

“A[u]gmenter of Their Kingdome”:

Goffe’s *The Couragious Turke, or, Amurath the First* as a Christian Tragedy based on Knolles’ *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*

Knolles’un *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*

Başlıklı Eseri Işığında Goffe’in *The Couragious Turke, or, Amurath the First* Adlı Hıristiyan Tragedyası

Sıla Şenlen Güvenç*

Abstract

Since Turkish Sultans mainly represented Islam for playwrights and the audience, English Renaissance plays about the Turkish Sultans were predominantly Christian tragedies illustrating the superiority of Christianity over ‘Mohammedanism’. The earliest Ottoman sultan to appear in such a tragedy is Sultan Murad I, or Amurath I (1362-1389) in Thomas Goffe’s tragedy entitled *The Couragious Turke, or Amurath the First*. In this respect, Goffe’s *Amurath the First* contains a great density of biblical allusions, where Amurath functions as an anti-type in comparison to his Christian counterparts, Eumurphe and Cobelitz. As many playwrights before him, Goffe gathered the material from Richard Knolles’ *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603). The aim of this study is to provide a detailed study of Goffe’s Christian tragedy in the light of Knolles’ aforementioned text.

Keywords: Goffe, Knolles, Murad I/Amurath I, Mehmed II/Mahomet II, Battle of Kosovo

Özet

İngiliz Rönesans döneminde Türkleri konu alan birçok Hıristiyan tragedyası mevcuttur. Bunların çoğunluğu Osmanlı Sultanlarını konu almaktadır. Sahneye taşınan en erken Osmanlı Sultanı Thomas Goffe’nin *The Couragious Turke, or, Amurath the First* (*Cesur Türk veya Birinci Murad*) adlı tiyatro eserindeki I. Murad’dır. Kendisinden önceki birçok yazar gibi, Goffe kaynak olarak Richard Knolles’un *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (*Türklerin Genel Tarihi*) adlı eserini kullanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı,

* Asist. Prof. Dr., Ankara University-Faculty of Letters, Department of English Language and Literature. E-mail: ssenlen@yahoo.com

Goffe'nın kaleme aldığı Hıristiyan tragedyasını, kaynak eseri ışığında ve yazınsal özellikleri kapsamında incelemektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Goffe, Knolles, Sultan I. Murad, Fatih Sultan Mehmed, Kosova Meydan Muhaberesi

English playwrights of the Renaissance wrote numerous Christian tragedies, mirroring the Christian concept of the world and illustrating the superiority and triumph of Christianity over 'Mohammedanism'. Most of these plays dealt with, or were inspired by the life of Ottoman sultans reigning between 1360 and 1603¹. The earliest sultan to appear in such a tragedy is Sultan Murat I or Amurath I² in Thomas Goffe's *The Courageous Turk, or Amurath the Firs^t* (1632)³. Unfortunately, it has been fairly neglected, apart from general references in connection to the representation of the Ottoman Turks, and studies such as Burian's paper on Goffe's general use of Knolles' chronicle as a source for his Turkish plays⁴ and Slotkin's paper dealing with "the importance of socially constructed identities in determining behavior and maintaining the imperial polity" (231)⁵, etc. This neglect might be due to the fact that it was most probably never presented of the public stage⁷, being viewed as a direct reflection of Knolles' history, and because it is not considered a great play. In fact, according to Orhan Burian:

¹ Although the latest Ottoman personage to be dramatized is Mustafa, Sultan Süleyman's son, in Fulke Greville's *Mustapha* (1608), it seems that playwrights made use of material dealing with Sultans up to Mehmet III (Mahomet III), that is 1603. The fact that Mahomet III had caused nineteen of his brothers to be put to death, "shocked" Europe, but also provided material for certain plays.

² Murad I reigned between 1362 and 1389. For detailed information about his reign. See. Halil İnalcık, "Murad I", *DİA*, İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2006.156-164.

³ Thomas Geoffrey, *The Courageous Turk and Raging Turk*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963; rep. 1974.

⁴ Also See. Nazan Aksoy. *Rönesans İngilteresinde Türkler*. İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1990.

⁵ See. Orhan Burian, "A Dramatist of Turkish History and His Source: Goffe in the light of Knolles", *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, Vol 40 (Issue 3-4) 1953. pp. 166-271.

