



## **DISCLOSING AN AUTHENTIC CULTURE FOR TOURISTS' DISCOVERY: THE TAHTACI TURKMENS\***

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to clarify and make visible of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture as an ethnic group culture through tourism perspective. Since the current agenda of international organizations such as UNESCO, UNWTO etc, is to value tangible and intangible assets of ethnic and indigenous people around the world, tourism potentials held by these people opportunity to them to participate as a tourism supplier. Thus, their cultural know-how can be kept and survived for the next generations.

The central question of the study raised on is; how can the Tahtaci Turkmen culture been protected as a tourism product in sustainable tourism? For this purpose, in-depth interview and observation techniques were used on Tahtaci Turkmen villages of Çanakkale, Turkey. Also a SWOT analysis was conducted according to the findings of the interviews, observations and literature review. According to the results of the analyses, protecting and developing social and cultural identity of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture can be feasible in sustainability perspective.

The value of this study is one of the prior researches on the Tahtaci Turkmen culture in international perspective for tourism, heritage and protection. It is widely accepted that any cultural heritage of a group is also the value of the people in the world.

**Key Words:** Sustainability, Cultural Authenticity, Identity, Ethnicity, The Tahtaci Turkmen Culture

## **ÖZGÜN BİR KÜLTÜRÜN TURİSTLERİN KEŞFİNE SUNULMASI: TAHTACI TÜRKMENLERİ**

### **ÖZET**

Bu çalışma, Tahtacı Türkmen kültürünü özgünlüğünü korumuş bir etnik toplum kültürü olarak turizm perspektifi ile değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Dünya üzerindeki özgün ve yerel toplumların sahip olduğu somut ve somut olmayan kültürel değerlerin turizm

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potansiyellerinin belirlenmesi ve sürdürülebilir kılınarak turizme sunulması UNESCO, Dünya Turizm Örgütü (UNWTO) vb., uluslararası örgütlerin de gündemini meşgul etmektedir. Dünyada ve ülkemizde kültürel mirasın korunmasına yönelik olarak yapılmakta olan bu tür çalışmalar, somut ve somut olmayan kültürel değerlerin sürdürülebilirlik yaklaşımıyla ele alınması gereğini ortaya koymaktadır. Böylelikle toplumların sahip olduğu özgün kültürel birikimlerin gelecek kuşaklara sağlık bir şekilde aktarılabilmesi de amaçlanmaktadır.

Yapılan araştırma temelde “Tahtacı Türkmen kültürünün korunması ve sürdürülebilir kılınması ve bir turistik ürün olarak turizme sunulması gereken unsurları nelerdir?” sorusu üzerinden şekillenmektedir. Bu amaçla, Çanakkale merkezine bağlı bulunan Türkmen köylerine yönelik görüşme ve gözlem teknikleri bir arada kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen veriler ışığında SWOT analizi yapılarak özgün Türkmen kültürünün sürdürülebilirlik açısından sahip olduğu avantajlar ve dezavantajlar ile maruz kalabileceği fırsat ve tehditler belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Elde edilen veriler, Çanakkale’de bulunan Tahtacı Türkmen kültürünün ve yaşam tarzının sürdürülebilir bir turistik ürün olarak korunmasının ve sürdürülebilir kılınmasının önemini ortaya koymuştur. Yapılan araştırma, Tahtacı Türkmen kültürünü sürdürülebilir bir turizm ürünü olarak uluslararası boyutta ele alması açısından önemli veriler sunmaktadır. Herhangi bir toplumun kültürel mirası tüm dünya toplumlarının da bir değeri olarak kabul edilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sürdürülebilirlik, Kültürel özgünlük, Kimlik, Etniklik, Tahtacı Türkmen kültürü

## Introduction

As researchers (Chambers, 1997, Sofield, 2003, Grünevald, 2006) pointed out that tourism is a very complex phenomenon, because of its effects on social, cultural, historical, and natural environment and relationships in its all multiple facets. The anthropology of tourism does not have a homogeneous approach but rather contains within itself a great internal diversity deriving from the way that it constructs itself with respect to a myriad of thematic objects. There are studies (Moscardo and Pearce, 1999; Taylor 2001; Avcıkurt, 2003; Rızaoğlu, 2004) in religious tourism, tourism and social change, tourism and the commoditization of culture, cultural mediators in the tourist industry, social impacts of tourism, and tourism and ethnicity among others.

