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TURKS in RETROSPECT





Gardens of the Palace in Old Istanbul

TURKS
in
Retrospect



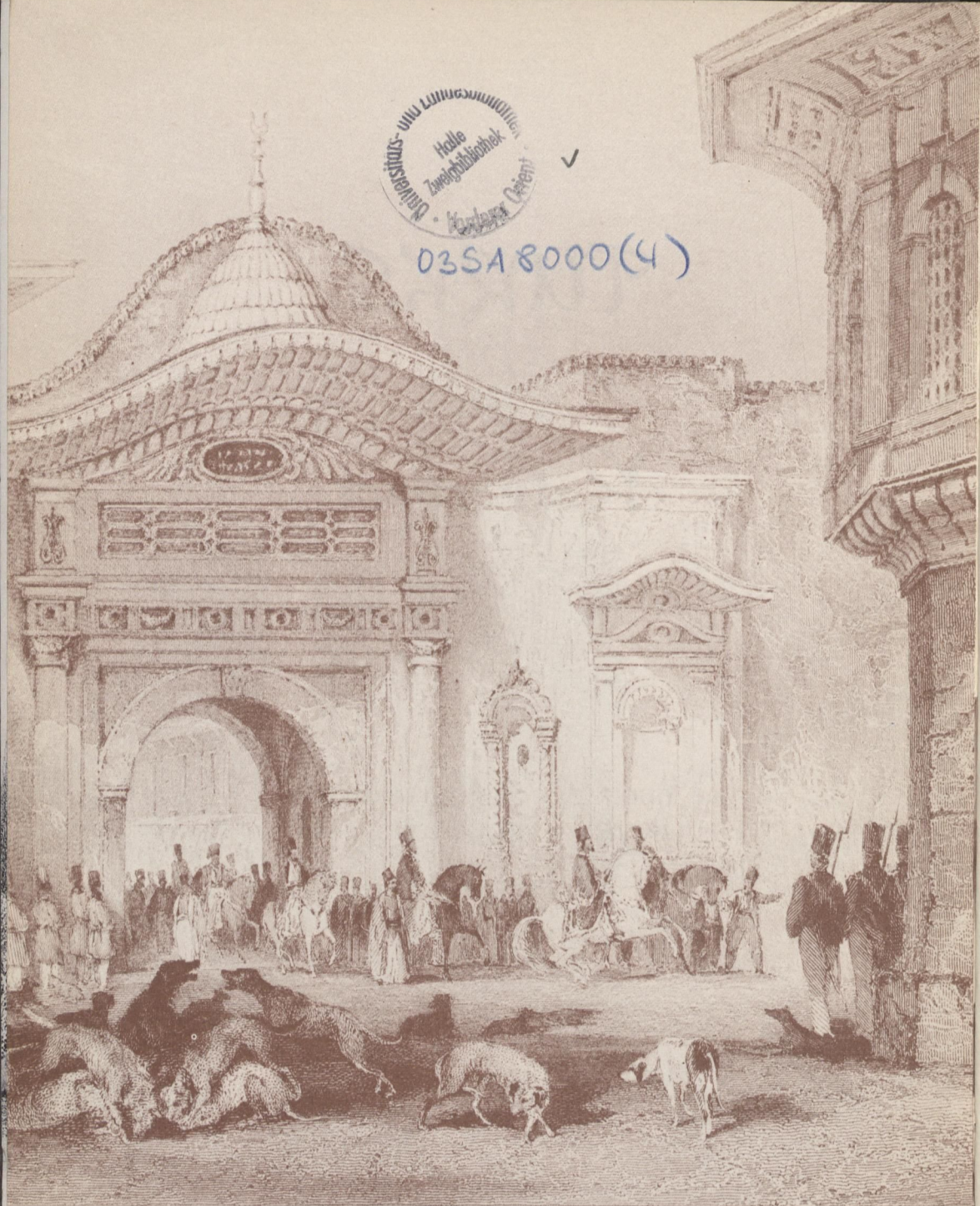
QUOTATIONS FROM LEADING
WRITERS THROUGH THE AGES

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"The Divan is the Council of Ministers. The Chamber where all the affairs of State are transacted is a small detached edifice surmounted by two domes, in the interior court of the palace. This Chamber has no doors shut at the entrance, for, as it is a court of justice, it is supposed to be always open, inviting all the world to enter it, and never to be closed against a suitor."



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THE DRAWINGS AND THEIR EXPLANATION IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE TAKEN FROM THE TWO VOLUMES OF "CONSTANTINOPLE AND THE SCENERY OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR" — ILLUSTRATED BY THOMAS ALLOM, WITH AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT BY THE REV. ROBERT WALSH. SECOND SERIES, FISHER SON AND CO., NEWGATE ST., LONDON. PUBLISHED CIRCA 1850.





HALT AT A CARAVANSARAI

"The interior of the Turkish Empire is constantly traversed by large bodies of men; their object is either commerce or devotion. . . . The venerable Turks . . . here with their glittering hanjars, stuck in their shawl girdles, beside their silver mounted pistols . . . have stopped at the caravansarai for the night . . .

"The caravansarai consists of quadrangles surrounded by chambers, where the guests are lodged; ascended by stairs they are connected by galleries and corridors. There is a fountain of pure water playing in the centre, with shrubs and trees around, and vines climbing over the roofs . . . affording agreeable shade and grateful repose to the tired and heated traveller."

Early Turks

GOVERNMENT:

"From the first century until the present, Asia has been undergoing a transformation more profound than that of Europe. The most decisive changes occurred between the 5th and 13th centuries, with the Turkish people as the main and most energetic factor..."

"The Turkish kings were quite different from the "people-eater" kings of some other nations. The Turkish *kagan* cared for his people. He believed that his mission in life as king was to feed the hungry, to dress the naked, and make prosperous the poor..."

"For this purpose, the Turkish kings did not rest at night and did not know rest during the day — they had other missions to fulfill. The Turkish *kagans* did fight and work day and night for the great fame of the Turks and for national glory. The Egyptian pharaoh, the Persian emperor or the Assyrian king would slaughter people just to celebrate their own glory and to show the power of their gods; the Turkish *kagan* would think only of the prosperity of his nation. Remarkable philosophy for the 8th century..."

Leon Cahun "L'Histoire de l'Asie", Armand Cohn Edition, Paris, 1896.

Leon Cahun (1841-1900) was a leading French Orientalist of the 19th century.