⁶ Joel Elliot Slotkin, "Now will I be a Turke': Performing Ottoman Identity in Thomas Goffe's *The Courageous Turk*", *Early Theatre* 12.2 (2009): 222-35.

⁷ Even though it had been performed by the students of Christ Church in 1618/19 "[...] so far as it is known they [*Courageous Turk* and *The Raging Turk*]⁷ were never presented on the public stage". Samuel Chew, *Crescent and the Rose*, New York: Octagon Books. Inc., 1965. p.486.

None of the plays [about the Turks], with the possible exception of Tamburlaine⁸, counts among the great plays of the age. Yet, as evidences of the kaleidoscopic picture that existed in the Elizabethan mind with regard to the east and especially to Turkey, their significance is undeniable, and does compensate considerably for what they lack as creative works⁹

With respect to Goffe's play, the "kaleidoscopic picture" it represents is the false images traditionally associated with the Turks, the common enemy of Christians, such as their 'evilness', 'treachery' and 'lust', etc. combined with information and narrations presented by Richard Knolles¹⁰. As many playwrights before him, Goffe gathered the material for his play from a very popular chronicle concerning the Ottoman Turks, Knolles' *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603). The chronicle was first published in 1603, and reprinted with additional information in 1610, 1621, 1631, 1638, 1679, 1687-1700 (in three volumes) and 1701 (abridged)¹¹. Since the play was first performed in by the students of Christ Church in 1618/9, Goffe could have used the 1603 original, or the 1610 edition. Thus, the aim of this study is to examine Goffe's play in the light what appears to be his only historical source¹². But as Goffe has indicated in the prologue, he does not follow the chronicle chronologically "We will not ope the booke to you, and fhov/A ftoy word by word, as it doth goe,/But give invention leave to undertake," (20-3) but instead has combined bits and pieces from the life of two sultans, "Mohamet" and "Amurath" together with additional scenes such as masques, the use of Senecan elements such Lala Schahin being disguised as the ghost of Amurath's father and the demons that appear at the Battle of Kosovo and innovations, etc.

The general outline of *Couragious Turk, or Amurath the First* is presented in the "Argument"¹³. The first two acts of the play deal with Amurath's obsession with Eumurphe, a Christian concubine, who conquers Amurath: "A Suppos'd [Supposed] Victory by Amvrath [Amurath=Murad=Murat]/Obtain'd in

⁸ Christopher Marlowe, *The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great*, In *Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays*, Edited with an Introduction by J. B. Steane. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1969; reprinted 1980, p.101-179.

⁹ Orhan Burian, "Interest of the English in Turkey as Reflected in English Literature of the Renaissance", *Oriens* Vol. 5, No.2 (Dec.31, 1952). 220.

¹⁰ See. Sila Şenlen, "Richard Knolles' The Generall Historie of the Turkes as a Reflection of Christian Historiography", *OTAM* 18 (2005). 379-393.

¹¹ Also see. V.J.Parry, "The Various Editions of Knolles". *Richard Knolles' History of the Turkes*, Edited by Salih Özbaran. Istanbul: Numune Matbaası, 2003. pp.47-58.

¹² See. Sila Şenlen, "Richard Knolles' The Generall Historie of the Turkes as a Reflection of Christian Historiography", *OTAM* 18 (2005). 379-393.

¹³ The excerpts have been quoted from the 1631 edition available at TTK under call number B/6211. The spelling in the excerpts have been presented in their original form. Some words have been added in square brackets [ex. Suppos'd=Supposed, re ft=rest,] by myself for easier reading.