Tourism has an impact on ecological, historical, structural, social, ethnic and cultural identity and environment of the destinations. Nowadays the impact that tourism has on the ethnic and cultural lives of communities is one of the most important issues debated by tourism researchers and scholars. There is an increasingly growing concern (Turner and Ash, 1975; Greenwood, 1978; Oakes, 1993; Mellinger, 1994; Macleod, 2006; Daniela et al., 2008) that tourism development is leading to destinations losing their ethnic and cultural identity by catering for the perceived needs of tourists.

Although they take longer to appear, the cultural consequences of tourist activity have the potential to be much more damaging in long term than environmental or societal effects. In many countries tourists are not sensitive to local customs, traditions and standards. Tourists are short-stay visitors of the destinations and carrying their own cultural norms and behavioral patterns with

## Turkish Studies

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



them. They are usually unwilling to change these norms for a temporary stay, and may be unaware that these norms are offensive to the host community.

Commercialization is the most important damaging impact on authenticity of traditional local cultures. Commercialization of traditional cultural events and customs is leading to 'fake folklore' for the tourists, but more importantly with no cultural value for the local population or the visitors. The issue is the potential conflict between the economic and cultural interests, leading to culture being sacrificed for reasons of promoting tourism i.e. creating an additional economic value at the price of losing an ethnic and cultural value (Linkorish and Jenkins, 1997). It requires a protectionist approach and policy to the ethnic and cultural values of the local population for a longer term tourism asset.

Studies about the protection of authentic cultural heritage (Oakes, 1993; Doğan, 2004; McKercher and Du Cros 2002; Duran, 2010b) show the need of discussing tangible and intangible ethnic and cultural values in view of sustainability. Sustainability means not only to protect and develop ecological diversity but also means to protect architectural, historical, socio-cultural, and economical factors in sustainable tourism. It seems that rural areas create more and more interests in terms of tourism because of the authentic characteristics of the cultural assets. In this regard the Tahtaci Turkmen's life style and culture deserve attention on basis of sustainability concept with its authentic characteristics. This study is important as it discloses the Tahtaci Turkmen culture through sustainable tourism perspective.

### **Literature Review**

Tourism is generally superimposed on indigenous systems of ethnic relations and can profoundly affect indigenously ethnic and cultural hierarchies. Tourist-host relations are often disproportioned, because tourists have higher status due to their ability to afford to travel to the destination. This may, however, be partly offset by the host's access to local knowledge, which may be pitched against the visitor and turned into profit (Adams, 1997; 155). Authenticity of touristic ethnicity is increasingly important for understanding ethnic relations, culture and identity in the world. Understanding the authenticity concept has evolved since then aforementioned modernist ideologies and typologies, post-modernist perspectives have gained primacy, suggesting institutionalized or hyper-real tourists. This stance points out that "genuineness or authenticity of a tourism setting is not a tangible asset, but is instead a judgment or value placed on the setting by the observer" (Moscardo and Pearce, 1999, p. 418). The post-structuralist argument, therefore, dismisses the notion of object authenticity. Wang (1999) termed this view as "existentialist" and placed emphasis on the subjective nature of authenticity and maintained that authenticity has essentialist connotations in that it suggests a state in which a person is true to her or his real self. In other words, it is nested in the subjective self, rather than the toured setting or object. For Chhabra (2008) that view also validates the notion of a different authentic time and experience for each person. In sum, four prominent discourses on authenticity have emerged: essentialist, constructivist, negotiation and existentialist. The essentialist school of thought advocates cultural continuity, originality, genuineness such as made locally by ethnic communities, and pristinity. Chhabra et al. (2003) indicated that authenticity is treated in the spirit of frozen heritage by this thought. On the other hand, the constructivist ideology relies on the concept that all opinions are influenced by the current market forces and environments. This school of thought supports demand-led connotations and is dictated by the tourists' perceptions of authenticity. (MacCannell, 1992; Chhabra, 2010). Consequently, it can be said that, there is a consensus (Cohen, 2002; Taylor, 2001; Xie and Lane, 2006) that authenticity is a negotiable concept depending upon state regulations, the visitors, tourism businesses or the host communities and their knowledge of and belief in their 'own' past.

