Entente on February 9th, 1934, to the effect that a separate pact should be concluded among Greece, Turkey and Italy; the Secretary-General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry N. Menemencioglu said this to the Greek Ambassador Sakellaropoulos as the view of Turkey: "...While we are strongly tied to each other, to take Italy [into our alliance] would have no advantage at all. If we enter into such a

⁵³ Söylev ve Demeçler, I, op cit., p. 83.

⁵⁴ See: İsmail Soysal, "Türkiye'nin Batı İttifakına Yönelişi, (1934-1937)", *Belleten*, Cilt: XLV/1, Sa.: 177 (Ocak 1981), pp. 132ff.

Tripartite Pact, we would but break to pieces the Balkan Pact and would thus suffer great harm."⁵⁵

On the other hand, Atatürk was also not unaware of the practical difficulties of entering into a treaty of alliance with a great power. For instance, he said to the Romanian Premier Tataresku in Ankara on October 28th, 1937 :

"...one should not forget yet another kind of danger inherent in the alliances of small powers with great powers. An alliance between the strong and the weak —whatever the outward shape— is... like the weak one's becoming subject to the strong one and coming under the latter's order. That is why, my Government, on considerations of definite independence, has not favoured a policy of alliance with those who are much too powerful than Turkey..."⁵⁶

Atatürk's these last words may sound in contradiction with Turkey's willingness to enter into alliance with both Britain and the Soviet Union only a year ago. However, a better evaluation would be to conclude that Atatürk was not against entering into an alliance with a great power if conditions so dictated but that he was nevertheless aware of the difficulties in it and would therefore prefer not to be obliged to do so.

c. Activity But No Adventurism in Foreign Policy

Atatürk's diplomacy was an active one. Indeed, Turkey's views as regards international problems were welcomed with much respect in foreign diplomatic circles.

As his views on Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism expressed above manifested, Mustafa Kemal did not at all favour adventurism in foreign policy. His severe criticisms of German and Italian adventurisms in the 1930's also mentioned above, again, can be recalled here.

While rejecting adventurism, Atatürk also kept away from the other extremity, i.e. passivity in foreign policy. Indeed, Turkey's views on world affairs were not without significance at all for foreign diplomats. Suffice it to say

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁵⁶ Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Yabancı...", *op. cit.*, p. 198.

that, on the eve of the Second World War, both the "revisionist" and the "anti-revisionist" camps of Europe were in rivalry to conclude a pact with Turkey. This rivalry continued until after Atatürk's death in 1938 when Turkey concluded a tripartite treaty of alliance with Britain and France on October 19th, 1939.

3. *Nationalism-Internationalism*

Mustafa Kemal's nationalism can best be seen in the following speech he made in Konya on March 20th, 1923:

"The various nations in the Ottoman Empire all saved themselves by uniting around national creeds and indeed by means of the power of the nationalist ideal. We realized what we are, indeed that we are a separate nation foreign to them, only when we were kicked out by stick. The moment our strength was weakened, they insulted and humiliated us. Only then we realized that our fault was to forget our own selves. If we want the world to show respect to us; let us first show this respect to ourselves and to our own nationality and we should do so in our sentiments, ideas, and in our deeds and actions. Let us know that those nations who have not reached their national personality, will only fall prey to other nations."⁵⁷

While being nationalist on the one hand, Atatürk belived on the other hand, that world community is one whole family and that all nations are relatives of one another.⁵⁸ No nation was justified to disinterest itself from the problems of others. That is why he deemed it his duty to be well-informed about the activities and problems of other nations even in the remotest corners of the world. This was not only a prerequisite of international responsibility, but also a necessity of being well-informed in order to be able to pursue the best foreign policy towards the outer world.

Atatürk's nationalism was no barrier to his "internationalism" (humanism). When in 1931 he received in Yalova the three airmen who had flown from New York to Istan-

⁵⁷ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, II, op. cit., p. 143: *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 26.3.1923.

⁵⁸ Sevim Ünal, "Atatürk'ün Balkanlar'daki Barışçı Siyaseti" (Exposé in the IX. Turkish History Congress, 21-25 September, 1981, Ankara).

bul, he told them that developments in civilization brought all human beings closer to each other and that he drew great pleasure from seeing it.⁵⁹ The fact that Atatürk's nationalism went hand-to-hand with his "internationalism" can again be seen on this same occasion. Indeed, he also told the American airmen that such successes set an example for the Turkish youth.

When he received the delegates to the Balkan Conference held in Ankara in October 1931, Atatürk said :

"To incite human beings to cut each other's throats under the pretext of giving happiness to them is an inhuman system and it is indeed most regrettable. The only means of making human beings happy is to draw them close to each other by using such energy and action that their mutual material and moral needs will be secured and see to it that they love one another.

The real happiness of humanity will materialize only if the number of travelers on the road towards this high ideal multiply and be successful..."⁶⁰

Atatürk said to the Romanian Foreign Minister Antonescu in Ankara on March 17th, 1937 :

"...one must think about the welfare and happiness of not only one's own nation but of all the nations of the world... and must do one's best to serve for the happiness of the whole world... Because, to work for the happiness of the nations of the world, is another way of trying to secure one's own comfort and happiness. Unless there is no peace, openness, and no getting on with each other among nations in the world, no one nation will be in comfort, no matter how much it strives for itself.

...Even an event in the what we think the remotest part of the world can —who knows— one day reach us.

That is why, we have to consider humanity a single body and each nation an organ of it. A pain on the finger-tip will affect the whole organs of the body."⁶¹

⁵⁹ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., pp. 90-92: *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 3.8.1931.

⁶⁰ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, II, op. cit., p. 270: *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 26.10.1931.

⁶¹ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, II, op. cit., pp. 277-279: *Ulus*, 20.3.1937. Atatürk added that in wartime, too, he used to be informed not only about his own unit but about all the other Turkish armies, too, so that he could direct his own forces well.

One can also recall here Atatürk's words as regards the cemeteries of the enemy soldiers killed in the war in Gallipoli in 1915. Atatürk said that those soldiers who died and were buried in the Turkish land were no longer in foreign territory. They were as much respectable as our own dead soldiers buried in the same area.

4. *Attitude Towards Europe*

Mustafa Kemal knew it well that he was fighting against the most powerful countries of his Age. Europe's supremacy in world affairs was still considered-despite certain new elements of weakness-to be at its zenith. Mustafa Kemal was, in a way, in a dilemma. On the one hand, the West was not only the most but also the one and only developed world in those years. The Soviet Union, which was undergoing a revolution and a civil war, was no match against the West. The Soviet Union, itself, was turning against the West for capital and trade, not to mention its need for diplomatic recognition. By softening its attitude towards world revolution, and indeed by watering down its economic doctrines in the Soviet Union itself (namely by passing from "war communism" to a new moderate economic policy-NEP), the new régime in Russia looked to many people in Europe as resembling old Russia or any other Western country. Again, Turkey was the only Islamic country in the continent of Europe. For many centuries on end, the Christian West had tried-in the words of the Gladstonian Liberals- "to kick the Turks bag and baggage out of Europe." Therefore, for the Turks to keep themselves in Europe, they had to reach a compromise with the West. First, the Turks had to show that they had the power to prove themselves. Secondly, the Turks had to make themselves look like the West if they wanted to keep themselves in the West. Here lay Atatürk's basic difficulty. Turkey had come under the military invasion of the West. He had to fight against the West first, to be able to turn into friends later.