Greece, where many captives tane [taken?],/One among the reſt [reſt], IRENE [**“Eumurphe” in play**], conquers him;” (1-3). According to Goffe, Amurath’s martial conquest is not actually a success, because he has been conquered by the Christian lady. Consequently, he loses his interest in war, which leads to rumours and hostility among the nobility and soldiers: “For taken with her love, he ſounds [sounds] retreat,/Eternally from Warre [War]; but after, mov’d/With murmur of his Nobles” (4-6). As a result, Amurath strikes off Eumurphe’s head in the presence of the nobles and returns to his former self: “in her Bed/Before his Councils face, ſtrikes [strikes] off her head./Then ruining former bloody broyles,” (6-8). Thus, concluding the legend. The subject of the rest of the play (Act III-V) mainly dealing with the Battle of Kosovo and Amurath’s death, is as follows:

*He ſtraight [straight] ore’comes [overcomes] all Christian Provinces,
 Invades the Confines of his Sonne in Law
 Fires Caramania, and makes Aladin
 With’s Wife and Children ſuppliant for their lives;
 At length appointed his greateſt Field to fight,
 Vpon [Upon] Caſſanae’s Plaines, where having got
 A wondrous Conqueſt [conquest] ’gainſt[against] the Chriſtians [Christians],
 Comes the next morne [morning] to overview the dead,
 ’mongſt [Amongst] whom a Chriſtian Captaine Cobelitz,
 Lying wounded there, at fight of Amurath,
 Riſing and ſtaggering towards him, deſperately
 With a ſhort dagger wounds him to the heart,
 And then immediately the Chriſtian dies.
 The Turke expiring, Bajazet bis Heyre [Heir]
 Strangles bis younger brother: Thus ſtill ſprings
 The Tragic Sport which Fortune makes with Kings.*

(Argument, 9-27)

Goffe has used two parts of Knolles’ chronicle: the section on Sultan Mehmet II entitled “The Life of Mahomet, Second of that Name, Seventh King and First Emperor of the Turks, for His Many Victories Syrnamed [Surnamed] the Great” for Amurath’s relationship with Eumurphe, and the part entitled “The Life of Amurath, the First of that name, and the Great Augmenter of their Kingdom” for the rest of the play, with the exception of the last hundred lines concerning Bajazet’s strangling of Jacob.

In order to find parallelisms between the play and chronicle, it might be best to begin with the legend of Mohamet [Sultan Mehmed II] and Hyrene as presented in Knolles' chronicle:

Now among many faire virgins taken priſoner by the Turkes at the winning of Conſtantinople, was one Irene a Greeke borne, of ſuch incomparable beautie & rare perfection, both of bodie & mind, as if nature had in her, to the admiration of the world, laboured to have fhewn [shown] her greateſt ſkil; fo [so] prodigally ſhe beſtowed vpon her, all the graces that might beautifie or command that her fo curious a worke. This paragon was by him that chance had taken her, preſented vnto the great Sultan Mohamet himſelfe, as a iewel [jewel] fit for no mans wearing as his owne: [...] Neuertheleſſe, having as then his head full of troubles, and above all things carefull for the aſſuring of the imperiall citie of Conſtantinople, by him but even then won, he for the preſent committed her to the charge of his Eunuch, [...] But thoſe his troubles overblowne, & his new conqueſts well aſſured, he then began forthwith to thinke of the faire Irene: and for his pleaſure ſending for her, took in her perfections ſuch delight and contentment, as that in ſhort time he had changed ſtate with her, ſhee being become the miſtreſſe & commander of him fo great a conqueror; & he in nothing more delighted, than in doing her the greateſt honor & ſervice he could. Al the day he ſpent with her in diſcourſe, and the night in dalliance: al time ſpent in her company, ſeemed to him ſhort & without her nothing pleaſed:

(Knolles, 1631: 350)¹⁴

Irene, as a Christian, is presented as a paragon, an image of perfection in body and mind. Conquered by her 'superior' qualities, Mohamet (Mehmed II) spends so much time with her that he is 'tamed' and loses his interest in war:

[...] his fierce nature was now by her well tamed and his wonted care of arms quite neglected: Mars ſlept in Venus lap, and now the ſoldiers might go play. Yea the very government of his eſtate and empire ſeemed to be of him, in compariſon of her, little or not at all regarded; the care thereof being by him careleſſly committed to others, that fo he might wholly himſelf attend vpon her, in whom more than in himſelf the people ſaid [said] he delighted. Such is the power of diſordered affections, where reaſon ruleth not the rein. (350)

His infatuation with her, lasting almost two years, causes discontentment in his subjects and nobility:

But whilſt he thus forgetfull of himſelf, ſpends in pleaſure not ſome few daies [days] or months, but even one whole yere [year] or two, to the lighting of his credit, & the great discontentment of his ſubjects in general: the Ianizaries & other ſoldiers of the court men deſirous of imploiment, & grieved to ſee him fo given to his affections, & to make no end thereof began at firſt in ſecret [secret] to murmur thereat, & to ſpeak hardly of him; and at length after their inſolent manner ſpared

¹⁴ All the quotations from Richard Knolles' *The Generall Historie of the Turke*, London: Adam Islip, 1603; reprinted 1631.

not openly to fay, That it were well done to deprive [deprive] him of his gouernment and ftate, as vnworthie thereof, and to fet vp [set up] one of his fonnes in his ftead. Which speeches were now growne fo rife and the difcontentment of the men of war fo great, than it was not without caufe by fome of the great Baf faes feared, whereunto this their fo great infolencie would grow. (350-1)

In the end, Mustapha Pasha, “a man for his good fervice (for that he was a child brought vp with him) of *Mabomet* greatly fauoured,” speaks with Mehmed II regarding the discontentment of the soldiers and nobles:

The life you have lateled ever fince the taking of Conftantinople, as a man carelefse of his eftate, and wholly wedded unto his owne pleaſure, hath given occaſion not unto the vulgar people onely (alwayes readie to fay the worſt) and foldiers of the Court, the guarders of your perſon, but even unto the greateſt commanders of your armies and empire, to murmur and grudge. (351)

Then he criticizes him for being controlled by a poor common slave:

You have given your ſelfe over (as they fay) for a ſpoile and prey unto a poore ſimple woman, your ſlave and vaſſale, who with her beautie and allurements hath fo bewitched your underſtanding and reaſon, as that you can attend nothing but her ſervice, and the ſatisfying of your moſt paſſionat and inordinate deſires; which how much the more you cheriſh them, fo much the more they torment and vex you. (351)

He implores him to consider his current transformation: “Enter but a little unto your ſelfe (I pray you) and compare the life you now lead with the like time heretofore you ſpent in treading honours ſteps, and you ſhall find a notable difference betwixt the one and the other.” (351), reminds him of all the great achievements of the former sultans, and concludes that he should not be controlled by a slave: “Thinke that your greateſt conqueſt, and ſuffer not your ſelfe, fo great a conquerour, to be led in triumph by your ſlave.” (352). Amurath is so much affected by his words that soon after he appears in front of his noble with Hyrene “who beſide her incomparable beautie and other the greateſt graces of nature, adorned alſo with all that curioſitie could deuife, feemed not now to the deholders a mortall wight, but ſome of the ſtately goddeſſes, whom Poets in their extraſies deſcribe.” (353) And this is what Mohamet says to them: “I underſtand of your great difcontentment & that you all murmur & grudge, for that I, overcome with mine affections toward this fo faire a paragon, cannot withdraw my ſelfe [myſelf] from her preſence:”, asking them what they would do if they were in “poſſeſſion a thing fo rare and precious, fo lovely and fo faire” (353). But they, enchanted by her beauty, say that they could not find fault in his manner. Then, in order to prove that they have been mistaken about him says: “Well, but now I will make you underſtand how far you have bin deceived in me & that there is no earthly thing that can fo much blind my ſenſes, or bereaue [brave?] [...] yea I would you ſhould all know, that the honor & conqueſts of the Othoman Kings my noble progenitors, is fo fixed in my breaſt, with ſuch a deſire in my ſelfe to exceed the fame, as that nothing but

death is able to put it out of my remembrance.” and suddenly “with one of his hands catching the faire Greeke by the haire of the head, and drawing his falchion with the other, at one blow ftruck off her head, to the great terror of them al[l]” (353)

The play does not show Eumorphe’s [based on Hyrene] capture, but begins with Amurath coming on stage and declaring that he has lost his interest in war thanks to his new acquired saint, Eumorphe:

*Amurath: [...] Peace (our grand) Captaine, see here Amurath,
That would have once confronted Mars himselfe, [...]
Puts off ambitious burdens, and doth hate
Through bloody [bloody] Rivers to make paf fages [passages],
Wherby his Soule [Soul] might flote [flout] to Acheron,
[...]
Iove [Jove] Ile[I will] outbrave thee! Melt thy felfe [self] in Luft [Lust]
Embrace at once all f tarre[star]-made Concubines,
[...]
To make me happier; here Ile place my Heaven.
And for thy fake [sake] this fball [shall] be my Motto be,
I conquered Greece, one Grecian conquered me.
[...]
Let others warre, great Amurath fball [shall] love. (I.i.3-63)*