CHARACTER:

"Turks are afraid of nothing; it is their foes who are intimidated. When Turks want something, they do not draw back their hands before getting it. And they would not seek worthless goals. Their pride is great. Whatever they plan to do, they do. They do not seek after the impossible. The literature of Basra (Basorah), the wisdom of Greece, and the art of China are old to the Turks. Turks are open-hearted. They don't hold prejudices and mean ideas. The Turkish language is as impressive as the bodies and the voices of the Turks. Every Turk sees himself as a lion, his foe as prey, and his horse as an antelope..."

Thumama b. Ashras (d. 825) — theologian of the liberal movement under the early Abbasids. In "Encyclopedia of Islam", vol. 4, Leyden & London, 1913.

"Is it possible to transform a raging, devastating, destroying hurricane into a morning breeze? ... And yet, I have seen a hurricane change into a morning breeze, a mad sea into a charming lake, and lightning into a rose! I am speaking of the Turk. The Turk, who is like a ruthless hurricane, a terrific sea, and merciless lightning when attacking his enemy, is a morning breeze and a clear lake with his friends or when facing a disarmed enemy. To change this charming breeze into a hurricane, this resplendent blue lake into a horrid sea, this rose with its fragrance of nobility to lightning would be indeed a blunder that would offend Nature itself."

Torquato Tasso in "Jerusalem Delivered." Paris, 1841.

Tasso (1544-95), one of the great poets of Italian and world literature.



MOSQUE OF MAHMUT II

"This beautiful but small Imperial Mosque, on the water's edge on the shores of the Bosphorus . . . with its rich lattice work and the gilded spires of its minarets glitters in the sun with a brilliancy and regency, as if it has been left just finished by the hands of the artisans . . ."



Ottoman Jurks

GOVERNMENT:

"The Turks were far better men, and far abler rulers than the wretched tyrants whom they superseded. As a rule, they were grave, serious, honest, and straightforward, while their vigor and energy in the conduct of affairs made them the wonder of the world . . . It seems to be conceded that for the first century following the fall of Constantinople, the Turkish dominions were better governed and more prosperous than most parts of Christian Europe; that the people, both Mohammedan and Christian, enjoyed a larger measure of private liberty and of the fruits of their labor than fell to the lot of their contemporaries under the confused and too often tyrannical governments of the West . . . In education and intellectual culture the Turks were in advance, not of their Christian subjects alone, but of the greater part of Christian Europe."

Edson L. Clark (1827-1913) in "Turkey" — Nations of the World Series, 1900, N. Y. (pp. 84, 87.)

"Few of them (the Europeans) realized that he (the Turkish Ottoman Sultan Suleiman) was head of the most democratic government of their time."

"He (the architect Sinan) had an amazing knack . . . The Turkish knack of Suleiman's time — of doing the more difficult things swiftly. The seemingly impossible took . . . a little longer."

"It was a nation of great inner strength that survived the degeneration of rulers who often became no more than puppets; this nation outlasted the Serene Republic of Venice, the vast Spanish dominion and imperial Austria, and it continued to survive with remarkable steadfastness while Poland was partitioned and Portugal shrank into a segment of the Spanish peninsula."

"Suleiman has fought for an intangible thing, the *right*. Was this intangible thing racial toleration (at a time when minorities were being driven from Spain)? Was it the right of individuals to be protected by law, regardless of religion (when heretics were too often burned at the stake elsewhere)? Was it an actual utopia for human beings (of which Thomas More had written, when beggars in England were maimed or hung)? . . .

"There was something quite modern in the spirit of his Turkey."

Harold Lamb in "Suleiman the Magnificent", Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N. Y., 1951.

Harold Lamb is a well-known contemporary American historian and novelist.

"It is probable that under the early Ottoman rulers, the administration of justice in Turkey was better than in any other European land. The Mohammedan subjects of the sultans were more orderly than most Christian communities, and crimes were rarer."

Cambridge Modern History (1907); Vol. I.



"From the fourteenth to the end of the seventeenth century the Ottoman Empire was almost continuously at war with the Christian Powers of Western Europe. The terror inspired by the Turkish name among all the European peoples was largely responsible for the widely spread popular belief that the Turks were a race of uncivilized barbarians who, wherever they went, left nothing but smoking ruins behind them and stamped out every vestige of civilization. Religious fanaticism, coupled with the fear born of unbroken Turkish military success, resulted in creating among Europeans a state of mind which rendered them for the most part incapable of viewing Turkey and the Turks with an objective and unbiased eye.

"This almost universal prejudice obscured the real facts. In the first place, the Osmanlis, as opposed to the Mongol hordes of Jenghiz Khan, and the Tartars of Tamerlane, did not commit wholesale devastations in the countries conquered by them — witness the numerous Byzantine monuments of Constantinople, Nicaea, Pontus, Thessaloniki and Mount Athos, the Gothic churches of Cyprus, and even the classical monuments of Ancient Greece, most of which survived the Ottoman conquest intact, save for the white-washing and small structural changes entailed by the conversion of the churches into mosques.

"Secondly, a Europe which was itself dominated by the most extreme and savage exhibitions of religious fanaticism, where heretics and witches were burnt at the stake, where torture was a normal method of judicial procedure, where thousands of peasants lived in a state of serfdom deprived of the most elementary economic and social rights, where the African slave trade even as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century was regarded as legitimate, not to say highly profitable trade and carried on by the most respectable persons, where Jews and all those who did not conform to the State religion, whether Protestant or Catholic, were subject to continual persecution and all manner of disabilities, was hardly in a position to throw stones at the people of Islam in general and the Turks in particular.

"As for the exterior criteria of civilization such as literature, the arts and polite living, these were by no means lacking from the Turkey of those times. Islamic civilization, however much it might differ from that of contemporary Christian Europe, was certainly not a thing to be despised. The unprejudiced student who compares social conditions in Turkey during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, both among the upper and lower classes, with those prevailing at the same date among the peoples of Southern Europe — in Italy, Spain, Portugal, etc.— will come to the conclusion, that, *mutatis mutandis*, the Turks were not behind the latter in the arts of living; further, if we take the conditions prevailing at the same date in a country like Russia, the comparison is all in favour of the Turks.

"It is true that, in the domain of certain fine arts, such as painting and sculpture, the Turks had very little or nothing to show. The reason for this is to be found not in any innate lack of artistic taste, but in the uncompromisingly iconoclastic spirit of the Moslem religion, which by condemning the reproduction of the human form as

idolatrous, prevented the development of the arts of portraiture and sculpture in all Islamic countries. Calvinism and Puritanism produced very much the same effect in certain countries of Europe.

