



THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF GALLIPOLI FOR OTTOMAN RULE IN BALKANS*

*Selçuk URAL***

ABSTRACT

There is no doubt that Turkish states appeared in different times and places all over the world but the last Turkish rule dominated in the district called Anatolia. After the years following Seljuk's becoming weaker and being erased in the history, Turkish principalities became prominent in Anatolia. Ottoman principality, one of Turkmen principalities carrying the heritage of Turkish identity in Anatolia, started the process of becoming a state politically as a first time while it was a western Anatolia frontier principality. The final of the above-mentioned process was determined by the relations of Ottomans with the other states and principalities nearby. Therefore, Ottoman principality was really careful about the relations with Byzantine, Karesi and Karamanogulları principalities that are in the same neighbourhood. Thus, Ottomans became effective in the area covering Bilecik-Sakarya-İzmit. Although the mentioned activities seem end kind of simple enlargement acts, it is clear that the real target behind was to turn face to fertile Balkan soil and become a political power in the area. In this regard, the reality of Ottomans' settling in Rumelia with the conquest of Gallipoli presented the political process of becoming a world-wide state. For the mentioned reasons above, Ottomans' landing on Gallipoli which is also a starting point for Ottomans' rule in both Balkans and Western Europe is a crucial topic that deserves to be paid attention on. In the current study, some significant comments were made to inform the importance of Ottomans' landing on Gallipoli in the primary conquest movements which enabled Ottomans to be a political state rather than a principality and the importance of Gallipoli in the conquest of Balkans.

Key Words: Gallipoli, Ottoman Empire, Balkans, Conquest.

*Bu makale Crosscheck sistemi tarafından taranmış ve bu sistem sonuçlarına göre orijinal bir makale olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

** Yrd. Doç. Dr. Sakarya Üniversitesi Rektörlüğü, Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Bölümü, El-mek: sural@sakarya.edu.tr

OSMANLI BALKAN HAKİMİYETİNDE GELİBOLU'NUN STRATEJİK ÖNEMİ

ÖZET

Her nekadardünyanın farklı coğrafyalarında ve farklı zamanlarda birçok Türk devleti kurulmuş olsa da, en son Türk hakimiyeti Anadolu şeklinde isimlendirilen coğrafyada vuku bulmuştur. Ancak Selçuklu Devletinin zayıflayıp ortadan kalkmasıyla birlikte, Türk devlet mirası konusunda kendisinden sonar bağımsız şekilde hareket edebilen Türk Beylikleri söz hakkına sahip olmuştur. Bunlardan Anadolu coğrafyasında Türk kimliği mirasını üzerinde taşıyan Türkmen beyliklerinden Osmanoğulları Beyliği, devletleşmesürecinibatı Anadolu uç beyliği iken başlatmıştır. Bu sürecin sonunu, Osmanlı Beyliğinin civarındaki devlet ve beyliklerle ilişkileri belirlemiştir. Bu sebeplebölgesinde yer alan Bizans Devleti ve Karesi ile Karamanoğulları gibi beyliklerle ilişkilerine son derece dikkat etmiştir. Ayrıca bu genişleme süreci, devletlerinin kuruluşunu Bilecik-Sakarya-İzmit bölgesinde tamamlamalarıyla birlikte, ilk kez batıya yani Gelibolu'ya doğru yönelmiştir. Bu yöneliş başlangıçta basit bir genişleme olarak görülse de, asıl amacın bakır Balkan topraklarına ulaşım siyasi bir güç haline gelmek olduğu açıktır. Böylelikle Osmanlılar açısından geniş ve verimli ovaları ifade eden Balkanlara ulaşım için öncelik verilmesi gereken yer Gelibolu olmuştur. Osmanlı Beyliği Gelibolu'ya geçişleri ve ele geçirdikleri her toprak parçasıyla hem siyasi hem stratejik ilerleme katetmiştir. Bu vesileyle Osmanlıların Gelibolu'ya geçmesi, dünyaya bir cihan devleti olarak çıkacakları siyasi süreci hediye etmiştir. Böylelikle Osmanlıların, gerek Balkanlar gerekse de Doğu Avrupa'da hüküm sürmelerinin başlangıç noktası olması hasebiyle Gelibolu'ya geçişleri, üzerinde ayrıca durulması gereken bir konu durumundadır. Bu çalışmada da Osmanlıların kuruluş mntıklarındaki fetihleriyle birlikte, Gelibolu Yarımadasına geçişleri ve Gelibolu'nun Rumeli fütuhatındaki önemi hakkında bilgi verilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gelibolu, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Balkanlar, Fetih.

INTRODUCTION

Several states with different cultures, beliefs, state organizations and civilizations were founded in Anatolia throughout history. In this regard, Turks who managed to rule in Anatolia for a long term left an important and a permanent trace in this territory. The mentioned trace which has economic, social and spiritual significance appeared thanks to the political vacuum in the territory among four great civilizations (Roman, Arab, Seljuks and Byzantine). The political vacuum after the collapse of Roman Empire was infused with Byzantine, the vacuum after Arab states was infused by Seljuks and the collapse of Seljuks and Byzantine gave rise for Ottomans (Sander, 2006: 30-31).

Filling the political gap after Seljuks' rule was extremely vital so as to continue Turkish mastery in Anatolia. It was an undeniable fact that Seljuks' heritage passed down Turkish principalities in Anatolia which tried to survive with minor administration centers. Due to political

Turkish Studies

*International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013*



contradictions among these principalities, there was a great risk for the permanence of Turkish identity in Anatolia.