Amurath orders Lala Schahin (Lala Şahin/Lala Shahin) to prepare a masque representing how the Gods once loved. Both in actual history and the play, Lala Schahin [Lala Şahin] is “his tutor, [...] whose grave advice and consell hee most followed in all his waightie affaires, being at that time one of his chiefe councillors” (Knolles, 190), being left alone on stage reflects his discontent regarding Amurath’s transformation:

*No more King now: poor Subject AMVRATH,
Whom I have feene (seen) break through a Troope of Men,
Like lightning from a Cloud:
[...]
now lyeth [lies] lurking in a womans arms
Drencht in the Letbe of Ignoble luft [lust] (I.ii.93-100)*

Discontent by the “enticing woman”, who has caused Amurath to be scorned and laughed at by his subjects decides that “[...] bloud, not water muft [must] wafh [wash] off this *f*taine [stain]” (I.ii.115).

The first step of Lala Schahin’s plan is to indirectly show that Amurath’s love for Eumorphe, a mere concubine, is transitory, and not befitting a ruler through a masque. The first masque is composed of the lovers Jupiter and Juno, Mars and Venus, Apollo and Pallas and Neptune and Diana. Each dances a masque dance with his goddess. While Jove and Juno are dancing, Juno, observing that Jove is looking at Eumorphe, accuses him of coming to earth “For *f*ome [some] new Harlot, *f*ome new Queene for you” (I.iv.201). Thus, the first masque shows that love is transitory. In the second masque, Philoxesus, a Captain, presents Alexander the Great with Darius “the wonder of her sex” and other ladies, but he refuses such “effaeminate Prefents [effeminate presents]” in preference of “A man, a Souldier, strong with his wounds,” (I.v.320) illustrating that great rulers should be preoccupied with war instead of lust. Amurath leaves the masque troubled, but still pursues his lust “Eumorphe, Love, Queene, Wife, let’s haste to Bed!” (I.v.375). Nevertheless, both Eumorphe and Amurath feel uncomfortable. Eumorphe fears that she will not always have “a King my [as her] subject” because his love will disappear with her beauty, and dreams of going to Elizium (Heaven), which acts as a foreshadowing of her tragic end (II.ii). On the other hand, Amurath fears people’s power to condemn a king to death is tormented by the fact that while “Poore men may love” he can’t (II.iii.523). But, above all, he considers what the Christians might think: “The Chri~~f~~tians now will *f*coffe [scoff/mock] at Mahomet;/Perchance they *f*ent [sent] this wretch [Eumorphe] thus to inchant [enchant] me!” (II.iii.551-2). While Amurath is caught between lust and duties, Lala Schahin enters Amurath’s room disguised as the ghost of his father, Orchanes (Sultan Orhan):

*I was firft [first] of all the Turkish Kings
That Europe knew, and the fond Christians plague,
What coward blood ran flowing in my veins,
When thou wert [were] firft [first] begot: who marrest all
Thy Fathers acts, by thy untam’d de~~f~~ires [desires],
Wherefore with Stygian curses I will lade thee
Firft [...], may she prove a Strumpet to thy Bed
Be her lips poyson [poison], and let her loofe [loose] embrace,
Be venomous as Scorpions! If she conceive’d
A Generation from thee, let it be
As ominous as thou hast beene to me! (II.iv.591-601)*

His father, the first Turkish “King” to be known in Europe, calls him the offspring of “coward blood”, cursing both his concubine and their possible future children. Of course, both the masque and ghost scene are theatrical devices employed by Goffe. Eumorphe’s end is exactly the same as Irene’s as described by Knolles. Amurath calls his men Schahin, Eurenofes and Chafe-Illibegge, following the mock ghost scene, and asks them what they would do if they possessed such as superior creature. Schahin indicates that he would enjoy his love freely, Eurenofes says that nothing could conjure him “from betwixt her armes” while Chase Illibegge says that if he had a crown “That Queen should be the chiefest jern t’adorne it,”(II.v.691). Then Amurath take Schahin’s sword and cuts off Eumorphes’ head to the great surprise of the nobles:

Amurath: [...]