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### **Turkish Studies**

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



There is also a developing theorization of the ethnic and cultural identity, and cultural heritage experience. Much of the literatures focused on the commoditization of heritage for tourist consumption and the impact of this process on authenticity (Landorf, 2009). Firat and Dholakia (1998) indicated that, cultural heritage experiences in term of “cultural fragmentation” which occurs where discrete cultural elements are translated into more marketable commodities, isolating them from the culture they were originally embedded in. This allows elements such as beliefs, festive, lifestyle, traditional food, music, and architecture and work practices to be invested with new meanings to make them more attractive, charming and marketable to a consumer market looking for new experiences. Consequently, we see and recognize that culture has been discussed as a concept that is being influenced from tourism undergoing a change through tourism, and equally affecting tourism movements (Avcıkurt, 2003; Smith, 2003; Doğan, 2004; Rızaoğlu, 2004; McKercher and DuCros 2002; Duran, 2010a). Nowadays, upsurge of interest on rural areas, local cultures and identities in international tourism movements are evaluated in different dimensions. In this context, the researchers discussing relation of tourism and local culture in sustainability dimension (Turner and Ash, 1975; Greenwood, 1978; Oakes, 1993; Mellinger, 1994; Hitchcock, 1999) highlighted that tourism development is the source of commoditization, and they are specified that, this developmental process is bringing about disappearing authenticity of local culture and degeneration of local identity. International tourism is considered as an enemy of local culture and identity, and highlighted that authenticity disappears and transforms into artificiality by the time.

The researchers who have discrete averment (Rogers, 2002; Lietaer and De Meulenaere, 2003; Uslu and Kiper, 2006; Cuccia and Cellini, 2007; Duran, 2010b) underlined that submission of rural areas and life style which has authentic cultural identity increases the awareness to the historical, natural and cultural identities which are losing authenticity and being homogenized in modern community. Smith (2003) indicates that culture is the biggest renovation instrument in tourism development with having substantial historical texture and ethnical heritage. In this regard, culture is turning into a renovation strategy and nowadays, many cities are being designed as cultural zones. Wyne (1992) defines the cultural zones as; the geographic areas that comprises from the cities which are perceived the cultural intensity. In this context, multinational cities providing cultural diversity as a source of prosperity and featuring culture as renovation instrument (Smith, 2007). Relation between culture and tourism has appeared in renovation concept of the cities and as part of renovation concept, cities seek to develop cultural infrastructure to suffer from meeting massive visitors (Harvey, 2007).

MacCannell (1992) indicated that modern mass tourism is based on two seemingly contradictory tendencies: the international homogenization of the culture of the tourists and artificial preservation of local ethnic groups and attractions so that they can be consumed as touristic experiences. The village or village lifestyle is not destroyed, but its original function is changed and no longer based on human relations, but rather it serves as an element in the recreational experiences of a tourist coming from the outside. The tourists often seek to experience a place where human relationships still seem to exist. International tourism movement indicators support this concept as well. Consequently, it's possible to specify that importance of culture is increasing in tourism movements and touristic destinations are being renovated in this way.

According to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) % 37 of international tourists travels for culture. Therefore culture is gaining a share in all tourist groups as a general theme (Öter and Özdoğan, 2005). Turkey has a great potential for being the center of cultural tourism with its rich cultural heritage and diversity in respect to efficient utilization from this share. As the frame of this study, Çanakkale is a tourism destination which must be evaluated in cultural zone concept with its touristic attraction centers like Troia, Gallipoli Peninsula National Park, Assos, Alexandria Troas,

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### **Turkish Studies**

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



Bozcaada (Tenedos), Gökçeada (Imbros), Gökçeada Underwater National Park, Kaz (Ida) Mountains National Park, Parion etc.

Two highly prominent discourses in the social sciences of tourism, the one relating to the quest for authenticity in the tourist experience, the other to the sustainability of ethnic identities and cultures, touristic sites, amenities and attractions, have run in parallel in the literature, without engaging each other (Cohen, 2002). Hence a basic problem remains as yet unexamined: does the quest for authenticity, insofar as it is a significant motive in contemporary tourism, contribute to or detract from the sustainability of tourist sites, amenities, attractions, and ethnic cultures and identities like Tahtaci Turkmens in Çanakkale?

Insights into the motivations and behaviors of heritage tourists are, therefore necessary if their impact on heritage sites is to be managed sustainably. Early conceptualizations were relatively rigid and focused on tourism as essentially an economic activity. This developed into more elaborate models that for the first time linked tourism to social change at the destination location and suggested the involvement of host communities when evaluating the impact of tourism (Landorf, 2009). Culture is an important source which requires a big necessity of to be protected and provided in sustainable form.