“But in other branches of the arts, such as architecture and the decorative arts, we find a great deal to admire in the Turkey of the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries. The superb faience of Iznik and the other Ottoman potteries; the flowered brocades of Bursa, those masterpieces of the weaver’s art; the carpets and embroideries of Anatolia; the metal-work and jewelry, are equal if not superior to anything produced in contemporary Europe. The splendid monuments of Bursa, Istanbul, Adrianople and other cities of the Old Ottoman Empire bear witness to the genius of the Ottoman architects as well as to the munificence of their patrons.”

Alexander Pallis in “In the Days of the Janissaries”, Hutchinson & Co., Ltd.; London, 1951.

Alexander Pallis is a well-known Greek scholar; until recently he was Minister Plenipotentiary for Information at the Greek Embassy in London.



THE GREAT BAZAAR

“The Great Bazaar was erected by Mehmet II when he took possession of Constantinople. . . . It consists of long avenues covered over with lofty arches of brick, lighted by apertures in the roof and branching off in various directions. The ceilings of the vaults and other parts of the walls are painted with various flowers and devices. Under cover at all times, and protected from wind, rain and sun, this bazaar is the resort of crowds everyday and all day long. In the heat of summer it is particularly agreeable – crowded with a busy population of many thousand persons, bustling, buying and selling in the cool and dim twilight. But the fair sex form by far the majority. The first attraction is generally a perfume stall. Here attar of roses, essence of lemon, extract of jasmine are presented to your choice. But by far the most attractive display is the pipe department. It is here the fancy of a Turk luxuriates and loves to exhibit itself with a dexterity shown in nothing else.”



MERIT:

"In Turkey, and especially among the Turks themselves, nobody cares about anything else save personal merit and value."...

"We kissed the Sultan's hand and withdrew to the wall facing the throne... there was a big crowd in the splendid court, from the lowest sipahi up to the highest dignitary of the Empire... In this vast assembly, there was not a single man that did not owe his position and title to his own value and courage. No one holds a position higher than another just because he is the son of somebody... Many high dignitaries of the Sultan are of humble origin; most of them were shepherds. These persons, instead of being ashamed of coming up from such lowly stock, feel proud about it. They feel that they are entitled to be proud because they owe so little to their ancestors for their achievements. Turks do not believe that merit in humans can be inherited. They accept merit in part as a gift of God and in part as the result of hard work and honest effort... Dishonest, lazy and inactive people get nowhere in Turkey... Herein lies the reason that Turks succeed in anything they attempt, why they became a dominant people always enlarging their territories."

"Turks show amazing courage, patience and endurance when faced with difficulties... I can't help but feel fright when I compare the Turkish system with ours. The Turks have all the resources of a powerful empire; they have unshakable strength, experience in war, field-tested soldiers, the habit of victory, and, above all, they have endurance, unity, order, simplicity, and vigilance."

*Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq in his "Turkish Letters — 1555-1562".
Quotation is from their Turkish Translation. Edition 1939.*

O. de Busbecq was Austrian Ambassador to the Court of Suleiman the Magnificent from 1554 to 1564.



EDUCATION:

"I have envied the Turks this system of theirs. It is always the way of the Turks, whenever they come into possession of a man of uncommonly good parts, to rejoice and be exceedingly glad, as though they had found a pearl of great price. And, in bringing out all that there is in him, they leave nothing undone that labour and thought can do — especially where they recognize military aptitude. Our Western way is different indeed! In the West, if we come into possession of a good dog or hawk or horse, we are delighted, and we spare nothing in our efforts to bring the creature to the highest perfection of which its kind is capable. In the case of a man, however — supposing that we happen to come upon a man of signal endowments — we do not take anything like the same pains, and we do not consider that his education is particularly our business. So we Westerners obtain many sorts of pleasure and service from a well-broken-in horse, dog and hawk, while the Turks obtain from a man whose character has been cultivated by education the vastly greater return that is afforded by the vast superiority and pre-eminence of human nature over the rest of the animal kingdom."

O. G. de Busbecq: Exclamatio, Sive De Re Militari Contra Turcam Instituenda Consilium (Leyden, 1633).





THE SWEET WATERS OF EUROPE

"On the river that flows into the Golden Horn where there was a paper factory Sultan Selim built a kiosk. . . . A mound has been thrown across the river, and the stream detained, so as to form a large and tranquil sheet of water. . . . This is the thronged resort of every person seeking amusement on St. George's Day in the month of May; and the Golden Horn is crowded with caiques from all parts of Constantinople. . . . The banks at this season are covered with a rich verdure and enamelled with a profusion of flowers of all hues. The illustration represents one of these festive meetings. On the right of the foreground is a group of girls dancing. . . . In the background, are companies engaged in various festivities and embosomed in the trees. . . ."

POETRY:

"Before I learned Turkish, I couldn't help noticing the heroic harmony of the troubadours in the voice of every Turk. Now that I know Turkish, I have come to understand that every Turk speaks like Roland. Only a native Turk can speak Turkish with all its natural sweetness and majesty. And yet, I am happy to have learned Turkish. The only way fully to understand the Turk is to speak his language without the help of a translator."

Antoine Galland in the "Journal d'Antoine Galland," 1672-1673, Paris, E. Leroux Ed., 1881. (Vol. II, p. 89).

Antoine Galland (1646-1715) is French translator of "The Thousand and One Nights" (Arabian Nights).



PLATONIC IDEAL:

"The Ottoman institution came perhaps as near as anything in real life could to realizing the ideal of Plato's Republic, but it is certain that Plato himself, when he conceived his Utopia, had the actual institutions of Sparta in mind; and in spite of the difference in scale between Ottoman and Spartan operations there is a close resemblance between the 'peculiar institutions' with which each of these peoples equipped itself for the accomplishment of its tour de force."

Arnold Toynbee; A Study of History; Abridgement of Volumes I-VI by D. C. Somervell. 1947. Oxford University Press (p.178).

Arnold Toynbee, famed contemporary British historian.