There kif fe now (captaines) doe! And clap her cheekes;

This is the face that did fo captive me:

Thefe were the lookes that fo bewitcht mine eyes;

Here be the lips, that I but for to touch,

Gave over Fortune, Victory, Fame, and all;

Thefe were two lying mirrors where I lookt

And thought I faw [saw] a world of happineffe. (II. V. 715-19)

Through such means, Amurath breaks free from his infatuation with his concubine and returns to military conquests: “Now Tutor, shall our swordes be exercifed,/In ripping up the breafts of Chriftians./Say Generals! Whether is firft? [first]” (II.V.720-22). Thus, the second act concludes the legend of Mahomet and Hyrene. According to Vitkus “*The Courageous Turke* suggests that when English readers and spectator thought of Moors and Turks, they imagined them as rash and violent oppressors who made it a point of religion and military honor to kill innocent women” (Vitkus: 2003, 101)

The next three acts of the play, based on Knolles’ part on “Amurath”, mainly deals with the capture of Adrianople and Battle of Kosovo¹⁵, apart from historical events such as the establishment of the devshirme system and janissaries, Bajazet’s marriage to Hatam (German Ogly [Germenoglu]’s daughter), Aladin’s attempt to capture Murat I’s territory in Asia and his defeat etc. Act III begins with the introduction of the ideal Christian hero Cobelitz, historically Miles Cobelitz. In Knolles’ text Cobelitz has been described as a “flaue [slave]” (189) and as a Captain soldier who has stabbed Amurath to death when he was walking the field after his victory, which will be quoted later on. In the play, however, he has been given extreme importance. As a Christian

¹⁵Sec. Feridun Emecen, “Kosova Savaşları”, *DİA*, Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2002, 221-4.

hero, he fights against the Mohammedan Turks, the common enemy of Christians, with all his power and faith. In III.i he wonders if sacred providence means to “arme” him with “thunder-bolt”, and adds that: “Turke, Ile oppo^fe thee ftill! Heaven has decreed:/That this weake hand, fhall make that tyrant bleed” (III.i. 760-1). On the other hand, Amurath, having regained his interest in war, is determined to fight against Christians. He asks Schahin whether they have killed “A thou^fand ^fuperftitious Chriftians ^foules” in the City of “Ore^ftias” [Orestia- Adrianople], (III.ii. 766-68) and the soldiers present the heads of dead Christians. This is of course a reference to the Battle of Adrianople. When Evrenoses brings news that “To Servia (my Lord) there are troupes of armes,/Gathered to re^fift Mahometans” and Chase Illibegge indicates that “At Bulgaria, there they fet on fire,/The Countries as they pa^ffe, ‘twere good we ha^fte”, they leave to “invade them” (III.ii.804-7).

Knowing that the “Butcherous Turke’s at hand”, Lazarus-Despot of Servia, and Se^fmenos [Sesmenos]- Governor of Bulgaria, have second thoughts about fighting, but Cobelitz gives them courage:

*Cobelitz: [...] (Servia) we mu^ft, we should, we ought,
Ea^fe and ^fucce^fe keeps ba^fene^fe company,
Shall we not blu^fb to fee the register
Of those great Romans, and Heroicke Greekes,
Which did tho^fe acts (at which our hearts are ^ftruck
Beneath all credence) onely to win fame:
And ^fhall not we for that Eternall name? [...] (III.iii.834-840)*

To which Se^fmenos answers: Well ^fpoke (true Christian)/[...] (O) then lets to our weapons! Make him yield” (III.iii. 843-48).