Literature review shows that sustainability has gained conceptual and philosophical dimension. This concept has born from direful and annoying results of the interactions between population and environment. Communities are opposed to unbounded population growth and excess consumption of sources, and they perceived that has a limit of growing up and usage of environment. Excess consumption and enlargement necessitated stability between environment and human requirements. Consequently, it has gained a sense that means the whole of many guiding principles, strategies and goals which are the necessity of human life that have to be maintained in all sectors (Duran, 2010). Sustainability, sustainable development and sustainable tourism concepts do not only deal with ecological conception but also deal with historical, socio-cultural, architectural and socio-economical, including all components of the concept that arranged equal distribution, protecting and providing consideration to ecologic and social system at the process of meeting the basic human requirements (Aranson 1994; Hawkins, 2004; Lietaer and De Meulenaere, 2003). According to Gee (1997) the primary goal of sustainable tourism is to access the expected benefits from providing the continuity of positive effects of tourism such as ecological, architectural historical, socio-cultural and socio-economical.

Sustainable tourism development is a concept that recognizes both environmental and socio-cultural limits to development as it can be in the literature review. Researchers emphasize the necessity of collaboration between public corporation, private sector, non-governmental organizations and local people for the achievement of sustainable tourism (Salah and Pigram, 1997; Bianchi, 2004; Irandu, 2006; Duran 2010). Sustainable tourism needs and requires wide collaboration of all stakeholders. As Clark (1997) pointed out sustainable tourism development involves strategic long term thinking and planning, and also considers the interests of all stakeholders including indigenous people and local communities.

### **The Tahtaci Turkmens in Çanakkale**

Çanakkale is a city and a region of education, culture and history with its past stretching back 5000 years, has been nourished by the legacy of ancient cultural treasures such as Iliad by Homer and has come to appreciate enchanting historical sites within its boundaries is now a significant tourism center. In ancient times, Çanakkale was known as the “Hellespont” “Dardanel” and is one of Turkey’s provinces, sitting astride both the Marmara and Aegean regions, with 671 kilometers of coastline and where geography and history meet in a meaningful way ([www.canakkalekutup.gov.tr](http://www.canakkalekutup.gov.tr)). Many civilizations had survived on Çanakkale region such as

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### **Turkish Studies**

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



Trojans, Hittites, Persians, Helens, Romans, Byzantine, Ottomans, and Turkish Republic since 1923. With the population exchange in first years of the republic, population diversity of the city was formed from immigrants came from Balkans, Greeks in Gökçeada (Imbros), Romans, Yoruks, and Turkmen citizens, with the high diversity and prosperity of culture (www.canakkaleli.com). Tahtaci Turkmen belief system (Alevi) and culture have an important situation on cultural structure of Çanakkale.

Citizens in Alevi belief account for some 25 percent of Turkey's population. Alevis go by a number of names, called "Kizilbash", after the Turkmen followers of the Safavid Sufi order of the 15'th and 16'th centuries from which they emerged and also "Bektashi", after the Anatolian Bektashi shi'a Sufi order founded in the 13'th century to which many belong. Other names include Tahtaci, Abdal, and Cepni which signify specific tribal and linguistic identities (Zeidan, 1999). Çepni Alevis live in central and eastern part of Black sea Region and in city of Balıkesir in Aegean Region. Tahtaci Alevis live in the area covering Mersin and Antalya cities in Mediterranean Region to Balıkesir and Çanakkale cities in Aegean Region. The Alevis in Çanakkale are being called Tahtaci Turkmens because of their specific tribal and linguistic identity. Alevi Turkmens who are called Tahtaci or Cepni are Oguz Turks, came from middle Asia (Horasan) to south-west Anatolia. Alevi Tahtaci culture and Turkmen identity are named in same way. Therefore in Çanakkale Turkmen term also means Alevi Tahtaci (Özdemir, 2007). Turkmen villages being studied in this paper are the villages of central Çanakkale and they are the Tahtaci Turkmens migrated from Kaz (Ida) mountains. The Tahtaci Turkmens in Çanakkale have protected their authentic culture as birth, death, wedding, feast etc., rituals and authentic life style. In case, the Tahtaci Turkmen culture and life style has been protected from other cultures in Çanakkale (Kılıç et al., 2006).