The fact that the Czarist régime had fallen in Russia, was certainly a contributing factor to the Anatolian move-

ment. Indeed, if the Russian Government, which had signed the 1915 Agreement concerning the annexation of the Turkish Straits had remained in power, it would be even more difficult for the Turks to fight yet another victor of the World War. However, Mustafa Kemal's relations with the new régime in Russia were not without any problems. What is more, by fighting against the West, which was the Bolsheviks' common enemy that had intervened in the Civil War in Russia, the Anatolian Movement, on its part, prevented the West from interfering more effectively in the civil war in Russia. Also, the Anatolian Movement aided the Soviet régime to get established in the Caucasian Republics (Georgia, Armenia and, Azerbaijan in particular). All this denotes that Mustafa Kemal's relationship with the Soviet régime was based on equality, namely on mutual benefits. This again was much different than the Ottoman practice of total dependence on one major power—needless to say—on an unequal basis, from late XIX. century onwards.

One other factor too, has to be taken into consideration by those who criticize Mustafa Kemal's adoption of a system on Western lines. Indeed, it is not to be forgotten that there was in Europe in those years, a general trend towards the Right. Prior to and particularly after the coming into power of Mussolini's Fascist Party in Italy in 1922, many rightist military dictatorships were being established in many countries in Europe. In countries like Britain, where democracy had taken root, mostly the Conservatives were in power. That is why I think there should be no room for criticisms that Atatürk's system was more to the Right than to the Left. In fact, Atatürk's system was neither a Rightist nor a Leftist model. Indeed, it was a *sui generis* model. He said at the National Assembly on December 1st, 1921: "...Gentlemen, we must be proud of not being like... others. Gentlemen, because, we look like ourselves."⁶² He also said that it was not possible to develop a nation by imitating others.⁶³ If that is done, a nation imitating another will not only be unable to succeed, but

⁶² Söylev ve Demeçler, I, op. cit., p. 197.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

will also lose its own character. This will be, he said, a grand mistake, and that "[Turkey] is -and will, God willing, develop- in line with its own character."⁶⁴

One other factor that made Turkey feel the influence of Europe was the fact that the League of Nations was established again in the continent of Europe (in Geneva). The League of Nations, the General-Secretariate of which was mostly British -the other two being French and Irish- was under British influence to such extent that even the stationery material used were British.

Thus it was inevitable that Mustafa Kemal's Turkey, which was entering into such an international arena would come under the influence of the West. What is more, French "mandate" rule in Syria and that of the British in Iraq; together with the Italian presence in the Dodecanese, all meant that Turkey was encircled by the major powers of Europe. This denoted further embroilment with European affairs.

5. *Attitude Towards the Colonial World*

Another element in Atatürk's foreign policy was his ability to see that a new world was looming ahead to end the colonial rule of long centuries. Therefore, Atatürk, while favouring on the one hand a rapprochement with the West, with full respect to the achievements of the Western civilization, did no, however, close his eyes to the sufferings of the Colonial World. Indeed, Atatürk was also aware of the Asian side of the Turkish character and was proud of it, too. As I mentioned above, Mustafa Kemal considered the Anatolian National War to be aimed at defending not only the cause of Turkey but of the whole East.

Atatürk's views as to the future of the Colonial World proved to be true in the latter part of the XX. century. That Atatürk could foresee the future about four decades beforehand is yet another proof of his ability to read the future. He said on January 3rd, 1922 :

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

"...During [a war, which lasted for one year, I stayed with those people in Africa who were waging this holy war of Islam. I had close contacts with them and acquired a profound knowledge as to their ideas. The African people, probably became aware of their personal freedoms even earlier. However, they found no opportunity. The invaders and their aggressive armies never stopped their pressure upon [the African people]. However, no matter how strong this pressure is, it will not be able to stand against this great movement of the thought. This movement of the thought which has turned towards humanity will succeed sooner or later. All the oppressed nations will one day destroy and annihilate the oppressors. Then will disappear from the world the words, the oppressor and the oppressed; and humanity will acquire a social status befitting it... Today, the powers which we see are in homogeneity, have concluded many treaties among themselves for the purpose of keeping the oppressed more firmly in shackles and thereby satisfy their pleasures by the benefits they draw from the labour [of the oppressed]. However, these treaties are nothing but worthless bits of paper. Indeed, such bits of paper which denote violation of the Right will have no effect at all upon the determined nations..."⁶⁵

Atatürk's views as to World Peace, which I will examine later, are again in line with the general policies of the Asian-African-Latin American World which came into existence several decades after his death.

One can even come across elements in Atatürk which became a matter of discussion almost fifty years later in our present-day world. Indeed, for instance, the just distribution of national resources, a topic which became a matter of discussion from the 1970's onwards in various international fora on the new international economic order, the North-South dialogue and the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. Atatürk said as early as in late 1919:

"...nations live on the land they occupy, not only as the true owner of it, but also as the representatives of all humanity. They benefit by the sources of wealth of that land for themselves, and are consequently also obliged to let all humanity profit by it..."⁶⁶

⁶⁵ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, II, op. cit., pp. 28-29: *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 4.1.1922.

⁶⁶ *Nutuk*, III, op. cit., p. 1182.

As regards the Islamic word, too, his intention was to see in the future a world of independent Islamic countries forming a family of cooperation. He knew it well, that Caliphate was not a factor sufficient for keeping the Islamic world in unity in a much-changed XX. century- as indeed the First World War had manifested. That is why he did not let himself be carried away by offers to be the Caliph himself. Instead, he believed that individually-ruled Islamic countries would be in a better position to form -so to speak- a commonwealth of their own. This far-sightedness again, materialized three decades after his death, with the establishment of the Islamic Conference in Rabat in 1969.

6. *Difference of Régimes No Barrier to Friendship*

Atatürk's foreign policy was based on friendly relations with all powers irrespective of internal régimes. During the National War, Mustafa Kemal entered into close cooperation with the Soviet Union despite the fact that he was against Bolshevism. Although he did draw parallelism between the Turkish and the Soviet revolutions,⁶⁷ he was yet of the opinion that communism was not practicable in Turkey. He said on February 2nd, 1921 :

"Communism is a social matter. The ...social conditions in our country, the strength of [our] religious and national traditions have such a character that confirm that the communism in Russia is not practicable for us... Indeed, even the thinkers of Russia agree with this truth. Therefore,

⁶⁷ For instance, he said on January 3 rd, 1922 that, like the Soviet revolution against the Czarist despotism, Turkey's people too, rose against both the exterior and the interior. He said that the nation took its reins into its own hands and established a real people's administration. He added that this system of government in Turkey ("Şûra" administration) was called "Soviet" in Russia. He said: "To appreciate and approve of this character of Turkey, means to wish earnestly, the existence, independence and happiness of the people of Turkey. It was the Russians first who manifested this sincere wish." From: *Söylev ve Demeçler, II, op. cit.*, pp. 27-28: *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 4.1.1922. See also Mustafa Kemal's comparison of the Bolshevik principles with Islam: Speech at the Grand Assembly on August 14th, 1920: *Söylev ve Demeçler, I, op. cit.*, pp. 92-102.

our relations and mutual friendship with the Russians depend only upon the basis of unity and alliance principles of two independent states."⁶⁸

In an interview to the *Petit Parisien* in Bursa in November 1922, Mustafa Kemal said :

"...this form of government is not a Bolshevik system. Because we are neither Bolsheviks nor Communists. Indeed, we cannot be either one of them, for we are nationalists and are respectful to our religion. In sum, our form of government is an exactly democratic government. And in our language, this government is called 'people's government'."⁶⁹

The fact that Atatürk was in favour of good relations with every power can again be verified by the fact that after the National War, Turkey maintained friendship with all the power centres of the world. Indeed, Western democracies, the Fascist powers and the communist Soviet Union were all in friendly dialogue with Turkey even in the 1930's when the ideological rift in the international arena was becoming an ever-increasing danger to world peace. The fact that all these power centres were rivalling for Turkish alliance in September and October 1939, even after the Second World War had started, is again a case in point.