However, the mentioned risk disappeared with Ottomans that used to be one of the small Western Anatolian principalities. In this way, Turkish civilization would be continued by Ottoman principality after Seljuks. Even the political actors of the other part of the world and Europe wouldn't have stopped the path leading Ottomans become an empire despite their entire political maneuver but just watch Ottomans' rising in history.

Byzantines who ended Turkmens' rule in Iznik (Nicaea) region and nearby before Ottoman rule made Turks live in drought Eskişehir plain, and also this region became a natural frontier between Turks and Byzantines (İnalçık 2000: 302). ErtugrulBey who is an Ottoman from Kayı branch of Oguz Turks was appointed as frontier in this Byzantine border by Anatolian Seljuks' leader Gıyâseddin the third Keyhusrev (Akgündüz 2000: 36). Frontier ErtugrulBey actualized his first political maneuver by making firstly Cobanogulları principality and then Germiyanogulları be bounded on him administratively. Moreover, his principality was provided with Soğut together with Domanic region for summer time by Seljuks (Toplu 1996: 147). Moreover, his principality was provided with Soğut region for living in winter and Domanic region for summer time by Seljuks. After the death of Seljuk Frontier ErtugrulBey, Osman Bey took over the leadership of Ottoman principality. In the period of Osman Bey, Ottomans started the process of becoming a state. In this way, around their new chief who ordered the enlargement of principality, Ottomans began to look for new grasslands and fields in which they can settle freely with their beliefs to found a great state inspired by their names.

The enlargement activity of Ottomans in the above-mentioned regard was developed in the center of raiding activities rather than a general war so as to complete the foundation phase. Although this kind of act seemed a kind of guerilla organization from today's aspect, these raiding activities gave birth to the spread of Ottomans from their foundation region. Ottomans were also the neighbors of Byzantines geographically who were the most important political power of that time. Hence, they were careful about their enlargement direction, or it wouldn't be so difficult for them to disappear in the ashes of history as it is a well-known fact. For this reason, Ottomans led their enlargement direction to Bilecik, Söğüt, Yalova and Sakarya cities (today's city borders) both in their foundation phase and empire phase. Ottomans believed that they could reach their main targets, Gallipoli and Rumelia, if they managed enlargement thanks to the raids they led in their region. Hence, the ultimate target in both heads and hearts of Ottomans was Gallipoli Peninsula.

The First Signs of Enlargement in Foundation Stage of Ottomans

As well known, the life story of Turkmens used to be composed of either in summer pasture or winter quarters. While Ottomans were travelling to Domanic, given to them before, they complained about the feudal landlord of Inegöl, Aya-Nikola, for disturbing their people to the feudal landlord of Bilecik. Before Ottomans' attacking to the feudal landlord of Inegöl, valuable goods of Ottoman principality were handed to the castle of the feudal landlord of Bilecik by their own wives on behalf of the treatment between two sides. Immediately after assuring that his valuable properties are safe, Osman Bey attacked on the feudal landlord of Inegöl by passing Armenian strait. Due to a sudden ambush before fighting, Bay-Hâce, the brother of Lord Osman, lost his life (Neşri 1983: 45).

After this ambush, Osman Bey and his men were really sorrowful and Osman Bey attacked on the feudal landlord of Inegöl again together with his nearly seventy men. In the end, he managed to get Kolca Castle in 1285. After the success of Ottomans, the feudal landlord of Inegöl planned to attack on Ottomans with the feudal landlord of Karacahisar. The troops of the brother of the feudal

Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



landlord of Karacahisar, Kaltus, attacked on Ottomans who were in the district of Domanic. Ottomans succeeded in repulsing the attack eventhough they lost Sarı-Batı prosecutor (Kemal 2005: 105-106). In this way, Ottomans started to enlarge their lands firstly in their ruling center line.

Due to the hostile manner of feudal landlord of Karacahisar, Ottomans leaded an excursion on Karacahisar, too. It was rumoured that Ottomans demanded help from the Sultan of Seljuks, Gıyaseddin. In fact, there are two rumours about this event. The first one is that the Sultan of Seljuks gifted Eskisehir for Ottomans' motivation before the excursion, and the second one is that the Sultan of Seljuks was extremely pleased with the success after the excursion over Karacahisar and he gave Eskisehir under the rule of Osman Bey as a present for successful attack. In the end, Ottomans took over Karacahisar Castle as a result of the encompassment in 1288-1289 and started to rule in Karacahisar and Eskisehir.

After capturing Karacahisar, a church was converted into a mosque and Muslims carried out Friday prayer there. In khutbah during Friday prayer, DursunFakih pronounced the name of Osman Bey after the name of Seljuk Sultan, Gıyaseddin. Sultan Gıyaseddin gifted tuğ, âlem, tabl and nekkare for¹ Osman Bey. In addition, he expressed his feelings for the conquest as follows: "I bestow the place from Eskisehir to Yenisehir for their happiness...". Osman Bey charged one of his men to be kadi, Muslim judge in Eskisehir. This act of Osman Bey is a kind of message which inspires that forthcoming Ottman State would be based on justice. With Osman Bey's leading, Ottomans captured Göynük, TaraklıYeniçerisi and Harmankaya in following period. The enlargement of Ottomans in the region continued with the participation of Kopruhisar Christians that attacked on the feudal landlord of Bilecik.

Afterwards, Osman Bey was handed an intelligence that he would be assasinated during a wedding feudal landlord of Bilecik and the daughter of feudal landlord of Yarhisar would get married. Wihout losing anytime, OsmanyBey started to attack over his enemies and he managed to capture Bilecik firstly, then he conqueredYarhisar, Inegol and Yenisehir in 1299. With the conquest of Yenisehir, this city had the honor of becoming first capital of Ottomans. Besides, the daughter of feudal landlord of Yarhisar, Nilufer, was married with Orhan, the son of Osman Bey (Maksudoğlu 2003: 55).