According to the 2003 Convention, "*intangible heritage can only be identified with reference to communities, groups or individuals that recognize it as part of their cultural heritage. Thus it is important to identify clearly one or several communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the nominated element*" (UNESCO, 2010). Having nourished by a variety of beliefs, cultural sources and reached its maturity in Anatolia, Alevi Bektaşî Order has distinguished itself from mainstream Alevi belief system, with respect to its roots, formation processes and current cultural background. Alevi-Bektaşî belief system has been enhanced and cultivated by a great variety of beliefs and cultures ranging from Manichaeism to Zoroastrianism, Shamanism to Islam and ancient beliefs and cultures rooted in Anatolia as well. Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage, performing arts; transmission of rhetoric skills through songs recited by zakirs and prayers uttered by Dede (spiritual leader). Social practices, rituals and festive events: regular semah performances in "Cem" rituals. Semah is one of the main twelve services of the "cem" rituals which are considered as religious practices by Alevi-Bektaşî adherents. It can be described as a set of mystical and aesthetic body movements in rhythmic harmony performed by semahcis (semah dancers), accompanied by zakirs playing saz (musical performers in cem rituals). Hıdırellez festival, local tastes according to the geographic conditions and cultural structures, Tahtaci Turkmen weddings, traditional village lifestyle, organic agriculture, and death, birth, festive rituals are the other Tahtaci Turkmen beliefs and authentic cultural values that have to be protected and sustained (Duran, 2010).

### Method

This study examines cultural values of the Tahtaci Turkmen people who live in Çanakkale province, Turkey. The title is specific to these people who live in Çanakkale region around Mount Ida. The study uses qualitative data via interview and observation techniques to gather in-depth

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### Turkish Studies

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



data about this “authentic” culture. Strategic perspective of this culture is also considered by outlining a SWOT analysis.

### ***The Problem***

The basic aim of this study is to determine tourism potential of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture and to define strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threat of specificity of Çanakkale’s cultural and rural demonstration in sustainable tourism. The problem of the study is “what are the elements of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture that have to be protected and sustained in Çanakkale? Who should be the partner for this protection and sustainability efforts? And how can it be developed and sustained? As part of this basic goal the questions of the research are;

- What is the meaning of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture in Çanakkale tourism?
- What are the primary values of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture which have to be protected and sustained?
- What are the effects of the tourism development on authentic cultural construction?
- Which policies have to be applied on the process of offering the Tahtaci Turkmen culture to the tourism?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of cultural values at the process of tourism development?

### ***Setting and Sample***

Since social sciences are proved to be a confident field for qualitative research methods, observation and interview techniques were preferred for determining authentic cultural values and touristic potential of Turkmen villages and Turkmen life style. According to the findings of the research techniques, SWOT analysis has been made for cultural tourism potential of Çanakkale and the importance of Turkmen culture and life style in Çanakkale’s cultural landscape. Therefore triangulation technique (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000) was used with performing interview and observation techniques together. This approach can contribute to increase the reliability and validity of the findings of the field research (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). There are eleven Turkmen villages, which are subordinated to the city center and all of them were determined for the field of the research in first phase. Content analysis was used for solving and interpreting the findings. Content analysis is a research method which allows the qualitative data collected in research to be analyzed systematically and reliably so that generalizations can be made from them in relation to the categories of interest to the researcher (Haggarty, 1996).

The data were collected primarily through recorded interviews and observation forms with participant observation technique in the study. In case, if data are collected primarily through interviews, open ended questions will be used. Probes also tended to be open ended or specific to the participant’s comments rather than to a preexisting theory, data analysis starts with reading all data repeatedly to achieve impression and obtain a sense of the whole (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) as if one would read a novel. Then, such as this research, recorded data were listened and wrote on Microsoft office word program and red word by word to derive codes (Huberman & Miles, 2002) by first highlighting the exact words from the text that appear to capture key thoughts or concepts. Next the text was examined by making notes of first impressions, thoughts and initial analysis. As this process continues, labels for codes emerge that are reflective of more than one key thought. Then codes were sorted into categories based on how different codes were related and linked. These emergent categories were used to organize and group codes into meaningful clusters (Patton, 2002). Those systematic were followed for analyzing the techniques which were used in this study.