7. *Participation in International Cooperation*

One other aspect of Atatürk's foreign policy was to participate in international cooperation. Indeed, Atatürk's Turkey, right from the beginning, showed interest in international cooperation. Even before becoming a member of the League of Nations, which it did in 1932, Turkey was actively interested in the activities of this organization. Turkey's participation in the Disarmament Conference from 1928 onwards is indeed a case in point.

⁶⁸ From : *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 20 : *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 6.2.1921. In other speeches, Mustafa Kemal also expressed his pleasure at the success of the Bolsheviks against their enemies and stated that the Bolsheviks were fighting for the liberation of all the oppressed people. See : *Söylev ve Demeçler*, I, op. cit., pp. 92-102.

⁶⁹ From : *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 51 : *Tanin*, 2.11.1922.

In his speech at the Grand National Assembly on March 1st, 1924, Mustafa Kemal said :

"...After the treaties come into force, the Turkish Republic's entry into the League of Nations is a point which will be taken into consideration. We hope that the League... will be such an organization that will not be a means of dictation for the strong powers and will secure harmony and balance among nations by examining and solving the disputes in a just and rightful manner."⁷⁰

Turkey did become a member of the League of Nations in July 1932. However, as years passed, it became obvious that the League was not successful in the maintenance of world peace. Nevertheless, Atatürk was of the opinion that an efficient international organization -if not the League itself- was still the only means of securing world peace. In an interview to Gladys Baker on June 21st, 1935, he said : "(In the face of the ever-increasing war danger)... the quickest and the most effective measure is to establish an international organization which will make a future aggressor realize point-blank that his aggression will not remain unpunished."⁷¹

8. *Importance of Regional Cooperation (the Balkans and the Middle East)*

Another aspect of Atatürk's foreign policy was to attach importance not only to the continent of Europe, which by all means was the hub of world diplomacy in those years, but also to consider important, those areas adjacent to Europe, namely the Balkans and the Middle East (Eastern Mediterranean). Indeed, if peace in the world meant peace in Europe, certainly, peace in Europe was dependent on peace in the Balkans and in the Eastern Mediterranean (the Middle East). Atatürk's policy was especially active in those two areas. The Balkan Entente of 1934 and the Saadabad Pact of 1937 are to be recalled here.

Atatürk attached special importance to the Balkans

⁷⁰ Söylev ve Demeçler, I, op. cit., p. 332.

⁷¹ From : Söylev ve Demeçler, III, op. cit., pp. 97-98 : Ayın Tarihi, No. 19 (1935), pp. 260-262.

which was not only an area connecting Turkey to the continent of Europe, but also a region which he knew so well since it was his birth-place. When he received on October 25th, 1931, the delegates to the Second Balkan Conference held in Ankara, he told them that the Balkan nations were of the same blood, namely that "their common ancestors all came in waves from Central Asia".⁷²

As to individual nations, Atatürk expressed on many occasions cordial feelings towards Greeks, Bulgarians, Romanians, Yugoslavs, and the Albanians.⁷³

Atatürk attached particular importance to establishing friendly relations with Greece. This would not only prevent Turco-Greek relations after the Anatolian War from entering a period of Greek revanchism, but it would also prepare the groundwork for a peaceful atmosphere in the Balkans, which, only a decade ago had been the birth-place of the World War. On the occasion of the Greek Prime Minister Metaxas's visit to Ankara, Atatürk said to him on October 19th, 1937, that he himself was a Macedonian, too, and that since his childhood he had observed common characteristics with his Greek friends.⁷⁴ He added that he believed those two nations should be close to each other and went on to say that he had expressed this opinion to Greek officers even when they (Turks and Greeks) were fighting against one another. During this visit to which Ankara had attached great importance, a Turkish journalist-regarded as the spokesman of the Government-said that Atatürk had stated that "there was no boundary between the two nations" while Metaxas had said that "the two armies [of the two nations] are all one single entity."⁷⁵

⁷² From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, II, *op. cit.*, pp. 268-270: *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 26.10.1931.

⁷³ See: Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Yabancı...", *op. cit.*, pp. 162-165; Şimşir, "Atatürk'ten Elçi Ruşen Eşref...", *op. cit.*, pp. 308-309 and İsmail Arar, "Atatürk'ün Günümüz Olaylarına da Işık Tutan Bazı Konuşmaları", *Bellekten*, Cilt: XLV/1, Sa.: 177 (Ocak, 1981), pp. 11-14 and 26.

⁷⁴ Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Yabancı...", *op. cit.*, pp. 181-182.

⁷⁵ From: *Ibid.*, p. 162: Falih Rıfık Atay, "Misafirlerimiz", *Ulus*, 19.10.1937.

When Metaxas re-visited Ankara later in 1938, Atatürk said to him on February 27th, 1938 :

"The cooperation between our two nations is not a time-restricted affair. This togetherness depends upon the continuous necessities of the logic. We have full confidence that our ideals will materialize. The stronger the foundation of our solidarity is, the more excellent our example will be to the whole world. I am of the opinion that this example will be far superior to all expectations.

Long eras of peace are rare in history. We are bound to spare no effort and good-will within our means, to extend as much as possible the period in which we are [at this moment]."⁷⁶

As to the Middle East, an area where -like the Balkans- Mustafa Kemal had served for many years, Atatürk's Turkey attached great importance to maintenance of friendly relations. His cordial feelings towards the people of Iran, Iraq and Syria are to be recalled here.⁷⁷

On the other hand, as I mentioned above, Britain's presence in Iraq, and that of France in Syria as mandatory powers, and Italy's hold of the Dodecanese, brought Turkey into the neighbourhood of these three European powers in the Inter-War period. That was yet another factor as to why Turkey was careful in maintaining friendly relations particularly with Britain and France. As to Italy, after Mussolini came to power, Turco-Italian relations were never on very good terms despite sudden and short-lived relaxations of tension like in 1928 when the two countries concluded a Treaty of Neutrality and Conciliation on May 30th, 1928.

Finally, Atatürk's foreign policy attached particular importance to friendly relations with Turkey's neighbour in the north, the Soviet Union. In his speech at the National Assembly on November 1st, 1924, Mustafa Kemal referred

⁷⁶ Arar, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

⁷⁷ See: From: *Söylev ve Demeçler, II, op. cit.*, pp. 39-41: *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 9.7.1922; from: Arar, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18: *Vakit*, 25.7.1930; from: *Söylev ve Demeçler, II, op. cit.*, pp. 267-268: *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 2.7.1931 and Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Yabancı...", *op. cit.*, pp. 202ff.

to the Soviet Union as "our old friend".⁷⁸ On other occasions in those days, he emphasized that particular significance was attached to relations with the Soviet Union. Later on, on March 9th, 1935, in his opening address to the Republican People's Party Caucus, he said :

"Our friendship with the Soviets is, as always, strong and sincere. The Turkish nation regards these ties of friendship remaining from our rainy days, as a valuable and unforgettable memory..."⁷⁹

He added that Turco-Soviet friendship, like in the past, would again conduce to international peace.⁸⁰

In his speech at the National Assembly on November 1st, 1936, Atatürk said :

"...I am particularly delighted to state that our friendship with Soviet Russia, which has undergone every experience in the last fifteen years, is continuing with its natural development, fully preserving the strength and sincerity of the very first day."⁸¹

In his final opening address to the Grand National Assembly on November 1st, 1938, Atatürk again referred to the Soviet Union as "our great neighbour and friend".⁸²

Atatürk's emphasis on regional cooperation can be illustrated by the following citations: In his speech at the National Assembly on November 1st, 1933, he said: "...the Republican Government ...by [duly] regulating its relations and friendships with the nearest neighbours [on the one hand] and with the farthest powers [on the other], has thus based its foreign policy upon sound principles."⁸³ In his interview to Gladys Baker on June 21st, 1935, Atatürk said that regional pacts were useful and that they should be turned into a collective pact embracing all the nations."⁸⁴

⁷⁸ *Söylev ve Demeçler*, I, op. cit., p. 336.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 381.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 414.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 412.