CHIVALRY:

"I was going to be a prisoner at Poltava; that would have been my death. I was saved on the shores of the Bugh River, then the danger became more imminent . . . again I was saved. But today, I am a prisoner of the Turks. What fire, steel, and floods were not able to do, the Turks did. I don't have chains on my feet. I am not in jail, either. I am free, free to do whatever I like. But still I am a prisoner — a prisoner of affection, of generosity, of nobility, of courtesy. The Turks have tied me with this diamond chain. Oh! if you knew how sweet it is to live as a free slave with people so affectionate, so noble, and so gentle!"

*King Charles XII of Sweden to his sister Ulrique-Eleanore.
From: Comte Theyls W. Van Horn, Memoires pour Servir a
l'Histoire de Charles XII; Leyden. 1772.*

*Charles XII, (1682-1718), King of Sweden took refuge in the
Ottoman Empire after his defeat at Poltava by the Russians.*



CHARACTER:

"These Turks have only one love — justice and truth; they did no injustice and, yet, they were victimized . . .

"We are on the side of the noble and brave Turks."

*William Pitt in John Goodwin Smith's "Great Statesmen" (1868).
William Pitt, the Younger, (1759-1806) a well-known British
statesman.*

"Turks are in general husky, tall, robust people with tough but noble faces. Under their black eyebrows sparkle their clever eyes . . . The Turk speaks with restraint; he will not open his mouth before first thinking. Those who deal with Turks and speak their language know how intelligent the Turks are . . . Turks love music, flowers, perfumes, sweets and coffee. The Turk's kindness and generosity is even extended to animals: they would stop anybody attempting to kill an animal and would ask him in anger, "Can you create such a life?"

*Sharlatos Vizantios in "Byzantino Turcica"; 1852.
Vizantios (1797-1878) was a well-known Greek historian.*



VALOUR:

"The Turks are a very ancient people. A valour that smarts under oppression, a tremendous spirit of initiative, a desire to mold the environment characterize the history of that people for centuries . . . the Turks are masters in destroying as well as building states. They have upset not only countries but whole continents, and their domination, once established, was hard to break down. History has learned a great deal from the Turks . . . Some of the works of Turkish hands are today the flower of our civilization."

*J. de Hammer-Purgstall in the "Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman"
(1835).*

*Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1855) was a well-known Austrian ori-
entalist whose 18-volume "History of the Ottoman Empire"
has become a classic.*



THE MEDAH OR STORY-TELLER

“The Medah, or Story-Teller, is a source of everyday enjoyment. He enacts by himself, in a monologue, various characters, and with a spirit and fidelity quite astonishing. . . . The subjects he selects for representation are parodies of the local scene. Sometimes a Turkish proverb is illustrated, and the effects of various vices and virtues are exhibited in a manner equally striking and amusing. The Place where the Medah exhibits is usually a coffee-house. He generally has a small table, placed before him which he either stands behind or sits on. His cuffs are turned up, and he holds generally a small stick in his hand. He imitates the multifarious tones of all the varieties of people in the Turkish empire, with a happy selection of all their characteristic expressions.”

DIGNITY:

"The Turk is the noblest of the nobles. This high nobility is not artificial or showy — it is the gift of nature. The only people that can create simplicity out of magnificence, eloquence from silence, a sensitive vitality from a graceful calmness... are the Turks. The Orient is the land of dreams and legends. The Turk is the eye, the tongue, the light and the truth of that magic land.

"One should be blind to history not to understand the Turks. The dignified silence of the Turks against the mounting unjustified attacks and mean slanders can only be explained by their pity for the blind... How beautifully this attitude answers the undignified calumnies."

Pierre Loti in "Fantome d'Orient"; 1928.

Pierre Loti (1850-1928) is a well-known French novelist.



SOCIAL LIFE:

"It seems that a deep and mysterious instinct led the Turkish people to its destiny... That instinct, confronted with many obstacles, had to fight, to subdue, everything that came its way. It was this instinct that led the Turkish race to the Pacific and to Gaul; that has spread the Turkish way of thinking all over the world from the Indus to Novgorod; that, three times in the same millenium, has built three inter-continental empires — the mightiest that history has ever recorded.

"This expansive spirit has always been the normal pattern in Turkish social life. None of these early Turkish empires allowed, in its social order, the system of caste and class that flourished in India, Egypt and China — and yet their contacts with those countries and those peoples have been very close. They never let the slightest religious intolerance take hold among themselves, nor did they advance the superiority of one faith or of one sect over another."

*Dr. Stephan Ronart, in "La Turquie d'Aujourd'hui",
Librarie Orientaliste Paul Genthner, Paris; 1937*

Dr. Stephan Ronart is a well-known student of Turkish affairs.



UNDERSTANDING:

"Istanbul and the Turks — you can't love that combination immediately... There is too much accumulated prejudice. You have to take your time... lots of time. But when enough time is spent, everybody, without exception, falls in love... Everybody, except of course the incurably wicked souls.

"Take me, for instance. In 1902, when first I departed for Turkey, I was pro-Greek. Oh yes! Like every Frenchman who took Greek in school, and learned to love the Iliad, Oedipus and Anabasis... I can swear to you that in 1897, when boarding my vessel the Iphigenie for a first long trip, and when Marshal Ethem Pasha was invading Thessalia, I hated the savage Turks!

"But when I went there and saw things with my own eyes, when I lived there just long enough, though briefly, when I learned and understood, — oh how fast my panhellenism disappeared. And, instead, I felt another love, a love deep and exclusive for the Turkish people, allegedly barbarian, and wild, but who are actually very sweet, very honest, very candid and terribly more civilized than we are led to believe... terribly less superstitious, less backward, less



WOMEN OF THE PALACE

"The women of the harem do not participate in social life. But at home a private teacher attempts to bestow on them cultural accomplishments. Music is most frequently attempted. They learn to play and sing beautifully. They have a regular income conferred upon them, called Paschmaklik — Turkish equivalent of pin-money. They use this in the purchase of clothing and jewelry for which they have a very refined taste."



fetichistic, indeed, than his detractors and calumniators, the turbulent people of the Balkans who caused so many disastrous wars! . . . That is why I love Turkey, after having loathed her because of my ignorance.

"And during the years, I have never failed and never feared to express, especially in her dark hours, my esteem and my admiration for the Turkish people and my protest against all the injustices and perfidies piled upon her. The Turkish people add the rarest virtues of all, gratitude, to their other rare virtues, such as courage, loyalty, soft-heartedness and nobility of character . . ."

Claude Farrere in "La Turquie Ressuscitee" 1922.