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## **Turkish Studies**

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



The interviews were semi-structured and the population was consisted of 30 people, 10 of them are the members of Culture and Solidarity Association of Tahtaci Turkmen, 11 of them are the village headmen and 9 of them are the Wisemans of the villages. The interviewees were selected during the observation process on villages. The questions directed to the interviewees were as follows;

- What is the Tahtaci Turkmen culture in your mind?
- What is the significance of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture on cultural structure of Çanakkale?
- In your opinion what is the importance of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture in Çanakkale Tourism?
- What are the primary values of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture that have to be protected and sustained?
- How would protecting and sustaining these values of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture gain touristic and cultural structure of Çanakkale?
- What are the values of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture which began to erode?
- Does the Tahtaci Turkmen culture must be a touristic product?
- In process of offering the Tahtaci Turkmen culture in tourism, how must a policy be applied and with whom?
- What may be the advantages of offering cultural values to the tourism?
- What may be the disadvantages of offering cultural values to the tourism?

As to said, content analysis was used in this study and steps of the analysis conducted are summarized as follows. Coding the data gathered is coded by the researcher and there are various ways of coding (Günlü, Pınar & Yagci, 2009);

- Coding according to previously identified concepts,
- Coding according to the concepts identified through the data being analyzed,
- Coding in a general framework.

The second coding type “coding according to the concepts identified through the data being analyzed” is preferred in this research since there is no previously defined conceptual structure guiding the analysis of the data.

- Axial coding; coding on classifying the data should be supported with another step as connecting the codes under an axial framework.
- Selective coding; phenomenon of the research is identified and the core category is emphasized.
- Setting and describing codes according to brooder themes.
- Connecting on the findings, conclusion and discussion.

As long as the data are and analyzed, one of the most important things in qualitative research is to test the validity and reliability of the research. Implementing different techniques in the same research such as interview and observation is a criterion of determining the reliability of the research (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000) is called triangulation method. In order to test the validity of

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### **Turkish Studies**

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013





the research, two independent scholars were selected from Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University and were asked to investigate the original answers from interviewees, and rate the codes. As soon as they coded and calculated the rates separately, codes from independent scholars and from authors were compared than responses were collected and the right percentage was calculated by the authors. After coding, code lists were classified in themes according to the common directions.

### **Research Findings**

The frequencies of the codes in themes are emphasized on Table 1.

**Table 1.** Frequencies of the codes and themes between interviewees

<b>Codes listed According to Themes</b>	<b>Total Mentions</b>	<b>f % 100</b>
<b>Attractions</b>		
Turkmen Weddings	24	80
Hidirellez	26	86.6
Natural village lifestyle	16	53.3
Turkmen Culture	12	40
Traditional Taste	14	46.6
Traditional Wearing	20	66.6
Fresh Air and Natural Beauty	10	33.3
<b>Authentic Values</b>		
Traditional Wearing style	12	40
Authentic Taste	6	20
Special Events	30	100
<b>Elements have to be protected</b>		
Architectural structure	10	33.3
Natural structure	6	20
Traditional Turkmen lifestyle	14	46.6
Local tastes	8	26.6
Traditional customs and rituals	28	93.3
<b>Elements have to be developed</b>		
Hospitality facilities	14	46.6
Local tastes	14	46.6
Village culture	14	46.6
Turkmen lifestyle	12	40
Cultural aware	26	86.6
<b>Effects of Tourism</b>		
Maintains cultural richness	24	80
Stimulates	16	53.3
protects	6	20
Publicities	26	86.6

As seen on Table 1, attractive elements of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture are, “Hidirellez” (a ritual about cultural and customs), “Turkmen weddings”, “local tastes and wearing” which are the authentic values of Turkmen culture. Interviewee 11 emphasized that;

*“We live our rituals traditionally in special days and feasts. Because we believe that protecting prosperity of our culture and experiencing it in our current life and special days is a necessity for protecting our identity in today’s changing world”.*

*(From interviewee I.11)*

### **Turkish Studies**

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013*



Researchers have attended all these events by observations made at the same time with interviews. Interviewees indicated Turkmen wearing style, authenticity of cultural events devoted to special days and values in authentic values theme. Emphasizing traditional custom and usage, and Turkmen life style is especially being come forward in elements that have to be protected. Interviewees decelerated views about necessity of developing conscience of rural life and culture.

*“In my opinion, tourism is very important for development of our villages. Because, tourism supports our cultural life, natural environment, and production of our villages. We can directly consume our products in our village, can represent our own culture to the tourists like weddings with traditional customs, feasts like “Hidirellez” and religious rituals like “Cem” and “Semah”. So our people became more conscious on their socio-cultural and natural sources”.*

(From interviewee I. 17).

According to them, sustainable tourism development can prevent danger of commoditization on cultural authenticity and can provide addition on protection, development and publicity of current cultural values and authenticity.