⁸⁴ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 98: *Aynn Tarihi*, No 19 (1935), pp. 260-262.

IV. BASIC GOALS OF ATATÜRK'S FOREIGN POLICY

A. *Maintenance of Independence*

All the characteristics of Atatürk's foreign policy we have analyzed so far were aimed at the realization of certain basic goals. And among these goals, independence comes first.

Atatürk, right from the very beginning of the National War, based his struggle upon his knowledge of the fact that Turks never accepted throughout history, to be "slaves".⁸⁵ When he was evaluating the conditions in Anatolia at the threshold of the National War, he said :

"Gentlemen, in the face of these circumstances, there was only one decision to give. And that was to establish a new and unconditionally independent Turkish state based upon national sovereignty!"⁸⁶

He also said that no matter how rich and prosperous a nation was, it certainly could not merit in the eyes of the developed world a higher treatment than a lackey. Atatürk's order to the Turkish nation was "Either Independence or Death!"⁸⁷ Atatürk underlined his determination not to accept the patronage of any foreign power whatsoever and that his only source of protection was the bosom of his nation.⁸⁸ He made it known at the very beginning that the Turkish nation was prepared to fight against any power and die if necessary for the realization of Turkey's independence within its national boundaries.⁸⁹

Atatürk was not against foreign capital on condition that it should be fully respectful towards Turkey's "internal and external independence and territorial integrity."⁹⁰ He said to the representative of France M. Franklin Bouillon in Ankara on June 13th, 1921 :

⁸⁵ Su, *op. cit.*, p. 432.

⁸⁶ Nutuk, I, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁸⁹ Nutuk, II, *op. cit.*, p. 457.

⁹⁰ Nutuk, I, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

"...when one says full independence, one denotes, certainly, full independence and freedom in all aspects, namely, in politics, finance, economy, judiciary, military, culture, etc. If any one of these is lacking, that means that the nation and the country are deprived of all independence in the real sense..."⁹¹

1. *Maintenance of the Lausanne Status*

After the establishment of Republican Turkey, Atatürk's foreign policy maintained Turkey's independence by special emphasis mainly on two major considerations. First, maintenance of the Lausanne Status and secondly, a policy of balance between Soviet and Western (British) friendships. In other words, Turkey based its independence upon a regional (Turco-Greek) and a global (Anglo-Soviet) balance.

However, Atatürk's concept of "balance" had a positive sense, in that it was not like the Ottoman "policy of balance" from XIX. century onwards, which was mainly dependence upon one major power by playing it off against the others. Whereas, under Atatürk's concept of balance lay genuine efforts to develop Turkey's power as the real guarantee of Turkish independence. Let us first cast a look at the first element of Atatürk's policy aimed at the preservation of Turkey's independence, namely, maintenance of the Lausanne status :

Atatürk's success in the military and diplomatic fields had earned Turkey the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. This is the only Peace Treaty in its real sense. Indeed, unlike the other treaties which were prepared by the victors themselves, without the participation of the losers of the World War, Lausanne Treaty was signed after a hard diplomatic warfare between the two participating sides on an equal basis. If the Western side had won the First World War, the Turkish side was the victor of the Turkish National War.

Turkey had thus materialized most of its national goals as expressed in the *Misak-ı Milli*. That is why, there was

⁹¹ Nutuk, II, op. cit., p. 624.

no need for Turkey to feel disenchanted with the post-First World War status. Turkey did not join the "revisionist" powers which pressed for a change in the peace treaties.

Maintenance of the Lausanne status has been a major concern for Turkish diplomacy since Atatürk's death. One can recall here the late İsmet İnönü's words that "he never wanted to be put into the position of winning another Lausanne". Indeed, Turkish diplomacy has always been sensitive in the maintenance of the balance created at Lausanne.

2. *Balance Between the Soviet and British Friendships*

As to the global balance consideration in Atatürk's foreign policy :

As I said above, Atatürk's foreign policy realized the true value of national power, after having witnessed the decadence of the Ottoman Empire which had based its security mainly on the weaknesses -or rivalries- of others by pursuing a "policy of balance". It may be argued that Atatürk, himself depended on Soviet friendship during the Turkish National War and that he later based his policy on British friendship on the one hand -Britain being the Great Power in the sea- and on friendship with the Soviet Union on the other - Russia being a great land power. However, Atatürk had realized that only one's own strength was the safest means of maintaining security in the international arena. He saw it well that no power needed the friendship of any weak power except with ulterior motives. Atatürk won the National War by organizing his own military and political strength. Later on, after the foundation of the Republic, he embarked upon a series of reforms which were aimed at creating a strong internal structure which would prevent a repetition of the Ottoman mistake. Indeed, when the new Turkish element in Anatolia proved that it had the strength to survive, adversaries eventually turned into friends, realizing that they needed the friendship rather than the enmity of such a powerful rising force in Anatolia.

Thus, Atatürk, by giving priority to his own strength, did not base Turkey's security on any single power. Even when he had to have a bit too close relations with any single power, he tried to keep open, other channels so that he should not fall prey to the influence of that power. This we can see during the Turkish National War, when Atatürk was apprehensive of some Soviet motives. Thus, he entered into dialogue with the West even in those years. Later, he developed his relations with the West while seeing to it that his relations with the Soviet Union too, did not fall below a reasonable level. The fact that the Soviet Union was on speaking terms with the West in those years, on the other hand, certainly facilitated such a foreign policy. As I mentioned above, Turkey intended to conclude treaties of alliance both with Britain and later with the Soviet Union in 1936.

I have already mentioned that Atatürk was very attentive to maintenance of good relations with the Soviet Union. As to Britain, I want to add here the fact that among the many nations Atatürk came to know on the battle-field, special admiration and respect developed in his mind towards the British.⁹² Atatürk's Turkey, from time to time, considered the possibility of reaching a treaty of alliance with Britain. For instance, when the British Ambassador to Turkey Sir Percy Loraine visited the Turkish Foreign Minister T.R. Aras on June 2nd, 1938, he expressed the idea of a gesture showing Anglo-Turkish friendship.⁹³ T.R. Aras's immediate reply was to conclude an agreement similar to the Anglo-Italian Gentlemen's Agreement or that Turkey should be admitted into the Anglo-Italian Agreement. Sir Percy's answer was that "he did not mean any such gesture." Later on, in October 1938, there was talk of a Franco-Turkish treaty of alliance which Turkey had proposed. The Turkish Government had laid down the condition that Britain should also be included as the *sine qua non* of such a combination.⁹⁴

⁹² Kürkçüoğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

⁹³ E 3437/135/44, FO 371/21930, From: Sir P. Loraine (Angora), To: Sir L. Oliphant (2 letters) (2 June 1938).

⁹⁴ E 5758/91/44, FO 371/21929, From: Sir P. Loraine (Istanbul),

B. "Peace at Home, Peace In The World"

Atatürk's other foreign policy goal was peace as formulated in the motto: "Peace At Home, Peace In The World."