The conquest of Byzantine cities by a Turk leader and the spread of Islam in these places caused many Oguz Turks who escaped from the pressure of Mongols and Tatars who had doubts about the political future of Seljuks to act together with Ottomans. Ottoman's conquering policy was based on the instructions and opinions of the Sultan of Seljuks instead of unplanned acting, and this kind of policy increased the people around them automatically. The leader of Ottomans, Osman Bey, had never acted in a way that threatened the dominance of Seljuks. In 1299, Osman Bey made Imams recite Khutbah for his name after Mahmud Gazan Khan forced the Sultan of Seljuks, Alâeddin, to leave his throne and nobody could be enthroned after his collapse. For this reason, 1299 is accepted as a foundation date of Ottoman State with the agreement of most of historians.

After Seljuks' losing their power wholly, Osman Bey gained his independence as a result and took the title of first Ottoman Sultan. After becoming a Sultan, Osman Bey made state territory be parcelled out administratively as a first action. With this parcelling, ShehzadeOrhan got Sultanozu, Osman Bey's brother, Gunduz Alp, got Eskisehir, Uygur Alp got Inonu, Hasan Alp got Yarhisar, Turgut Alp got Inegol and Edebalı got Bilecik.

¹ Tuğ, tabl: davul, Alem: flag, Nekkâre: bellmeans.

Turkish Studies

International PeriodicalFortheLanguages, LiteratureandHistoryofTurkishorTurkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



Henceforth, Ottoman incursions went on with the encompassment of Kopruihisar. Taking here under the control became an important progress for Ottomans to reach Iznik (Nicaea) neighborhood.

After all was said and done, the opening of Iznik route for Ottomans with the capture of Kopruihisar put Byzantines and feudal landlords in a pessimistic mood. Despite being in this mood, they succeeded in uniting with each other against Ottoman thread. However, they didn't manage to stop Ottoman progress in Koyunhisari Battle (1301-1302). With this victory, Osman Bey gained independence and legality for his state whose foundation was going to be announced in a near future (İnalçık 2000: 333). The victory of Ottomans in this war in which Byzantines supported feudal landlords explicitly towards Ottomans gave path for the encompassment of Bursa, a crucial city in the region. Additionally, Osman Bey constructed a citadel in Kaplıca side and charged Ak-Demir for the control of this citadel and constructed another citadel in the side of the mountain and charged BalabanBahadır for the control of this citadel for ultimate goal of encompassment of Bursa (Neşri 1983: 61).

As a result of this victory, Ottomans were honored against Byzantines and then conquered Mekece, Akhisar, Lefke, Cadırlı regions (Uzunçarşılı 1982: 110-111). At that time, the emperor of Byzantine demanded help from the ever-strongest of Mongol Khans, Gazan Khan, for Turks who were threads for Byzantines in every part of Asia, yet the emperor turned back with empty hands. Under the leadership of Osman Bey, Ottomans kept on enlarging their territory. Even they proceeded to İstavroz in Blacksea costs and Anadoluhisarı and captured Kocahisar. Together with ever-lasting attacks of Osman Bey, Karatekin region which is near to Iznik was conquered by Ottomans and Iznik which was the most significant region of Byzantine borders was captured part by part (Hammer 2007-35-36). The next target of Ottomans was Bursa which would be the capital of Ottomans later.

The very first move before the conquest of Bursa was to capture Adranos Castle which was in the same neighborhood. Ottoman Sultan could not participate in the encompassment because of an illness called *nikris* on his food but sent ShehzadeOrhan, KöseMihâl, Turgut Alp, Şeyh Mahmud, the brother of SheyhEdebali and his son, Hasan, instead of his honor (Kemal 2005: 130). Owing to the strong ramparts around the city, the encompassment lasted nearly eight years. People of Bursa could not resist for the encompassment and gave up their hope from the help of Byzantines, as a result the city was captured by Ottomans in 1326. In this regard, a city which suits for becoming the capital of Ottomans was gained. However, this happiness did not last for a long time for Ottomans because Osman Bey who built a reputation for his bravery and success until that time passed away.

With the capture of Bursa, Ottomans were turned into a state from a frontier principality. They gave up nomad way of life anymore and settled down permanently; also they built a state with a regular military unit. Thanks to the successful enlargement policy of Ottomans, troublesome political process of Byzantine, which is the most important state in the region, was displayed with all bright facts. As Ottomans increase their ruling in the region, Byzantines demanded help from Ottomans for political struggles inside their state rather than resist Ottoman enlargement.

After the death of Osman Bey, OrhanBey became the leader of Ottomans. With starting state structure of Ottomans, Ottoman Sultan OrhanBey coined *akçe*² with the suggestion of Bursa Judge of Chandarlı Kara Halil in 1327. On the other hand, OrhanBey continued the conquest process of his father.

² Akçe; whichmenassilvercoins.

As a first action, he captured most of Iznik Peninsula, the costs of Izmit Bay till Yalova, Gebze and Eskisehir. Ottomans' reaching Bosphorus and Black Sea alarmed Byzantine Emperor Andronicos the third and this situation ended up with a war between two sides. Byzantine Emperor who crossed Uskudar in Anatolia and Ottomans met in Pelekanon district which is between Darica and Eskihisar. Unable to resist to the encompassment, Iznik surrendered (HocaSadettinEfendi 1979: 87). In this way, Iznik and Izmit became Ottoman lands in 1331 and 1337, respectively (Shaw 2004: 35).