According to interviews and the analysis about the interviews, it appears that protecting authenticity of current Turkmen culture and offering to tourism in sustainability perspective have positive effects on Çanakkale tourism. Observation of the study includes eleven Turkmen villages which are located around Çanakkale center. Recorded and unrecorded interviews have made for getting in debth information about observed field or event, which means attended observation technique that, was performed in this study. An observation form has developed for the research and determined a purpose for getting in debth data. The purpose of the observation form of this study is; “defining the social and cultural structure of the Turkmen villages, determining the effects of tourism on Turkmen culture and locality (place) of Turkmen culture in Çanakkale tourism”. Table 2 shows grouped codes in accordance with themes and frequency of the codes on observed fields or events.

**Table 2.** Themes and codes from observations

List of codes according to themes	F* 1	F 2	F 3	F 4	F 5	F 6	F 7	F 8	F 9	F 10	F 11	T	f % 100
<b>Structure of villages</b>													
Traditional village architecture	*	*	*	*		*		*		*		7	63.6
Homogeny Turkmen population	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	11	100
Rural lifestyle		*		*	*		*	*	*	*		7	63.6
<b>Culture samples</b>													
Samples on rural life		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	9	81.8
Village culture	*			*		*	*	*		*	*	7	63.6
Turkmen culture	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	11	100
<b>Tourism style</b>													
Agro-Tourism		*	*			*	*		*	*		6	54.5
Rural tourism	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	10	90.9
Culture tourism	*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	9	81.8
<b>Elements have to be protected</b>													
Traditional village life and culture	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	11	100

### Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



Traditional architecture					*			*		*		3	27.2
Cultural events	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*		8	72.7
Traditional tastes		*	*	*	*			*	*		*	7	63.6
Natural structure		*	*		*		*	*	*	*		7	63.6

\* F = Observed field.

According to Table 2, it is seen that observed fields have homogeny Turkmen population, traditional village architecture and rural lifestyle intensively. Rural lifestyle, village culture, and authentic Turkmen culture and lifestyle are observed and coded intensively in dominant culture samples. The highlighted suitable tourism styles for observed fields are especially agro-tourism, rural tourism and culture tourism. Traditional village lifestyle, Turkmen lifestyle and culture, traditional pleasures, cultural events, natural structure are highlighted in theme of elements which have to be protected.

The observation and interviews indicated that Çanakkale Turkmen villages have an authentic culture and are suitable for alternative tourism styles as seen on Table 2, like agro-tourism, rural tourism, culture tourism above mass tourism. This situation is suitable for Çanakkale's tourism style as a cultural region.

The analysis of the data revealed that the Tahtaci Turkmen culture has more to take part in tourism world with their authentic cultural attractions along with natural attractions surrounding their places. The value of this study is one of the prior researches on Tahtaci Turkmen culture in international perspective for tourism, heritage and protection as it is widely accepted that any cultural heritage of a group is also the value of the people in the world.

### SWOT Analysis on Turkmen Villages

At the process of offering Çanakkale Turkmen culture in tourism with gaining sustainability qualification, the questions of essentially what?, for what?, however?, how?, for whom?, and by whom?, become more of an issue that have necessity of to be answered. Therefore, protecting authenticity of Turkmen lifestyle and culture, and offering tourism in sustainability perspective requires SWOT analysis specific to the region.

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the region were analyzed in terms of sustainable tourism development according to the data gained through observation and interview techniques. The SWOT analysis tool is important for developing an understanding of an organization, situation and decision-making for all sorts of situations in businesses, organizations, and for individuals. The SWOT analysis headings provide a good framework for reviewing strategy, position and direction of a company, product, project, region or person (Popa, 2010).

**Table 3:** SWOT analysis on Çanakkale Turkmen culture in sustainability perspective

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><b>Natural attractions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kaz (Ida) mountains national park</li> <li>• Substantial flora and fauna</li> <li>• Convenient and fresh climatic conditions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cultural attractions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficiency of environmental conscience</li> <li>• Importance of social and cultural values is not to be understood.</li> <li>• Deficiency about sustainability and sustainable tourism conscience</li> </ul>