In the Inter-War years, although Turkey did understand the unjustness of the treaty systems regarding the losers of the War, it still did not sympathize with the endless aspirations of the "revisionist" countries -aspirations which Atatürk detected well in advance. Atatürk's Turkey favoured corrections of the injustices in the system through peaceful means. Atatürk's Turkey itself, at a time when *faits accomplis* were daily practice in the world, did not resort to force in modifications in its own status. Indeed, Turkey's demand for a change in the Straits Convention signed at Lausanne and again its press upon France to take into consideration the *sui generis* status of Iskenderun, when France decided to end up its mandatory rule over Syria in 1936, both were based on international law instead of a blunt resort to force. This attitude of Turkey had only earned it sympathy and understanding. For instance, a British Foreign Office memorandum dated 23 July 1936, on the progress of the negotiations at the Montreux Conference, said the following :

"...Turkey's demand for a revision of the Straits Convention was generally regarded as justified. It was improbable that in present circumstances she could count upon the guarantee in the Straits Convention in return for depriving her of military control of the Straits... that she suggested revision by negotiation was in happy contrast with certain other procedure..."⁹⁵

3 Oct., 1938; E 7045/91/44, From: Sir P. Loraine (Angora), To: Mr. Baxter (Very Confidential), 17 Nov., 1938.

⁹⁵ E 4702/26/44, FO 371/20080, Foreign Office Minute, 23 July 1936. Also, during a debate at the House of Commons on April 21st, 1936, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Eden said: "...HMG... recognized that the Turkish Government's request for discussion [of the Straits Convention] was one which they were fully entitled to make, and they regarded it as a valuable proof of the fidelity of the Turkish Government to the principle that international treaties cannot be modified by unilateral action. They therefore declared their readiness to discuss the question which had been

Atatürk, who had spent many years on the battle-field, knew the difficulties of war. That is why he never sympathized with the war-cries of certain other leaders in Europe who had never commanded even a squadron in any battle in their lives.

Throughout his career, Atatürk gave priority to peaceful means before resorting to force. He said in Adana on March 16th, 1923 :

"In any case, I am not in favour of driving the nation into war for this or that reason. A war must be both unavoidable and vital. My genuine opinion is this: I must feel compunction when I drive the nation into war. We may go to war saying that 'we won't die' against those who declare that they will kill us. Otherwise, unless national life is in danger, war is a crime."⁹⁶

raised at such time and in such manner as might be found most convenient to all concerned." An MP, Mr. Cocks said: "Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that British public opinion is strongly in favour of the request of Turkey, in order that somebody, at any rate, can stand up against the aggression of Italy?" 311 H.C. Deb. 5s., pp. 28-29. On July 21 st, another MP, Mr. Mander said: "Is not the attitude of Turkey on this matter a very admirable example to Germany in the way of peaceful change?" 315 H.C. Deb. 5s., p. 260. And on July 27th, Mr. Eden said: "...The results of the Conference can, in the view of the Government, be regarded as extremely satisfactory. The experience of this Conference at Montreux embodies many lessons, but... the most important of those lessons is this: From the point of view of general European politics, the Conference has shown that treaty revision by negotiation and agreement, in accordance with the normal principles of international relations and practice, can lead to a settlement more favourable to all concerned than the method of repudiation or the method of the modification of treaty engagements by unilateral action. (Had Turkey acted unilaterally, it wouldn't be able to get such a satisfactory result itself)... the effect of the Conference has undoubtedly been to bring about a closer and more cordial understanding between HMG and the Turkish Government, and that is a tendency which we welcome all the more in view of the very friendly relations which now exist between our countries..." (pp. 1119-1121).

⁹⁶ *Söylev ve Demeçler, II, op. cit.*, p. 124. In an interview to the correspondent of *İkdam* in İzmir on September 22nd, 1922, he said that "Turkey never wanted to shed blood for a mere nothing." *Söylev ve Demeçler, III, op. cit.*, p. 41.

In another interview to *Tasvir-i Efkâr* on 24-25 October 1919, he said

In his speech at the Grand National Assembly, on October 4th, 1922, Mustafa Kemal said that before shedding blood, a representative (Fethi Bey) was sent to Europe to settle the question peacefully.⁹⁷ However, he added, the attitude of the West towards Fethi Bey showed that Britain regarded this démarche of Ankara as weakness. Thus, he said, there remained no other means than resort to force.⁹⁸

Later on, when difficulties arose at the Lausanne Conference, Mustafa Kemal said in Izmir on January 30th, 1923, that Turkey took the question to the peace-table at a time when it could continue with its military successes.⁹⁹ He added that this should not be interpreted by the Entente powers as a sign of weakness since Turkey could well take the necessary measures if the other side did not refrain from the responsibility of continuing the war. In a speech in Arifiye on January 16th, 1923, Mustafa Kemal said that Turkey wanted peace, first of all because it was peace-loving and secondly to re-build the country after the never-ending wars.¹⁰⁰ However, he added, Turkey was determined to continue with its struggle unless peace was achieved.

Atatürk, when preferring the diplomatic means, also believed that peace meant conciliation. In an interview to a foreign journalist on October 13th, 1922, he said that he was determined to save all the dominantly Turkish areas by means of conciliation upon such basis that would please everyone "even the English".¹⁰¹

Atatürk was ready to enter into peaceful relations

that Turkey was forced to defend itself when it was faced with Greece's unrightful attack upon İzmir. *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 10.

⁹⁷ *Söylev ve Demeçler*, I, op. cit., pp. 248-249.

⁹⁸ See also his interview to the *Daily Mail* in İzmir on October 26th, 1922 to the effect that he earnestly preferred peace but had to resort to the final attack upon the Greeks since he had found no other way to expel them from Anatolia. *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 44.

⁹⁹ From: *Ibid.*, p. 59: *Akşam*, 6.2.1923.

¹⁰⁰ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, II, op. cit., p. 52: *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, 24.1.1923.

¹⁰¹ *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 47.

with any power even at the most unfriendly moment. Upon Turkish forces' re-entry into İzmir, a misunderstanding had occurred on the part of the British Admiral as to whether the Turks had declared war against the British.¹⁰² In reply to the British Admiral's letter directed to him, Mustafa Kemal said that there should be no talk of declaration of war since there existed no diplomatic relations between the two sides. He added, however, that resumption of diplomatic relations was desirable.¹⁰³

On every occasion, Mustafa Kemal stated that Turkish foreign policy definitely refrained from any violation upon the rights of other powers and that Turkey only defended its own rights, life and honour.¹⁰⁴ That Turkey attached utmost importance to world peace was a constant theme in Atatürk's speeches. For instance, at the Grand National Assembly on March 1st, 1924, he said :

"Gentlemen! The honest and sincere direction of the (Turkish) Republic in foreign policy is aimed at the maintenance of peace and the treaties. Our direction is to extend our relations and to respect... the law, upon the basis of reciprocity."¹⁰⁵

In his last address to the Assambly, he said on November 1st, 1938: "Peace is the best way to secure welfare and happiness for all nations. However, once it ...is achieved, it requires continuous solicitude and care and preparedness of every single nation."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Mustafa Kemal's speech at the Grand National Assembly on October 4th, 1922: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, I, op. cit., pp. 248-249.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 266. See also: From: Kürkcüoğlu, op. cit., p. 243: E 9237/27/44, FO 371/7887 (From: Commander —in— Chief Mediterranean, To: Admiralty, No. 311, Sept. 13, 1922), E 9238/27/44, FO 371/7887 (From: Sir H. Rumbold, Const., No. 409— Very Urgent, Sept. 13, 1922), E 9291/27/44, FO 371/7887 (From: Commander —in— Chief Mediterranean, To: Admiralty, No. 320, Sept. 13, 1922).