The existing political process changed Ottomans from a principality into a regional power. While Turkmen principalities were busy with solving their political problems, Ottomans focused on becoming a state wholly. Even, they managed to achieve superiority over Karamanogulları principality that accepts themselves as inheritors of Seljuks. Thus, Ottomans both would have expanded their borders in following years and not accepted an alternative force in their path to be a regional power.

Ever after, Ottomans declared that they set up their state in a regional concept. Also, in order to complete the process of becoming a state wholly, they became aware of the fact that they had to find new and fertile lands for their people who were added to Ottoman population as a result of the conquests.

The target is Thrace and Balkans whose center is Macedonia. The path to be followed is taking control in Gallipoli Peninsula over Dardanelles and spreading to Balkans over Thrace (Wittek, 1971: 42).

For this reason, Ottomans turned their faces to the west, Gallipoli Peninsula after the foundation and settlement phases in Western Anatolia.

Rising up Gallipoli Peninsula

Gallipoli district, which was the first target of Ottomans who completed the process of becoming a state completely, was the region called Rumelia by Turks. Moreover, both Anatolian territories in Seljuks' time except from the ones belonging to Byzantine and Gallipoli which was a gate to the western world used to be known as Rumelia. As time passed, the name of Rumelia started to be used for Balkans when Ottomans began to capture Western Europe by reaching Edirne through Gallipoli.

Although the name of Rumelia meant a geographical region for Ottomans, it also meant a kind of important administration center in administrative sharing system as Ottomans' lands expanded dramatically (Gökbilgin 1956: 247-252). Hence, Gallipoli became a spearhead for Ottomans to determine new goals and horizons as Ottoman state's lands enlarged. Furthermore, taking over Gallipoli fired up the desire of reaching Balkans, in fact Europe in Ottomans' dreams.

Ottoman State stepped on Rumelia for permanent settlement; therefore, they displayed a policy which was based on getting on well with local people. As a result, they enabled local people to like Ottomans. In this regard, rising up to Gallipoli under the leadership of Suleyman Pasha represented the beginning of settlement policy (Doğru 2002: 165-176).

Seizing two significant cities in Western Anatolia paved the way for proceeding in Gallipoli. The first of above-mentioned cities was Mudanya which was conquered in 1321 and the other one was Bursa which was occupied by Ottomans in 1326 (Oruçbey 2009: 14-15). From the perspective of Ottomans, seizing Bursa, Mudanya, Yalova and Iznik stood for reinforcing regional authority in Western Anatolia. It was a must for Ottomans who expanded geographically and had a regional authority to inhabit in Gallipoli. It was with capturing Mudanya and reaching to Marmara Sea to meet with Rumelia for Ottoman State (İnbaşı 2002: 154).

Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



doi



In Ottoman history researches, it is mentioned that Ottomans and some other Turks have been to Gallipoli and Rumelia before Ottoman Shehzade Suleyman Pasha. Some of these are as follows: Izzeddin Keykavus's escaping and taking refuge in Byzantine and Byzantine's bestowing Dobruca region for him, Berke Khan, the lord of Altınordu State, and Emir Nogay's domineering Dobruca Turks in second half of 13th century, Turks' helping Byzantine emperor old Andronicos with Rums against his grandson in the struggle of dynasty dominance in 1322 (Dirimtekin 1970: 577-578), Umur Bey's, who is from Aydınogulları, incursion to Bodonitsa, Agriboz, Morea and Gallipoli in 1332 or 1333 (İnalçık 1964: 767), some Turks' entering Rumelia for protecting Byzantine Emperor on behalf of the treatment made between Ottomans and Byzantines in Orhan Bey period and raiding activities, Byzantine's allying with Umur Bey firstly, who is from Aydınogulları, and Orhan Bey during the throne struggle in 1341 between Ioannes the fifth and Kantakuzenos (Uzunçarşılı 2003: 107-108) and some small Turkmen groups' passing to Gallipoli for the purpose of menacing Byzantine (Öztürk 1989: 136).

Pioneering Gallipoli raiding activities of Turks passed to Ottomans as a result of Umur Bey's death during the encompassment of Izmir Castle which was under the dominance of Byzantine (İnalçık 2009a: 50). After that time, Ottomans began the planned west-oriented conquest process; for this reason, it must be understood clearly that Ottomans directed their enlargement route towards the west, in other words Balkans by passing through Gallipoli and getting richer instead of entering a fight with Turkmen principalities in Anatolia for superiority struggle. With their wise preferences, Ottomans did not let a bloody and sorrowful competition arise with Turkmen principalities in Anatolia who share the same ancestors and beliefs with them. The priority for Ottomans was to reach fertile lands in Gallipoli Peninsula and make any necessary move on the east when they feel they are at the top of their strength.

Some events such as the capture of frontier lands which were under the rule of Byzantine, the conquest of Bolayır and Karesiogulları's entering under the hegemony of Ottomans in 1345 (Zachariadou 1997: 248-251) enabled Ottomans to step on Gallipoli as a first time. Passing over Dardanelles strait and settling down in Europe territories turned Ottomans into an empire that possessed minor Asia and Balkans. Besides, taking control of Gallipoli city and then ruling in Thrace laid the fact that Gallipoli was an important base in the matter of Balkan conquest (İnalçık 2004: 46).

All above-mentioned progresses forced Byzantine to exhibit a political attitude towards Ottomans as a first time. Byzantine, on the edge of collapsing down because of political conflicts inside, considered the best way to communicate with Ottomans. Thus, the alliance beginning with the desire of Kantakuzen to get Byzantine throne can be accepted as a starting point of these relations (Emecen 2002: 23; Demirkent 1992: 9), which was an invaluable opportunity for Ottomans. Every relationship with Byzantine had a positive effect for Ottomans. By stepping on Rumelia in 1352, Ottomans succeeded in multiplying their activities in the region in a short time thanks to the political problems of Byzantines.