### Turkish Studies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnographic values</li> <li>• Mythological values (from Iliad)</li> <li>• Cultural events (carnivals, festivals, etc.)</li> <li>• Authentic villages (structural and lifestyle)</li> </ul> <p><b>Archeological attractions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Troas, Assos, Parion, Alexandria Troas etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security and communication service</li> <li>• Hospitality and F&amp;B organizations</li> <li>• Non-governmental organizations</li> <li>• Local authorities collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limitation of sustainable tourism with natural environment</li> <li>• Deficient stakeholder participation</li> <li>• Market demand, price sensitivity, deficiency of publicity and marketing activities</li> <li>• Efficiency of training programs on cultural natural conscience</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p><b>Potential opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment opportunities to local people</li> <li>• Increasing cultural and ecologic environmental conscience</li> <li>• Contributing maintenance of natural, cultural and historical values of the region</li> <li>• Being alternative of time factor of tourism</li> <li>• Growing consumer awareness and interest in alternative tourism.</li> </ul> <p><b>Advances related sustainable tourism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic agriculture operations or agro-tourism</li> <li>• Kaz (Ida) mountains national park</li> <li>• International Troia Festival</li> <li>• Special events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disruption ecologic on cultural structure is beginning description</li> <li>• Social and cultural values of the villages are being lost</li> <li>• Inadequate governance on facilities.</li> </ul>

The cultural structure of the villages are homogenous and they protected their authenticity in patches even if being applied theatrical it has sufficient depth and prosperity for being sustained.

### Conclusion

Tourism is an industry that needs natural, cultural and historical sources intensively, and it manages them as an economic input. But principally, the truth of natural sources being inadequate requires tourism development on a sustainable base. Sustainability of tourism is not only gaining

### Turkish Studies

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



importance with its natural environmental dimension, but also gaining importance with its architectural, economic, social and cultural dimensions. Because social and cultural outputs are unique social patterns, with specific features that comprises in long time durations.

The relationship between authentic culture, ethnicity, and identity in the context of tourism raises issues regarding the extent to which cultural relativity is respected (Doorne, Ateljevic & Bai, 2003). The subject of protecting cultural authenticity and identities in sustainable tourism can be clearly seen as a global-local practice reflecting the global political economy of tourism, as well as the protection, representation, and reconstitution of cultural authenticity.

This study draw together a range of theoretical issues related to the production and consumption of cultural and ethnic tourism. In the broader context of contemporary cultural economy, the relationship between identity formations, cultural representation and authenticity protection were discussed. Upon this, the empirical context of the study layered, followed by description and interpretation of identical and cultural dimensions of the Tahtaci Turkmens, engaged in cultural tourism in Çanakkale Turkey. Consequently, this study focuses on protecting and sustaining Turkmen culture and identity which are considered as important potential for Çanakkale in specific perspective and sustainability of all social, cultural, physical, and natural sources in general perspective. However sustainability of all these sources is possible with development of existing variables are not only with quantitative, but also with qualitative development. As it is well known, culture is the product of collective life and is alive, transmissible, and a multipliable process.

Research problem of the study was; “what are the elements of the Tahtaci Turkmen culture that have to be protected and sustained in Çanakkale? Who should be the partner for this protection and sustainability efforts? And how can it be developed and sustained?” The research methods which used for solving the problem of the study and answering the research questions indicated that; the elements of Tahtaci Turkmen culture which have to be protected and sustained are, traditional Turkmen weddings, local tastes and wearing, and ancient rituals about culture and customs like Hidirellez, Cem and Semah. Especially local people and nongovernmental organizations with assistance of local authority and tourism sector agents should be the partner for protection and sustainability process. Cultural prosperity of Tahtaci Turkmens can be developed with collaboration of all stakeholders in guidance of sustainability principles. Sustainability of tourism needs and requires wide collaboration of all stakeholders and involves strategic long term thinking and planning (Duran, 2010). In this context, effective collaboration of stakeholders (especially local people and NGO's) has to be gained.

Tahtaci Turkmen culture means, a protected culture and identity with high prosperity of ancient rituals, deep philosophies, and traditional lifestyle in cultural construction of Çanakkale. Accordingly it means that, Tahtaci Turkmen culture has a great importance for cultural tourism in Çanakkale. As interviewees emphasized that, development of alternative tourism types like cultural tourism, agro-tourism, eco-tourism etc. in sustainability perspective has a great importance for cultural and environmental characteristic of the Turkmen villages. This process requires training programs for awareness of local people about sustainability, sustainable tourism, and protection consciousness on authenticity of their culture.

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### **Turkish Studies**

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



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**Turkish Studies**

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



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*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013



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*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013





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### Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic  
Volume 8/6 Spring 2013