¹⁰⁴ See, for instance his speech at the Grand National Assembly on March 1st, 1922 (*Söylev ve Demeçler*, I, op. cit., p. 236) and interview to the correspondent of *Vossische Zeitung* on 21-24. 3. 1930 (From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., pp. 84-89: *Aydın Tarihi*, No. 73, Year 1930, pp. 6042-6055).

¹⁰⁵ *Söylev ve Demeçler*, I, op. cit., p. 332.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 412.

Atatürk regarded world community as one single family and believed that no one nation could disregard its obligations in the defence of world peace. In an interview to Gladys Baker on June 21st, 1935, he said :

"If war suddenly erupts like the explosion of a bomb, all the nations should not hesitate to unite their armed [forces] and financial powers against the aggressor...

Nations in the World are like flat-dwellers of a building. If the building is set on fire by some of the dwellers, the others will not be able to save themselves from the effects of it..."¹⁰⁷

Atatürk believed that if security was not extended all over the world, general peace could not be achieved.¹⁰⁸ He was also very anxious as regards the world armaments trade which he said was under the control of certain powers.¹⁰⁹ He was also not confident as to the effect of the international measures on the realization of real and actual security for Turkey; or for anyone else, for that matter.¹¹⁰

In Atatürk's way of thinking, peace should be based upon justice. He said on one occasion that "Right ought to be superior to Might in the world".¹¹¹ Thus, he differentiated between real and unreal peace. During his talks

¹⁰⁷ From : *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98 : *Aydın Tarihi*, No. 19 (1935), pp. 260-262.

On another occasion in May 1937, Atatürk said that all countries had to work in cooperation for world peace against an aggressor. He added that if at any time he thought that matters had come to that pitch, he intended to shed his civilian garments, and unpack the uniform he had so long laid aside, and place himself at the head of the Turkish forces. E 2752/188/44, FO 371/20860, From : Sir P. Loraine (İstanbul), To : Sir L. Oliphant (Private and Confidential), 1 May 1937.

¹⁰⁸ See, for instance his speech at the Grand National Assembly on November 1st, 1925 : *Söylev ve Demeçler*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

¹⁰⁹ *Idem.*

¹¹⁰ Speech at the Grand National Assembly on November 1st, 1926 : *Ibid.*, p. 349.

¹¹¹ *Nutuk*, III, *op. cit.*, p. 1184. On the other hand, he said to Gladys Baker on June 21st, 1935, that international measures should be taken for the betterment of living conditions of all humanity, particularly as regards famine. He added that citizens of the world should be educated in such a way as to refrain from hatred, jealousy and malice. From : *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, *op. cit.*, p. 99 : *Aydın Tarihi*, No. 19 (1935), pp. 260-262.

with the French representative (M. Franklin Bouillon) in Ankara on June 21st, 1921, Mustafa Kemal said to him : "...We can make peace Ankara in appearance... However, our nation will never be able to achieve peace... by such peace arrangements that will not secure our full independence."¹¹²

C. *Unimitative Democratization and Modernization (Westernization)*

Atatürk realized well the new concepts of his Age and thus concentrated his efforts towards the establishment of a democratic and modern society. He obviously understood well the reality that only a modernized Turkey-since it had some territory in the continent of Europe-could have the strength to maintain its independence against Europe which was in those years not only still the hub of international diplomacy but also the centre of the modern world.

Atatürk as an individual, much different than many-military or civilian- leaders of his Age, was a democratically-minded personality. In an interview on 21-24 March 1930, to the correspondent of *Vossische Zeitung*, he said :

"...Even that centry at the gate is not afraid of me. You may go and ask him if you like. No authority can be built upon fear. Any rule depending upon the power of cannons, cannot be enduring. Such a rule and even dictatorship can be necessary only in the rise of a revolution and leven then temporarily..."¹¹³

In another interview on June 21st, 1935 to Gladys Baker, he said :

"I am...not a dictator. They say that I have strength. Yes, this is true. Indeed, there is nothing I cannot do, if I want to. Because, I never act forcedly and unjustly. For me, a dictator is the one who subjugates others to his will-power. I want to rule not by injuring hearts, but by winning them."¹¹⁴

¹¹² Nutuk, II, op. cit., p. 624.

¹¹³ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 88 : *Aydın Tarihi*, No. 73(1930), pp. 6049-6055.

¹¹⁴ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op. cit., p. 100 : *Aydın Tarihi*, No. 19(1935), pp. 260-262.

As the correspondent of *Christian Science Monitor* Lawrence Shaw Moore had observed during his interview with Mustafa Kemal in August 1921, he was a man of great strength without any forced effort to look strong.¹¹⁵ Indeed, Atatürk always attached importance to the essence of anything rather than the mere appearance. For instance, when he received Keriman Halis in August 1932, to congratulate her upon her winning the title of "Miss World", Atatürk said:

"...You have proven to the world the noble beauty of the Turkish race. See to it that you preserve by scientific means your natural beauty which we are proud of... However, what you should be more interested with, is to hold the first place in the world in high culture and high virtue as your mothers and ancestors did."¹¹⁶

Atatürk, indeed confident of his own strength, was quite tolerant of criticisms and would even be more pleased when criticized instead of being flattered. Even during the very delicate days of the National War, he would never lose his calmness in the face of at times the most provocative criticisms at the Assembly.¹¹⁷

Atatürk believed in the importance of public approval of any decision a statesman would take. In a letter to Ali Fuat Pasha on August 17th, 1919, he said:

"...Decisions not subject to and in conformity with the national will, will never be obeyed in the eyes of the nation. Therefore, it is not lawful for us to look authorized in any question without waiting for the concurrence... of the national will, in order to carry out well our job which is only to act as an interpreter for the national conscience as regards the destiny of our nation and country..."¹¹⁸

In an interview to *Tercüman-ı Hakikat* on December 4th, 1923, he said: "...The Republic is in favour of freedom of opinions. We respect every opinion provided that it is sincere and legitimate. Every opinion is respectable for us.

¹¹⁵ Söylev ve Demeçler, III, op. cit., p. 29.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹¹⁷ See, for instance, debates at the Grand National Assembly on August 14th, 1920: Söylev ve Demeçler, I, op. cit., pp. 102ff.

¹¹⁸ Nutuk, I, op. cit., p. 103.

However, our opponents should be reasonable."¹¹⁹ He went on to say that the whole country was in ruins and that brigandage did exist. He added that Turkey had to develop rapidly in the road of innovations to be able to keep abreast of the times. He said that Turkey would achieve the level of domestic security of Britain and France and that (Turkey) would eliminate every obstacle on the road to modernization since the poverty-stricken people in Anatolia did indeed favour to become rich and modern.

In an interview to the correspondent of *The Times* in December 1924, he said: "It is natural that political parties should exist in countries which are based upon national sovereignty and... in republics in particular. Thus, undoubtedly, parties controlling one another will come into existence in the Turkish Republic, too."¹²⁰

As I said earlier, Atatürk was against imitating others in the adoption of a political system. He was of the opinion that every country should choose its own system fitting itself best. For instance, in an interview to the correspondent of *Le Matin* in March 1928, he said that Turkish democracy followed the freedom-path of the French Revolution but added that every nation would base its system upon its social requirements and the necessities of its Age.¹²¹

Atatürk's attitude towards Europe which I examined earlier, can again be recalled here. In an interview to the correspondent of *Neue Freie Press* in September 1923, he said that the Ottoman State had kept the Turkish nation away from progress by preventing it from coming into contact with Europe.¹²² He added that the Nationalists followed the outer world very carefully and that "to estab-

¹¹⁹ Söylev ve Demeçler, III, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

¹²⁰ From: *Ibid.*, p. 77: Hâkimiyet-i Milliye, 11.12.1924.