Although the success of Ottoman raiders during Gallipoli attacks made Byzantine uncomfortable, this situation inspired them to use Ottoman soldiers in their internal disorder (İnalçık 2009b: 78). It was rumoured that Ottomans entered Europe as ally³ (Aktepe 1950: 284; Kinross 2008: 40) of Byzantine as a result of the idea of Byzantines to use Ottoman forces in their internal disorder during political conflicts and throne struggles. At this time, together with throne struggles and civil war in Byzantine opened the gates of Thrace for Ottomans (İnalçık 2009b: 78).

³ Orhan Gazi stepped on Rumelia several times with the demand of Byzantine Emperor firstly in 1345 and then in 1346, 1347, 1349 and 1353 (Aktepe 1950: 284; Kinross 2008: 40).

Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



The reason for Byzantines' insisting on this idea can be sourced from the danger of Serbians who had the desire of playing the role of Byzantines in Balkans. As a fascinating sample in history, Byzantines took the risk of demanding help from Ottomans who were going to erase them from the scene of history in future due to both the danger of losing sovereignty in Balkans against Serbians and throne struggles inside the country.

Surely, Ottomans took the advantage of developing some political moves against the political equations Byzantines formulated over them. The most striking example to be shown in this context is the wish of Sultan Orhan to get married with the daughter of Byzantine Emperor Kantakuzen. The gist of the political step of OrhanBey for marrying with the daughter of Byzantine Emperor lies under the fact that Ottomans wanted to clear away Byzantine effect on their way leading Rumelia. Thus, the move of OrhanBey to send assistive forces to his Byzantine Emperor father-in-law against Serbia King, Stefan Dushan in 1349 caused Ottoman raiders to act in Balkans.

To this end, landing in Rumelia side and settling down there has been crunch time in Ottoman political history. In last years of OrhanBey's rule-time, it was the start of unpredictable progresses that Ottomans owned an important foothold in Gallipoli (İnalçık 1964: 768) Peninsula which would extend to Thrace in future (Emecen 2002: 23). In Ottoman history tellings, the capture of Cimpe Castle is accepted as the most significant move of Ottomans about the settlement of them in Europe side. However, Halilİnalçık mentions that the real conquest happened as a result of Bolayır's conquest and Ottoman's settling down a strategic point in Gallipoli Peninsula (İnalçık 2009b: 87). By any means, the progress of Ottomans towards Gallipoli symbolizes the pathway leading Ottomans into a world empire.

From our standpoint, the capture of Cimpe Castle by Ottomans because of throne struggles in Byzantine in 1352 has been a vital milestone enabling Ottomans' landing in Rumelia. After two years following the occupation of Cimpe (Cinbi) Castle, the conquest of Gallipoli, a strategic event for Ottomans' Rumelia control, was realized and finally the south parts of Thrace were captured in following five years by Ottoman raiders. In capturing Thrace, following statemen were employed: Suleyman Pasha, LalShahin Pasha, Hacıİlbeyi, EvrenuzBey, GaziFazıl and YakupEce (Uzunçarşılı 1982: 157). Right after conquering Cimpe Castle in 1352, Ottomans gave an end to Byzantine's transportation between Gallipoli and Istanbul by occupying Gallipoli, Bolayır, Malkara, Kesan and Corlu (Sevim 2002: 43). In the end, almost half of Thrace was conquered before the death of Sultan Orhan (Bahadır 2002: 45).

It was supported that natural disasters occurring in the region were effective as well in Gallipoli's encompassment by Ottomans just after the occupation of Cimpe Castle, which was uttered mostly by western historicans. It was also reported that Suleyman Pasha and his troops conquered the defenceless region whose city walls were fallen down and people left. Moreover, it was put into words that Muslim Turk villages were settled down easily and quickly on Thrace territories whose settlers died or escaped because of the natural disasters between 1341 and 1354, infectious diseases, civil wars and finally Ottoman attacks. Especially, it was recorded that the earthquake on 2 March 1353 in Gallipoli Peninsula destroyed all sea towns and Gallipoli, and extensive rain and snow following that earthquake killed other settlers who were safe after the earthquake and the region turned into an empty desert (Dirimtekin 1970: 580).

On the other hand, Ottoman historicans did not regard the entrance of Ottomans into Gallipolia and the conquest of the region so simple. It was reported that the conquest of Gallipoli lasted long thanks to Gallipoli feudal landlord and his men nearby. In fact, the conquest of Gallipoli and its neighbourhood took shape as a result of hunger, poverty and weakness of the inhabitants after the long-lasting encompassment process of Ottomans (Kantemir 2005: 83-84).

Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



doi



In this regard, it needs to be accepted that the conquest of Gallipoli is the result of many raiding activities which progresses step by step. Ottoman forces under the rule of ShehzadeSuleyman Pasha took over the control of the region with showing their military intelligence in both the conquests in Bilecik-Izmit-Sakarya line, the encompassment of Gallipoli castle and the conquests of Eceabat, Bolayır and Gallipoli region.

Ottoman historicans agree on the fact that Gallipoli conquest happened as it was mentioned above. Ottoman historianNamık Kemal comments on the issue as follows: "It is not an honorless move or a sin to occupy a city, which was destroyed after an earthquake occuring with the will of Allah, by entering inside through damaged city walls. Smart commanders and soldiers are the ones who take advantage of any situation they come face to face" (Kemal 2005:189).