Claude Farrere (1876-). French writer whose novels, set against eastern European and Far Eastern backgrounds, brought him fame and a place in the Academie Francaise.



CULTURE:

"European history books are full of stories of how the barbarous Turks invaded the east and the west, and destroyed peoples and cultures. Myths and tales recount the Turks as supernatural and terrible forces . . . Even today, fear of the Turks vibrates in half the hearts of humanity. And yet modern science reveals the mysteries of pre-history and studies the traces of long-disappeared peoples. Suddenly, we see the Turkish race in the light of history and learn how she formed the bridge between the East and the West and how she created brilliant cultures and powerful states."

Herbert Melzig in "Ataturk"; Ankara, 1938.

Herbert Melzig is a German Orientalist and specialist on the Ottoman period.



TOLERANCE:

"Istanbul fell and Mehmet II entered the city. He got off his horse in front of the main entrance of Santa Sophia and, with his yatagan, cut off the head of a soldier who was busy wrecking the holy altars. The Turkish Sultan refused to destroy anything. He did not abuse his victory. Turkish religious tolerance became evident right from the beginning; he left the Christians their churches and the freedom to worship in their own way. He kept the Greek patriarch in his functions, free from any interference. The Turks, as a race and as a nation, are among the most honorable on earth. Their character is noble and towering. Their heroism is like an unalterable power. Their religious and patriotic virtues would inspire respect and admiration in every impartial soul . . . They are generous and sensitive. Their country is that of gentle, heroic people. I think that to be the foe of such a people is like being the foe of humanity. God preserve me from such a sin."

Alphonse de Lamartine in the "Voyage en Orient," Paris, 1868.

Lamartine (1790-1869), the great French poet, historian, and diplomat, was the author of a classical 8-volume history of the Ottomans.

"I yearn for a "Sun City" where there would be no night and where human beings would not know of darkness.

"Is it possible to find on earth such a "Sun City"? . . . the exist-

ence of the Turkish people, so tolerant, so respectful of freedom of thought, of freedom of religion, and of other people's language, leads me to think that, at least in the future, a "Sun City" will become a reality. This is highly probable, since we have today the courageous and just Turks, who do not jail free thinking and do not chain the love for truth. Yes, there is hope; why shouldn't there be in the future a "Civitas Solis" (Sun City) where only justice, truth, and freedom will reign."

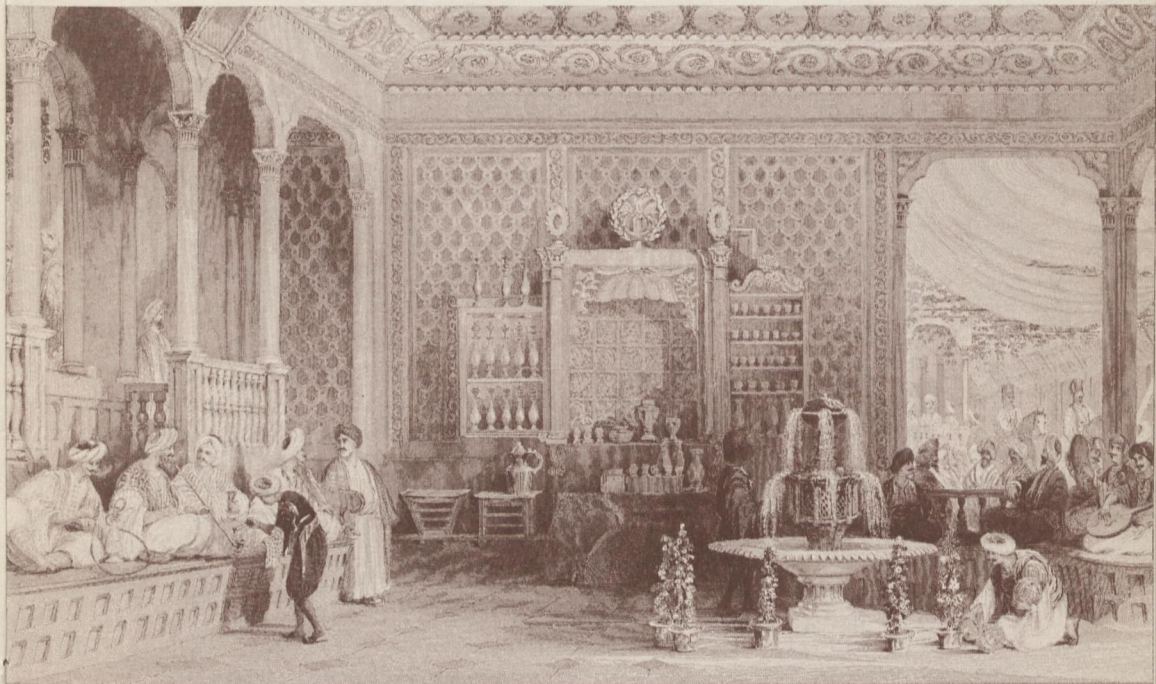
Tomasso Campanella in a letter to Cardinal Pierre de Berulle as quoted by C. J. F. Henault in "Cardinaux Savants".

Tomasso Campanella (1568-1639) a well-known Italian philosopher.

"If the blood that feeds the olive tree branch of Christianity is that of the martyrs, we must admit that those who prevented the destruction of that branch right where it grew are the Turks. This people are truly merciful and tolerant. They let live truths in which they do not believe — side by side with their own beliefs. This, even if it is the result of proud self-confidence, is still magnanimous."

A. R. de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) in the "Journal des Debats", Paris, 1841.

Alphonse de Chateaubriand, the brilliant French novelist and father of Romanticism.



INTERIOR OF A TURKISH COFFINET

"The Coffinet, or coffee-house, is something very splendid, and the Turk expends all his motions of finery and elegance on this. The edifice is generally decorated in a very gorgeous manner, supported on pillars and open in front. On one side are musicians with mandolins and tambourins, accompanying singers. The coffee is served in cups, not larger than egg-cups, black and thick."



PALACE OF SAID PASHA

“The first objects that present themselves, on ascending the Bosphorus, are the Palaces, hanging, as it were over the water. They display long fronts, with ornate balconies of wood . . . sounds of music continually issue from these, particularly at night. Concerts attract multitudes of boats and caiques of all sizes, filled with company of every grade — a gathering of gay souls over sparkling waters . . .”