¹²¹ From: Söylev ve Demeçler, III, op. cit., p. 81: Hâkimiyet-i Milliye, 8.3.1928. He added that only towards the common aim of world peace, could different democracies cooperate.

¹²² From: Söylev ve Demeçler, III, op. cit., p. 65: Hâkimiyet-i Milliye, 27.9.1923.

lish contacts between our nation and the developed [world] is in line with our interests."

In an interview to the French editor Maurice Pernot on October 19th, 1923, he said :

"(Turks are not hostile to foreigners). Countries differ but civilization is only one. And any one nation should accede to this sole civilization for progress. The decline of the Ottoman Empire —conceited by its victories against the West— began on the day when it cut off its bonds tying it to the European nations. This was a mistake which we shall not repeat."¹²³

Mustafa Kemal went on to say that throughout History, Turks always went towards the west. He added that what he wanted was a "European Turkey, or better to say, a Western-oriented Turkey". He added: "We want to modernize our country. All our effort is to establish a modern, therefore Westernized government in Turkey. Is there any nation which has wished to enter into the civilization and yet has not turned towards the West?"

On another occasion, during a talk with the youth in Konya on March 20th, 1923, Mustafa Kemal said that the Islamic and Christian worlds saw each other as enemies and that the Moslem world could never put down its gun; thus falling behind the progress of the West.¹²⁴ "Because of its enmity against the West, it felt hatred against progress. And this led to our decline" he added.

When Sir H. Dobbs, British High Commissioner for Iraq, paid a visit to Mustafa Kemal in Ankara in November 1926, Atatürk said to him :

"...An English historian had said that the Turkish Empire was behind the Western nations in development, by a period equal to that dividing Christ and Mahomet, and all this lost time must now be made up. It was not a question of

¹²³ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, III, op cit., pp. 67-68: Tanin, 11.2.1924.

¹²⁴ From: *Söylev ve Demeçler*, II, op. cit., p. 140: *Hükimiyet-i Milliye*, 26.3.1923.

railways, factories and telegraphs, but a question of fundamentally changing the whole mentality of the people..."¹²⁵

I want to add here the great admiration Atatürk felt towards Japan for its progress in every field depending upon its own genius and energy.¹²⁶

V. CONCLUSION (*The Impact of Atatürk's Foreign Policy Upon the Present*)

"Atatürk's Foreign Policy" has been one of the determinants of Turkish foreign policy-making since his death in 1938. Indeed, some scholars of Turkish Foreign Policy refer to "institutionalized foreign policy direction" as a constant determinant of Turkish foreign policy, and by this they mean the principles of foreign policy set by Atatürk.

Has Turkish foreign policy been equally successful since Atatürk's death?

In the 1950's, for instance, when once again Turkey was the moving spirit in the formation of the Balkan Pact in 1954 and the Baghdad Pact in 1955, Turkey believed that it was acting in compliance with Atatürk's foreign policy of maintaining peace in the Balkans and in the Middle East. However, especially since the roots for bi-polarity did not exist in the Middle East, despite the fact that the Cold War which was beginning to end in Europe was moving into the Middle East, and also due to other factors, including certain errors of Turkish diplomacy as regards the Baghdad Pact in particular, these two experiences in the Balkans and in the Middle East in the post-1945 world did not work out well.

It may be argued with great justification that this was mainly due to the fact that Atatürk's successors were not of his calibre. It is also true that international world changed after his death, so much so that parallel to the loss of

¹²⁵ From: Kürkçüoğlu, *op cit.*, p. 323: E 6677/6677/44, FO 371/11557. From: Sir G. Clerk (Angora), 24 Nov. 1926.

¹²⁶ E 2752/188/44, FO 371/20860, From: Sir P. Loraine (İstanbul), To: Sir L. Oliphant (Private and Confidential), 1 May 1937.

the influence of Europe in international affairs, medium powers like Turkey began to carry less weight in the world arena. However, one should still admit the fact that since Atatürk's death, Turkey has been a bit too reserved, which has, at times, driven Turkey into complete inactiveness in the international world. To express interest in other nations' problems may not necessarily mean to become entangled with other peoples' disputes.

Since mid-1960's onwards, however, with the adoption of multi-lateral foreign policy, Turkey has, in a way, been more active internationally. For instance, Turkey's vote patterns at the United Nations in the last 15 years will manifest that Turkey has been more interested in world questions not directly concerning it. However, one has sufficient ground to assert that Turkey can play a still wider role in the international world, in compliance with the spirit of Atatürk's period, even in to-day's much-changed world. It may be born in mind that a well-judged and carefully-balanced expression of interest in other peoples' problems may not necessarily draw the wrath of any or both of the two parties most directly concerned. Also, an expression of readiness to submit efforts towards the solution of any such problem may not necessarily result in loss of prestige even if these efforts prove to be fruitless.

On the other hand, in international conferences, like for instance in the Islamic Foreign Ministerial Conferences, when any delegation presents a well-balanced conciliatory proposal to end an *impasse*, it is warmly welcomed; thus earning the proposing state gratitude and respect. This again is in harmony with the basic principles of Atatürk's foreign policy; and Turkey, despite the fact that it is now more active after a long period of passivity, has now great opportunities to do still much more in such international gatherings.

A final evaluation of Atatürk's foreign policy teaches one that a strong and highly-qualified political team in power, will most certainly be successful provided that a dialogue is established with the people with a view to

explaining the national cause well enough to form a self-reliant mass movement.

I may have used many adjectives in praise of Atatürk's foreign policy. Lack of criticism can only be a further sign of its successfulness.

Nevertheless, the evaluation of Atatürk's foreign policy can best be made by representatives and nationals of other powers. Atatürk's foreign policy did, indeed, render international respect for Turkey. To illustrate my point, I will refer to the Conference that worked out the Montreux Straits Convention of 1936. Indeed, the minutes of this Conference will provide sufficient material to see how prestigious Turkey was in the eyes of so many different powers of that period. I will suffice with only one of these: The head of the Romanian delegation, Foreign Minister Titulesco said: "...The method the Turkish Government has used, has strengthened the confidence in treaties. And, by acting in this way, Turkey can only win our heart-felt gratitude."¹²⁷

An article in *The Times* on the tenth anniversary of the Turkish Republic made the following evaluation:

"...still more important and significant is the astonishing change for the better in the relations between the Republic and foreign powers. It is true that the Treaty of Lausanne, which represented an agreed, and not an imposed peace, made it easier for Turkish statesmen to renew friendly relations with their former enemies, but even so their success after such a series of bitter struggles, has been remarkable. Ten years ago Greeks and Turks were still bitter enemies; Turkish relations with Rumania were at best correct; the question of Mosul threatened to embroil the Republic with the British Empire and with Iraq; affrays on the Syrian border caused continual friction with France, and there were rumours of Italian designs on the coasts of Anatolia. To-day the relations between Turkey and the Great Powers are altogether friendly, and the Turkish Republic is a valued member of the League of Nations. The Mosul question and the frontier difficulties with France and

¹²⁷ Seha L. Meray - Osman Olcay (Çev.), *Montreux Boğazlar Konferansı, Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, A.Ü. SBF Yayınları, No. 390, Ankara, 1976, p. 27.

Persia have been amicably settled. Greeks and Turks are on the best of terms, and, whatever may be the precise importance of the numerous pacts of friendship and arbitration which their FOREIGN MINISTER (sic.) has been busily concluding with other powers, they furnish the best of evidence of the pacific intentions and policy of the Turkish Government..."¹²⁸

The British Ambassador to Turkey, Sir Percy Loraine, made the following evaluation on the evolution of the Turkish foreign policy in July 1934 :

"That Kemalist Turkey, during the last few years, has played, maybe rather unexpectedly, an active, vigorous and leading role in the international politics of this region of the world is, I think, an established fact... it has also been... a beneficial role, the main objectives being security and stability at home and peace abroad.