ShehzadeSuleyman had a palace done for himself in Gallipoli region (Jorga 2005: 194) and made there headquarters of his army. In this sense, he occupied Marmara costs extending from Bolayır to Tekirdag and Greek people in that region were moved to Karesi city, Balıkesir, with his order (Neşri 1983: 87; Uzunçarşılı 1982: 157-158). About Suleyman Pasha's acts in Gallipoli, Gregoras noted "*He acted like he was in an Ottoman colony or like he was in his homeland*" (İnbaşı 2002: 155). In addition, Eceabat region was conquered by YakupEce and GaziFazilBey and that region was bestowed to them as timar, benefice.

Kantakuzenos, who got flurried after Ottomans captured Gallipoli, offered OrhanBey to give Gallipoli region back against payment. However, OrhanBey refused his offer by stating that the mentioned region was conquered by his troops so the region cannot be handed back. Donald Nicol explicitly explains Ottomans' proceeding in Gallipoli in his following statement: "What's clear is that Ottomans will not give back all the territories they captured in Gallipoli in exchange of either by bribe or compliment". The conquest of Rumelia, motivating Ottoman raiders with various spoils and extensive lands, is the fact lying under the decision of OrhanBey.

Ottomans' becoming a super force in Gallipoli and enabling Turks to settle down in the region caught the attention of Europeans as well (Gökbilgin 1964: 403). Nevertheless, there seemed no serious counter-attack by Europeans due to political disorders among Balkan nations by means of stopping Ottoman progress in Eastern Europe until they realized Ottomans were real rivals for them in Balkans.

After settling down in Gallipoli, Ottomans continued their conquests in three different directions with border forces. The first border force became military base for the conquests starting from the coast and reaching to Mount Tekfur, Corlu and Istanbul direction, the second border force became military base for the conquests starting from the middle yard over Konurhisar in the direction of Malkara, Hayrabolu and Vize, and finally the third border force became military base for the conquests carried out in Meric Valley in the direction of Ipsala, Dimetoka and Edirne. The above-mentioned three main routes were protected and in Rumelia conquests of Ottomans and these three main routes were enlarged as the conquests developed in the region (İnalçık 1964: 769).

Besides, Suleyman Pasha demanded from his father, OrhanBey, that Muslims from Anatolia be inhabited in the conquered places for Ottoman dominance. The other Ottoman Shehzade, Murad, was busy with making the region ready for Muslim settlement. For this reason, Turkmen tribes from Karesi region were forwarded to Gallipoli (Şentürk 1993: 92).

Soon after taking Gallipoli under control, Ottomans tried to settle down near the pathways, trade routes and strategic points in Gallipoli. Turkmen communities brought there from Anatolia were exactly put in the mentioned strategic points.

Due to Ottomans' raiding activities, local people left their places and town planning activities were started immediately on the lands of native people (Selçuk 2002: 179). As mentioned

Turkish Studies

International PeriodicalFortheLanguages, LiteratureandHistoryofTurkishorTurkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



above, these conditions became important factors in a great sense for the immigration of landless Turkmen communities in Anatolia to Rumelia (Aktepe 1953: 299).

Malkara, Burgaz and Corlu went out of Ottoman rule because of political vacuum occurring as a result of SehzadeSuleyman's death in 1357 and Sultan Orhan's death in 1361. However, Corlu and Luleburgaz were gained back thanks to the attacks of Murat the first over Byzantine. The conquest of these regions was a kind of preliminary preparation for the conquest of Edirne which was both an entrance gate for Balkans and future capital of Ottoman Empire (Sevim 2002: 43). Also, ShehzadeSuleyman's being burried in Dardanelles instead of Bursa was an explicit sign showing that Ottomans planned to be permanent in Gallipoli (Kienitz 2004: 110).

The Conditions Making Gallipoli Conquest Easy

There are several reasons that affect or simplify Ottomans' passing to Gallipoli region which they adjusted as enlargement target. One of the above-mentioned reasons can be Ottomans' relations with their cognates. The expectations on Turkmen heritage passed down by Seljuks drafted each Turkmen principality a barren and complex political process. Among these regional Turkmen principalities, Ottomans did not prefer a risky and problematic relation type with them regarding their conquest direction and policy at the beginning of becoming a state. They put forward a political understanding which aims the spread of Islam instead of presenting a discourse claiming that they are after Seljuks' heritage in Anatolia.

Thanks to their belief-oriented approach, Ottomans enabled a lot of inhabitants and raiders in Anatolia to take part in their struggle. In this way, they suppressed the possible threat of Turkmen principalities with their landing in Gallipoli. Thus, the prosperity and power that Rumelia frontier principalities obtained after each victory in Gallipoli and Rumelia drove the other principalities in Anatolia to support the mentioned conquest process.

Ottomans mostly paid attention to Byzantine, the lord of the region for a long time, on their pathway to Gallipoli. Byzantines' behaviours and acts were important factors firstly in Ottomans' being able to live in their foundation area, Bilecik-Sakarya, and finally their enlargement policy against Byzantine. The political vacuum which Byzantine had difficulty to a great extent to get rid of in last years was the main reason for Byzantines' attitudes towards Ottomans. Byzantine Empire had to cope with both throne struggles inside and Serbian and Bulgarian tribes that were busy to decrease Byzantine power in Balkans. This situation resulted in Ottoman raidings' success in Byzantine borders at the beginning of the foundation phase of Ottoman State and Byzantines' not being able to resist very much in Ottomans' landing in Gallipoli.

Osman Bey and Orhan Bey comprehended the mentioned political vacuum of Byzantine very well and made use of it. They developed Ottomans' relations with Byzantines as being supporter of one side in their throne struggles. As a result of their wise acts, they showed the success of enlarging their borders and they prevented any Byzantine reaction towards their enlargement policy. In the context of Ottoman relations with Byzantines, mutual strategies developed by Ottomans and Byzantines can be regarded as one of the factors that enable Ottoman conquest of Gallipoli and Ottomans' success in raiding activities.