HERITAGE:

“Let us look back for a moment over the best centuries of Turkish rule, from the rise of the Seljuks in the eleventh century to the beginnings of the Ottoman decline in the seventeenth. The first thing that strikes us is the immensely important contribution of the Turkish period to Islam itself. The Arabs had given Islam its prophet, its book, its faith and its law — the Turkish dynasties, if one may misuse a western phrase, established its church. It was Turkish rulers who first created a regular hierarchy in Islam, culminating in the Ottoman system of territorial muftis organised in a pyramid under the supreme control of the chief Mufti of Istanbul, called the Sheikh of Islam. It was under Turkish rule that the Madrassas — the great theological college of Islam — came into existence and spread all over the Moslem world, serving as centres for the formulation and defence of orthodoxy. Ottoman jurists and administrators made a formidable contribution to the elaboration and application of Islamic law, while on a very different level Turkish mystics helped to enrich the popular, intuitive religion of the brotherhoods that had always existed alongside — and sometimes in conflict with — the formal religion.

“In other fields, too, the age of Turkish domination in Islam saw notable achievements. Arabic literature was declining into its

silver age, but Persian literature was reaching new heights of achievement, and a new Moslem literature in the Turkish language contained much that is of interest and value, especially as one would expect from an imperial people — in history. Perhaps the finest flower of Ottoman culture was in architecture and the fine arts — and in the superb mosques that still grace Turkey and the former Ottoman provinces, in the splendid products of the minor arts, and in the characteristic art of calligraphy, often underrated by western observers, but capable of reaching high levels of artistic self-expression.

“It is in visual art and statecraft that we can see most clearly the three main streams of tradition that have combined to form Ottoman civilization: the high culture of classical Islam, with its religious and legal foundations, its concept of a state and society determined by the holy law, its Arabic and Persian aesthetic and intellectual patterns; the Hellenistic tradition — long familiar from the Hellenistic elements in old Islamic civilization itself, later reinforced from the arts of conquered Byzantium — visible in the structure of the Ottoman state and of the Ottoman mosque, in the exposition both of a theological argument and decorative theme; finally, the truly Turkish tradition,



ENTRANCE TO THE BOSPHORUS FROM THE BLACK SEA

“This spot recalls many interesting recollections of mythology, history and natural phenomena. Its present aspect presents a singular and beautiful prospect. The blue and limpid Bosphorus, now expanding into bays, now cooped between promontories, here suddenly expands into an apparently interminable ocean. Amidst these lovely undulating grounds, so varied in form as to command an exclusive prospect, parties of pleasure are continually assembled. Every Turk’s highest enjoyment is in the contemplation of a solemn, silent and widespread landscape. It is this that attracts such numbers to the agreeable heights of Buyukdere.”



THE ENTRANCE TO THE PALACE (THE SERAGLIO)

"This magnificent palace occupies the apex of the triangle on which the city is built... and the principal entrance is on the summit of the hill. Here is the large and lofty gate called Babi Houmayoun, which literally signifies, 'the high door,' and from thence the diplomatic phrase adopted by the Franks, who call the Turkish government 'the Sublime Porte'. All dignitaries and foreign ambassadors proceeding to an audience pass through here. The gateway is decorated with the most gorgeous display of Turkish sculpture, covered with large semicircular projections, supported on a colonnade of pillars. The embossments are of gold on blue and green grounds."

brought by the first Turkish invaders from the steppes of Central Asia and constantly renewed by the steady seepage from the tribes into the cosmopolitan religious, military, and bureaucratic hierarchies of the Ottoman state. It was this new Turkish element that remoulded the inherited traditions of older cultures into something new and distinctive, that reached its full flower in Ottoman civilization . . .”

Bernard Lewis in "The Ottoman Empire and Islam". The Listener. October 2, 1952. London.

Bernard Lewis is one of the better-known contemporary British scholars specializing in Turkish studies.



GEOGRAPHY:

“If you ask me, God created the Bosphorus in order to entertain the Turks – these gentlemen of the Orient. To enable millions to hear the saga of that people, two continents came ear to ear and lip to lip. After that spot was created on earth, Turks began searching for it and, a few centuries later, discovered their paradise.

“Istanbul, with all its beauty and glory, deserves the Turk. There is no other spot on earth where container and contained match so wonderfully.”

Theophile Gautier in "Le Pere de Judie", 1857.

Theophile Gautier (1811-1872), French poet, painter, and novelist.





"In 1923 Turkey was proclaimed a Republic and a completely new chapter was opened in the life of the Turkish People. This monument in the heart of Ankara is a lasting tribute to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the Founder of the Republic and a constant reminder of the dynamic spirit of modern Turkey."

Turks of the Republic

PROGRESS:

"In the nineteen-twenties he (Kemal Atatürk) put through what was perhaps as revolutionary a programme as has ever been carried out in any country deliberately and systematically in so short a span of time. It was as if, in our Western world, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the secularist scientific, mental revolution at the end of the seventeenth century, the French Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution had all been telescoped into a single lifetime and been made compulsory by law. In Turkey the emancipation of women, the disestablishment of the Islamic religion, and the substitution of the Latin alphabet for the Arabic alphabet as the script for conveying the Turkish language were all enacted between 1922 and 1928 . . .

"It looks as if in Turkey, whose statesmen had tried for so many generations to 'make do' with the western art of war alone, the western institution of parliamentary constitutional government, which is so much nearer than our art of war is to the heart of our western civilization, had now genuinely taken root. If so, this is a notable triumph for a sense of fair play and moderation in politics which, we Westerners believe, is one of the good gifts that the West is able to give the world. Since 1917 we have seen many partially or nominally democratic peoples lapsing into diverse forms of tyrannical government, and some of these peoples — for instance the Italians and the Germans — have been, not recent proselytes to our Western civilization, but native-born members of our Western family. The victory of the Western constitutional spirit in the Turkish elections of 1950 is thus a landmark which may perhaps even signify a turn of the political tide in the world as a whole . . ."

*From Arnold J. Toynbee's "The World and the West"
(Published by Oxford University Press '53)*



ACHIEVEMENT:

"Exactly half a millennium ago this Friday the Ottoman Turks captured Constantinople, bulwark of Eastern Christendom and capital of the Byzantine Empire. In celebration the citizenry of Istanbul (Constantinople's modern moniker) will start a two-week-long fiesta.

"They have a lot more to celebrate than a 500-year-old battle. Turkish progress within the last 30 years has caused admiration throughout the civilized world and exploded the old Kipling adage that "East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." In the 19th Century, Turkey used to be known as the Sick Man of Europe; the Well Man of NATO would be an appropriate epithet these days.