(Today, Turkey is closer to its former enemies than to its former friends). Turkey is actually anti-revisionist; is pro-League of Nations; is content with her own frontiers; is hostile to the splitting up of powers into opposite camps or blocs; is an advocate of international cooperation; works for the reduction of international frictions..."¹²⁹

Sir Percy Loraine wrote the following to the Secretary of State in March 1937 :

"You will not, I believe differ from me in thinking that the Turkey of 1937 is a stronger, a more trustworthy and in every way a more efficient and desirable ally than the Turkey of 1914. (Its strategic and political value is even greater now). (What is more), in 1914, Turkish alliance was sold to Germany in order to enforce domination. In 1937, it is offered to the United Kingdom to ensure peace."¹³⁰

During a debate at the British Parliament (House of Lords), on July 18th, 1938, members attached great importance to friendship with Turkey and emphasized the developments Turkey achieved in the last 15 years under the leadership of Atatürk.¹³¹ Later, at the House of Lords

¹²⁸ "Ten Years in Turkey", *The Times*, 28.10.1933.

¹²⁹ E 4525/3652/44, FO 371/17936, From: Sir P. Loraine (Constantinople), 1 July 1934.

¹³⁰ E 1650/315/44, FO 371/20861, From: Sir P. Loraine (Angora), To: Secretary of State (Very Confidential), 12 March 1937.

¹³¹ 110 H.L. Deb. 5s., pp. 894-904.

on October 26th, 1939, Lord Shell had this to say on the score of the signature of the Anglo-Franco-Turkish Pact:

"...The new Turkey is a creation of our own Age, and it shows the importance, the enormous force of ideas upon a nation's life. We know in this country how difficult it is to persuade even individuals to modify even in a small degree their habitual practices. It is the same with ourselves. We are all of us perfect museums of outworn habits and prejudices. But to get a whole people to change its point of view in one generation is an achievement of very great magnitude and importance. That was done in Turkey as the result of the wise planning and sane outlook of perhaps the greatest of her modern sons. Kemal Atatürk has thus bequeathed to Europe a modernized Turkey which contains something of the fine qualities of his own spirit. I think I am right in saying that we rejoice to be on good terms with that people and we can walk together with them because we are agreed."¹³²

In the House of Commons, on the conclusion of the Anglo-Franco-Turkish Pact, Prime Minister N. Chamberlain took the floor on October 19th, 1939 and informed the House

¹³² 114 H.L. Deb. 5s., p. 1555. Several months before, on May 19th, 1939, during a debate at the House of Commons, Mr. Lloyd George—whose fall from power in October 1922 had been destined by Atatürk's victory in the Turkish National War—had this to say: "...I am glad that the Government have waken up at last to the importance of securing the adhesion of certain powers. Unreservedly and unequivocally I congratulate them upon the Turkish Treaty. It is of great value. It is not merely that you have got a little Power with about 16,000,000 to 20,000,000 of population. They are a very brave people which in itself is a very considerable help... Therefore, I have nothing but the most unqualified feeling of gratitude for the very notable achievement with regard to Turkey..." Later on, the Prime Minister N. Chamberlain said: "...The declaration [with Turkey] was very warmly welcomed by this House, and the general satisfaction at the conclusion of this agreement which has been demonstrated throughout the country shows how high is now the prestige of Turkey in this country, and how greatly her friendship is valued. That friendship was begun under the long and memorable presidency of the late M. Atatürk..." Mr. Churchill, too, praised the Government for having concluded an agreement with Turkey who, he said "had harmonious relations with Russia and Romania." Another MP, Sir A. Sinclair, too, "welcomed the agreement with the great and proud nation of Turkey." 347 H.C. Deb. 5s., pp. 1814, 1842.

that the Pact was signed in Ankara only half an hour ago. Mr. Chamberlain said :

"...I would call attention to the fact that the Treaty is valid for a minimum period of 15 years; it is therefore, no temporary arrangement to meet a pressing emergency but is a solid testimony to the determination of the three Governments concerned to pursue a long-term policy of collaboration. I am sure that it will give the House great satisfaction to learn that our negotiations have been brought to this successful conclusion, and that the seal has been set on our close and cordial relations with a country for the qualities and character of whose people we have the highest regard and admiration."¹³³

Mr. Attlee said :

"I am quite sure that I shall be expressing the views not only of Members on this side of the House but in all parts of the House, in welcoming the statement made by the Prime Minister... and that our friendship with Turkey may be strengthened for many years to come."¹³⁴

Another MP, Sir Percy Harris, too, congratulated the government upon its "great victory" and said :

"...At a period in history when many Governments have had to face great difficulties since the war, it is remarkable that Turkey has been one of the countries that has made immense progress in the arts of civilization and economic development and, therefore, it is very satisfactory to us that they should be standing alongside this country in its fight for law and order and for decency in international affairs."¹³⁵

Prime Minister N. Chamberlain said the following, in the Commons on October 26th, 1939 :

"...The outstanding event in foreign affairs since my last statement to the House was made, has been the signature of the Treaty with Turkey. The Treaty has been received with profound satisfaction throughout the Empire and in France; and it is a great encouragement to us to know that it has been widely welcomed in many other parts of the world. That is doubtless because the world sees in it a

¹³³ 352 H.C. Deb. 5s., pp. 1127-1130.

¹³⁴ *Idem.*

¹³⁵ *Idem.*

guarantee for the maintenance of peace in at least one region of the world... We are proud to feel that, under its provisions, we now share mutual responsibilities with the Turkish people, for whose patriotism, probity and valour we have long cherished a high regard..."¹³⁶

On the other hand, the attitude of Greece towards Atatürk is also a case in point. Mr. E. Venizelos, former Premier of Greece, in a letter to the Nobel Peace Prize Committee on January 12th, 1934, proposed that the Peace Prize of that year be given to Atatürk.¹³⁷ In his letter, Mr. Venizelos emphasized the importance of the establishment of the Turkish Republic under the leadership of Atatürk and referred to his reforms aimed at the realization of a modern state. Mr. Venizelos went on to state that the new Turkey became an element of peace in the Near East and that "Mustafa Kemal Pasha was the person who made this most valuable contribution to peace both between Turkey and Grece and in the Near East in general."

Upon Atatürk's death on November 10th, 1938, heartfelt grief was expressed all over Greece.¹³⁸ In the letters of Government officials of Greece and many organizations and individuals, deep sorrow was expressed with statements such as: "Atatürk was one of the chief leaders of world peace"; "Atatürk was one of the great personalities of world civilization"; "Atatürk was the founder of the Balkan Entente". All the major newspapers in Greece, in their November 11th issues, gave wide coverage to the death of Atatürk, all with leading articles, and photographs occupying the whole front pages. The main points in the Greek papers were as follows: "Atatürk attached great importance to Turco-Grek friendship"; "the importance of the friendship between the Turkish and Greek nations on the two shores of the Aegean"; "Atatürk was a labourer of peace"; "Atatürk should have lived longer for the bene-

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 1617-1618.

¹³⁷ *Milliyet*, 20.5.1981, p. 8.

¹³⁸ Bilâl N. Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Ölümü Karşısında Yunanistan" (Exposé in the IX. Turkish History Congress, 21-25 September, 1981, Ankara).

fit of all humanity"; "Atatürk, who had turned historical enmity into friendship, was a great leader History can witness only once in every millenium." On the other hand, the Municipality of Salonica, decided to give Kemal Atatürk's name to the street in which was the house where Atatürk was born in 1881.