Another factor enabling Ottomans' stepping on Gallipoli is the lack of any political power in both Gallipoli and Rumelia which had the power to stop Ottoman progress at that time. Apart from Byzantines' being inside political disorders, Serbians' and Bulgarians' problems with each other in Balkans drafted the region (Gallipoli, Rumelia) into a rapid political instability and Ottomans managed to utilize from this situation. In the background of these policies of Ottomans, the fact that supporting the balkanized local dynasties in Rumelia and Gallipoli and then erasing them in the scene of history lies. Ottomans' various assistances towards the local people in the

Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



region turned Ottomans into being supporting power, as a result many territories in Rumelia entered under the rule of Ottomans easily (İnalçık 1993: 14-15).

Another factor behind Ottoman success in Gallipoli and Rumelia is originated from the fact that Vatikan and Popery, which European forces used for their political desires, lost their power. For this reason, crusade allies which Europeans managed to set up every time so as to prevent Ottoman progress in Balkans started to end in failure. Besides, the pressure of catholicism for the inhabitants in Balkans caused both Ottomans' being accepted like a shelter by the inhabitants and the inhabitants' not being able to participate in crusade allies due to their hopeless situation and poverty.

Balkan nations suffered from despotism ruling type very much for a long time. Although the villagers seemed to be bounded on their lands for farming, almost all of crops obtained as a result of cultivating were taken by the despots because of high taxes the villagers had to pay. Balkan people saw the light of exit from the mentioned despotism with the justice oriented systems Ottoman brought for them, which guaranteed that everybody could earn his living freely as he desired. What's more, Balkan people got rid of both sectarian pressures and despotism-based ruling type as a first time in their history with the help of Ottomans. The mentioned situation and this new system caused Ottomans to be popular in the region. Even, considerable amount of people converted into Islam. This economic, social and religious system Ottomans carried into the region was associated with "Balkan peace". Since, Balkan people coming from different sectarians and ethnic origins began to live in a period full of peace, development and prosperity, which they looked forward for a long time.

Ottomans, who stepped over Gallipoli peninsula in the first half of 14th century, reached a rapid development level. Because of the fact that there were powerful Turk principalities in Western Anatolia and there was a limited space for enlargement of Ottomans in Byzantine border, Ottomans found the chance of enlargement by just passing over Gallipoli (Baştav 1994: 829).

Conclusion

The very first important step for Ottomans' turning into a great empire from a small Turkmen principality took shape with the enlargement success they had in Western Anatolia. In this regard, Ottomans usually carried out their raiding activities, which would open the gates to become a state in the future, in Byzantine border. Thanks to the success in these raiding activities, Ottomans could declare the dominance of a Turk state in the region.

With the unexpected rise in the scene of history, Ottomans arouse curiosity about whether they would be a small principality in their region or become a world-wide empire. However, it needs to be emphasized that Ottomans regarded 'jihat', desire to expand Islam, as an enlargement reason due to their Islam belief. For this reason, it would be wrong to expect from Ottomans to set up a local state in their region.

Hence, Ottomans determined their enlargement direction and region just after setting up their state. Undoubtedly, this direction was the west; in other words, Balkans, the land of fertile soil, and finally Eastern Europe. The very first acting place for Ottomans in the above-mentioned region was Gallipoli Peninsula.

Ottomans had to capture Gallipoli Peninsula in order to move freely while trying to pass over Rumelia. With the leadership of Shehzade Suleyman, the grandson of Osman Bey, a rapid enlargement period started in Gallipoli with the first raiding activities. Taking Gallipoli and its neighbourhood under the control gave invaluable hope to Ottomans to reach Rumelia.

Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



For Ottomans who owned Gallipoli, the new target was Balkans. Just after the completion of Turkmen settlement in Gallipoli Peninsula, Ottomans turned their faces to Edirne, which shows that Gallipoli meant a kind of vehicle to reach Rumelia for Ottomans.

In this sense, Ottomans started to possess larger areas in Gallipoli day by day thanks to the heroic deeds and successes of Ottoman raiders. Taking vast areas under their rule brought about meeting with a great deal of people for Ottomans. Also, this process enabled some Ottomans to leave Anatolia and settle down in Balkans. As a result of immigration chain towards vast and fertile lands compared to Anatolia, Balkans began to turn into Turk-Islam territory.

Once for all, Gallipoli became the most significant geographical region for Ottomans' developing west-oriented enlargement policies. Not only did Ottomans succeed in capturing Balkan lands which would provide several advantages for them both materially and spiritually, but also they did not experience regional compression thanks to the successful conquests carried out in these lands.