"At a frontier station in the Caucasian foothills on the 367-mile-long Soviet-Turkish border is a sign which reads, "We Turks are proud of our freedom and we are ready to die for our freedom." The U.S. can be proud of the help it has given the Turks in attaining that freedom. Since Marshall aid began in 1947, we have invested more than \$1 billion in Turkey. We can be even prouder of the wonderful use the Turks have made of this help. By expanding their productive capacity they have tripled their gross national production. The Turk-



"The village doctor accompanied by a team of specialists and nurses drives to the village. Public health services are expanding increasingly – and reaching into the remotest corners of this Republic – a government of the people, by the people, for the people."

ish Army has been modernized into one of the best, man for man, in Europe and in Korea. In 1950 there were free elections; the opposition beat the party that had been in office for 27 straight years.

"They catch on fast in that country. When Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, decided that it would be a good thing if the Latin alphabet were adopted, he called in all the nation's foremost linguists and grammarians and asked them how long it would take the population to switch over from the Arabic alphabet. After a prolonged huddle the scholars estimated that it would take six years. "Okay," said Kemal, in effect, "just assume that five years and six months have elapsed."

Life Magazine: June 1, 1953.



CHARACTER:

"The Turkish people themselves have a national character which makes it possible for the great qualities of leadership displayed by Atatürk to develop and mature. The people are older than any political regime. They have a deep-grained sense of honor, loyalty and decency. They are proud and tough. They are a vigorous race and have shown great fortitude in adversity... They have great powers to endure suffering and make sacrifices for a cause they believe in."

Ernest Jackh in the "Rising Crescent" Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., New York, 1944.

Ernest Jackh is professor-emeritus at Columbia University and long-time authority on Turkish affairs.

PHILOSOPHY:

"The so-called Bolshevik 'revolution' in Russia was really a counter revolution, for it subordinated the individual to the collectivity, the State. From the time of man's first rebellion against the tyranny of his tribe, the true revolution has been the movement to free the individual, and subordinate the State to man. The Turkish Revolution was a true revolution, and I know of no other in history which did so much so quickly and with so little bloodshed.

"The Turkish Revolution not only freed the Turks from a civil-religious despot and the grip of Koranic law. It emancipated Turkish women from the harem and the veil, and gave them equal rights with men — far outdoing in this respect the English, American and French Revolutions in their time. It even changed completely the alphabet — a thing no other revolution ever dared attempt. One must know how much simpler the present romanized alphabet of Turkey is, compared to the intricate Arabic alphabet . . .

"The 'terrible Turk' of 1923 has become the 'terrific Turk' of 1953 by his own great revolution. He has much still to do, but his story is already a most inspiring one for all who believe in the vast possibilities of human freedom, or struggle against great odds. They can rejoice that he stands guard where Istanbul, as he calls Constantinople, links Europe and Asia — stands between the nations of the Middle East that are seeking to follow his example and the latest despotism that would enslave them."

Clarence K. Streit in an article in Freedom & Union, May 1953. Mr. Streit covered the Turkish scene for the Philadelphia Ledger in the formative years of the Republic. He is the Editor of Freedom & Union published by Federal Union, Inc., 700 9th St., N.W., Washington, D. C.

CHANGE:

"Here, in Turkey, is a revolution which, instead of confining itself to a single plane, like our successive economic and political and aesthetic and religious revolutions in the West, has taken place on all these planes simultaneously and has thereby convulsed the whole life of the Turkish people from the heights to the depths of social experience and activity."

Arnold Toynbee: "Civilization On Trial", p. 196. Oxford University Press (1948).



SPIRIT:

"They are uniquely important people to know in this era of one-world hopes, because they live in a country which is both Asia and Europe, and share the culture and problems of both Occident and Orient . . ."

"They are an unconquered people who have suffered defeats and bowed to foreign demands in years of weakness, but they have never had foreign rulers established over them . . ."

"The Turk's view of the world . . . is an unusual complex of angles. They measure their neighbor nations with the intimate knowledge gained through having first ruled and then lost all of them. They look at the world from the opposite angles of those who have made enemies by their own aggressions and those who have been victims of other's aggressions; and likewise from the angle of a once great power and from the angle of a nation now small. And, finally, they

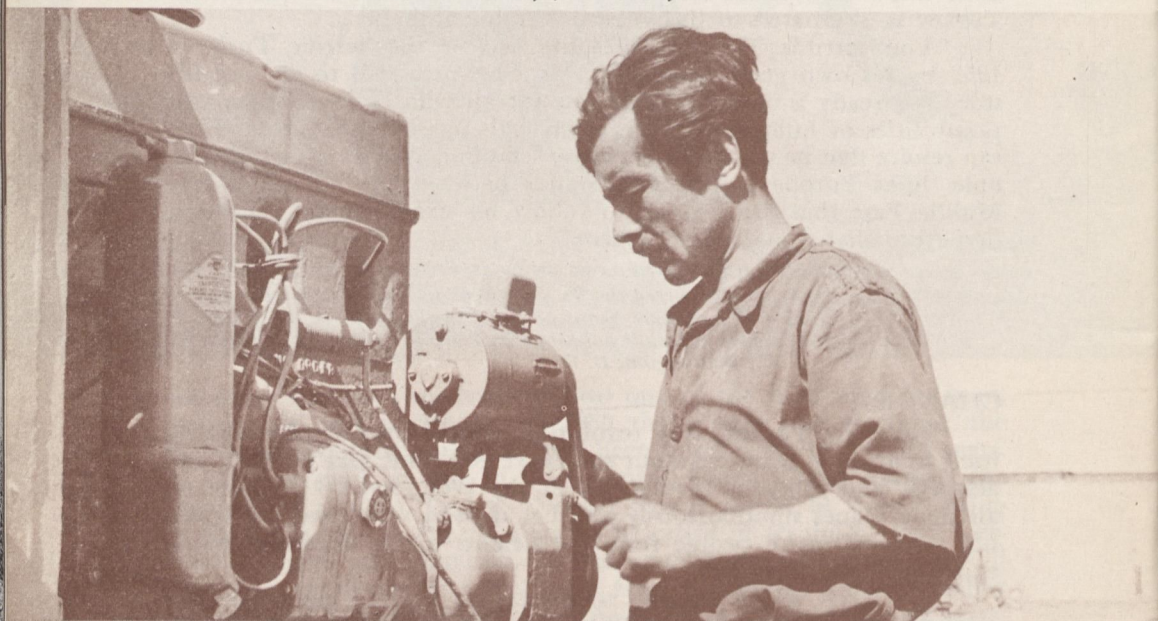


can always look in all directions with the confidence of those who have preserved their own independence. Such a comprehensive view is possible to few, if any, other people."