REFERENCES

- AKGÜNDÜZ, Ahmed ve Said ÖZTÜRK (2000). *Unknown Ottoman*, İstanbul: OttomanStudies Foundation Publications.
- AKTEPE, Münir (1953). "XIV and XV. Relating to the Settlement of Centuries by the Turks in Rumelia". *Journal of Türkiyat X*, ss.299-312.
- AKTEPE, Münir (1950). "Çimpe Castle which is the First Castle Ottomans Conquered in Rumelia". *Journal of İstanbul University Faculty of Arts 2*, ss.283-306.
- BAHADIR, Gürbüz (2002). *Lines Extending From East to East, the Balkans and the Turks*. Konya: LineBookstore.
- BAŞTAV, Şerif (1994). "Contribution of Rumelia in re-foundation period of Ottoman Empire". XI. *Congress of the Turkish History Book III*, ss.829-839.
- EMECEN, Feridun (2002). "From the Foundation Phase of Ottoman to Interregnum". *Encyclopedia of the Turks IX*, ss.15-32.
- DEMİR KENT, Işın (1992). "Byzantine Rule in Balkan Peninsula Until 14th Century". *I. Kosova Victory 600 Anniversary Symposium Proceedings Book*, ss.1-11.
- DİRİM TEKİN Feridun (1970). "Ottomans' Passing to Rumelia and Settling there According to Contemporary Byzantine Sources". VII. *Congress of the Turkish History Book II*, ss.577-580.
- DOĞRU, Halime (2002). "Conquest and Settlement Policy of the Ottoman Empire Rumelia". *Encyclopedia of the Turks IX*, ss.165-176.
- GÖKBİLGİN, M. Tayyib (1964). "Orhan". *Encyclopaedia of Islam IX*, ss.399-408.
- GÖKBİLGİN, M. Tayyib (1956). "Rumelia State Liva's at the Beginning of Suleyman the Magnificent Rule, Cities and Towns". *Bulleten of the Journal XX*, ss.247-285.
- HAMMER, J. Von (2007). *History of the Ottoman Empire*. İstanbul: Interest Culture and Art Publishing.
- HOCA SADETTİN EFENDİ (1979), *Tacût Tevârih*. Translated by İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, Ankara: The Ministry of Culture and Tourism Publications.

Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



- İNALCIK, Halil (2009a). *Devlet-i Aliye Research on the Ottoman Empire I*. İstanbul: Business Bank Turkey Culture Publications.
- İNALCIK, Halil (2009b). "Ottoman Sultan Orhan (1324-1362) Settlement in Europe". *Belleten of the Journal* 266 (LXXIII), ss.77-107.
- İNALCIK, Halil (2004). *An Economic and Social of the Otoman Empire I*. Translated by Halil Berktaş, İstanbul: Eren Publishing.
- İNALCIK, Halil (2000). "Bafeus War and Osman Gazi Sirge of Nicaea". *Discussion on Establishment of the Ottoman Empire made of twigsto İstanbul*. Eclectic Oktay Özel, Mehmet Öz, Ankara, ss.301-340.
- İNALCIK, Halil (1993). "Turks and the Balkans". *Foundation for Middle East and Balkan Studies Publications*, ss.9-32.
- İNALCIK, Halil (1964). "Rumelia". *Encyclopaedia of Islam IX*, ss.766-773.
- İNBAŞI, Mehmet (2002). "Settlement Policy in the Balkans and the Ottoman Domination". *Encyclopedia of the Turks IX*, ss.154-165.
- JORGA, Nicolae (2005). *History of the Ottoman Empire I (1300-1451)*. Translated by Nilüfer Epçeli, İstanbul: Yeditepe Publications.
- KANTEMİR, Dimitri (2005). *The History of Rising and Falling of Ottoman Empire*. Translated by Özdemir Çobanoğlu, İstanbul: Books of the Republic of, Sixth Edition.
- KEMAL, Namık (2005). *History of the Ottoman I*. Translated by Mücahit Demirel, İstanbul: Wise Culture and Art Publishing.
- KIENITZ, Friedrich Karl (2004). *Shadow of a Great Banner of*. Translated by Seyfettin Halit Kakinç, Ankara: Ellipse Book.
- KİNROSS, Lord (2008). *The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire*. Translated by Meral Gasıralı, İstanbul: Golden Books Publishing.
- MAKSUDOĞLU, Mehmet (2003). *History of the Ottoman*, İstanbul: Elif Publications.
- NEŞRİ, Mehmed (1983). *History of the Ottomans*. Prepared by Mehmet Altan Köymen, Ankara: Publications of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Prime Minister Publications.
- ORUÇ BEY (2009). *History of the Ottoman*. Prepared for publication by Necdet Öztürk, İstanbul: Çamlıca Publications.
- ÖZTÜRK, Necdet (1989). "Süleyman Pasha, on the Conquest of Ferecik". *Journal of Turkishness Researches IV*, ss.135-145.
- SANDER, Oral (2006). *The Rise and Fall of the Phoenix*. Ankara: İmge Bookstore.
- SELÇUK, Havva (2002). "New Residential Areas which were set up as a Result of the Settlements in Rumelia". *Encyclopedia of the Turks IV*, ss.165-179.
- SEVİM, Sezai (2002). "Turks and Settlement Activities in the First Transition of Rumelia". *Proceedings of International Symposium on Past and Future of Turkish Culture in the Balkans*, ss.41-49.
- SHAW, Stanford (2004). *The Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey I*. Second Edition, İstanbul: E Publications.

Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013



-
- ŞENTÜRK, M.Hüda (1993). "Settling Policy which Ottomans Applied in Rumelia in the Period of Foundation Phase and its Results". *Bulletin of the Journal* LVII (218), ss.89-112.
- TOPLU, Abdülhadi (1996). *Anatolia Residents and Riots in History*. Ankara: Ocak Publications.
- UZUNÇARŞILI, İsmail Hakkı (2003). *Anatolian Principalities and Akkoyunlu, Karakoyunlu States*, Ankara: The Turkish Historical Society Publications.
- UZUNÇARŞILI, İsmail Hakkı (1982). *History of the Ottoman. Osmanlı Tarihi I*, Ankara: Ankara: The Turkish Historical Society Publications.
- ZACHARIADOU, Elizabeth A. (1997). "Karesi and the Ottoman Principalities: Two-Competitor State". *Ottoman Principality*, Editor. E. A. Zachariadou, Translated by G. Ç. Güven, İ. Yerguz, T. Altınova, İstanbul, ss.243-255.

Turkish Studies

International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic
Volume 8/9 Summer 2013