"They (the new Turks) have thrown their energies into constructive activities and have spurred those efforts by research into earlier constructive periods in Turkish history; they have put humanitarianism foremost in their own new social and economic life; they have concentrated on cultural opportunities from initial literacy to the fine arts; and they have joined promptly and actively in the initial aims of the United Nations."

Eleanor Bisbee in the "New Turks", University of Pennsylvania Press, 1951 (pp. 4, 171-172).

Eleanor Bisbee, formerly professor of philosophy and psychology at Robert College and American College for girls in Istanbul, resided in Turkey for several years.



"Sugar, paper, steel, glass, rayon, and chemicals are some of the new industries founded under the Republic. The rapid tempo of industrialization provides one of the best guarantees of a rising standard of living."

MERIT:

"He (an experienced foreigner) will also find that their (the Turks') traditional hospitality is unforced and that their quite admirable self-assurance has little in it of the dog-in-the-manger quality which characterizes chauvinism in its more malignant forms..."

"On no level of the Turkish class structure are large numbers of individuals automatically kept up in positions of important prestige and privilege unless they themselves merit those superior positions. There is free mobility downward as well as upward..."

Lewis V. Thomas & R. N. Frye in "The U.S., Turkey and Iran", Harvard University Press, 1951; (pp. 84, 113).

Lewis V. Thomas is professor of Turkish history at Princeton University. He has lived in Turkey for many years.

RELIABILITY:

"If I were in combat, I would rather have a Turkish division on my flank than any other I know . . .

"Dollar for dollar, I believe we are getting more out of our investment in Turkey than in any other country where we've spent money."

Major General Horace McBride as reported by W. Atwood in Collier's, Oct. 21, 1950.

Gen. McBride was chief of the joint U.S. Military Mission for aid to Turkey from 1947 to 1950.

BASIC HONESTY AND INTELLIGENCE:

"The Turkish Orient is not one of violent and harsh colors. While in Africa light eats all color, in Turkey everything seems subdued in half-tones. And today, a calm, confident feeling for the future blends harmoniously with the present and with a wonderful past.

"In all her alliances and pacts, Turkey was, throughout history, the most honest and most dynamic of the parties involved — this is the opinion of our own historians, including Alfred Rambaud . . . From that history, we should at least learn one main Turkish characteristic — respect for the pledged word. We are faced with a sincere, often inflexible, and always honest people . . . To that basic honesty, Turks add intelligence and caution."

Edouard Herriot in a series of lectures at Sorbonne on November 29 and December 6, 1953.

Edouard Herriot, many times Prime Minister of France is, also, a well-known man of letters.



"Young farmers are eager and impatient for tractors and mechanized equipment. State-sponsored courses throughout the land provide the technical know-how for the machinery that has made yesterday's barely self-supporting farmers the backbone of Turkish economy today."

TENETS:

"It has been a basic tenet of Turkish policy that the security of small nations lies ultimately in the maintenance of a rule of law among nations. The Turkish record for international cooperation both in the League of Nations and in the United Nations is convincing proof of Turkish sincerity in this regard . . .

"Since the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 Turkish leaders have consistently advanced a program of democratization and economic development. Since 1946, Turkey has developed a multi-party system and has liberalized legislation with respect to electoral procedures and freedom of the press. The basic strength of the Turkish Republic rests on the unity of its people and on their determination to resist at all costs any aggression against their country."

Harry S. Truman: Report to Congress in August, 1949 on American Military Aid to Turkey.



CHARACTER:

"The evolution of Turkey, taking place within the span of a single generation, is one of the marvels of our time. Fifty years ago — and there are a number of us here who can remember that long — the events, the names and the faces of Turkey were little-known to us. Our understanding of the country and its people was very meager indeed.

"And then the change. Today we recognize it as a modern, progressive country, one that we are proud to call ally in the great problems that face the free world today."

Dwight D. Eisenhower: At the State Dinner in the White House in honor of President Celal Bayar, January 27, 1954.

EVOLUTION:

"The United States has sought friends, and will continue to seek friends in this world; and it will measure friendships in those qualities that we call the ennobling virtues of man: his courage, his capacity for self-sacrifice, his readiness to stick by his friend until the end — courage, stamina, gallantry.

"It is in these terms and these qualities that we so value our friendship with Turkey. We have found her — we have proved her, on the fields of Korea — for our sons are buried together, where numbers of them fought shoulder to shoulder — we have found them to be a nation of courage, of gallantry, of stamina.

"To a friendship of this kind, one that has been forged and maintained in common recognition of these values, there are always two others: confidence, and faith.

"This evening, as I stand here, I say to you, with no shadow of doubt in my mind, that if the free world can be bound together in its entirety by the kind of friendship that binds America and Turkey, we have no more reason to fear the people behind the iron curtain than we have to fear ourselves as we sit here at this gorgeous board."

Dwight D. Eisenhower: At President Bayar's Dinner at the Turkish Embassy, Washington, January 29, 1954.

LIST OF OTHER PUBLICATIONS

GENERAL:

New Turkey
Doing Business with Turkey (economic)
Turkey for the Best (travel)
Uncle Sam in Turkey
An American Looks at Turkey
The Road Comes to the Village
Our Trip to Turkey
Facts on Turkey
Turkish Recipes
Aspects of Turkey
Economic Development in Turkey
Turkish Digest

FOLDERS:

Picturesque Turkey
Istanbul
Quiz Yourself on Turkey
Izmir, Garden of the Gods
Turkish Itineraries

TURKEY TODAY SERIES:

Mineral Resources in Turkey
Education in the New Turkey
Self-Government in Turkey
Women in Modern Turkey
Courts of Justice in Turkey
Modern Turkish Literature
Modern Turkish Poetry
The Turkish Constitution
Health and Social Welfare in Turkey
Turkey's Foreign Relations in 1952
Progress Report from Turkey, 1952
Progress Report from Turkey, 1953

FILM STRIPS, ON LOAN:

Modern Turkey (with manual)
Gulen of Turkey (color)
Turkish Farm Family

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