On the other hand, the “victorious” Ottomans lead young Christians as prisoners. When [Cairadin] Ba^ffa claims that “these young ^flaves” are full of “Valor” and “mettall”, Lala Schahin declares that he will set them up as “janizaries”:

*Yes; and to his Highnesse shall performe
A service which I long have thought upon,
And which his Turkish Majesty requires;
They’l fits to be a neare attendant guard,
On all occasions to the Emperour;
Therefore they shall be called Janizaries,
By me first instituted, for our Princes safeties sake. (912-919)*

In Knolles, the establishment of the devshirme system and janissaries is provided in detail as follows:

About this time [when Lala Schabin was sent to invade a country about Philippopolis] (by the suggestion of Cara Ruffemes a doctor of the Mahometan law) Zindelu Chelil, then Cadelofber or chiefe Iuftice [Justice] among the Turks, but afterwards better knowne by the name of Catradin Baf fa, by the commandement of Amurath, took order, bat every fifth captive of the Chriftians, being aboue fifteen yeres [years] old, fould be taken vp for the King, as by law due vnto him: and if the number were vnder five, then to pay to the King for every head 25 a fpers, by way of tribute: appointing officers for collecting both of fuch captiues and tribute mony [money], of whom the aforefaid Cara Ruffemes himfelf was chief, as firft deuifer [deviser] of the matter. By which means great numbers of Chriftian youths were brought to the court as the kings captiues, which by the counfell of the fame Zinderlu Chelil, were diftributed among the Turkiſh busbandmen in Afia, there to learn the Turkiſh language, religion, & maners; where after they had bin brought vp in all painfull labour and trauell by the fpace of two or three yeres, they were called vnto the court, & choice made of the better fort of them to attend vpon the perfon [person] of the prince, or to ferue him in his wars: where they daily practiſing all fears of activity, are called by the name of Ianizars (that is to ſay, new foldiers [soldiers]) (191)

In the play, janissaries are presented to Amurath by Cairadin Bassa to be brought up “[i]n all the pracepts [precepts] of our [their] Mahomet:” (III.v. 964) during the ceremony prepared from Bajazet’s marriage to *German Oghy’s* [Germiyenoğlu] daughter *Hatam* (later Devlet Sultan/Hatun)¹⁶.

The Christians are demoralised. Safmenos is saddened that “Seruia, our [...] Cities are turned flames” while Lazarus talks about Christians with worse fates than death:

Our dead men are denyed their funeral flames:

And thoſe infectious Carcafes [carcasses] doe performe,

A ſecond murder on the reft that live!” (1033-5)

But Cobelitz prays that “Heaven avert/And arme you[them] with the prooffe of better thoughts!” (1041). Reminding them “Fortune and Heaven will fcorne to try a man,/That hurles his weapons hence and runs away!”. He still believes that they are strong because they are fighting a just cause: “O what an army ‘tis to have a caufe/ Holy and juft; there’s our ftrenght indeed. (III.vi. 1040-1055) Also when Lazarus asks whether they will continue fighting, Cobelitz indicates that they should fight until their last breath:

¹⁶ Later in IV. ii., Amurath blesses Bajazeth and Hatam, pray for their well-being. Enter Eurenofes with six Christian maidens, the daughter of 6 European kings, with cups of gold with jewels in their hands. Amurath gives all the presents brought by Asian lords to Eurenofes, and the six virgins to the service of Hatam.

*Laz: What courfe now Coobelitz, must we ftill be yoakt
 To mi fery, and murder? We fcarce have roome,
 Vpon our bodies to receive more wounds,
 And muft we ftill oppofe our felves to more?
 Cob: Yes! We are ready ftill: a folid minde
 Muft not be fhakt with every blaft of Winde!*

(IV.iii. 1295-1300)

Although the Ottomans gain a victory, they have to return due to Aladin, King of Caramania, and Amurath's son-in-law. Amurath is angry because Aladin "Have made him leave off his great Prophets Warres,/When he was hewing downe the Chriftians" (IV.i. 1073-5), but Aladin, however, is determined to overcome Amurath, but fails to do so. Thus, he gets his wife-Amurath's daughter, to beg for his life: "My wife's his Daughter: fince we cannot ftand/His fury longer, fhe fhall fwage his wrath (IV.iv.1352-3). In Knolles' text, the event has been narrated as follows:

*Aladin now on every fide defieged in Iconium, and without all hope of
 efcape, fent to the Queene his wife, Amuraths daughter[...] to adventure ber felfe
 to goe to ber angrie father, and craue pardon for his great trepasse & offence. [...]
 Amurath moft entirely loued this his daughter, and therefore for ber fake not only
 granted unto her, her husbands life [...] but alfo his kingdom. (196)*

In V.i of the play, Aladin, his Wife, and two children come to beg for Aladin's life and receive a pardon, and orders him to lead a wing in Servia: "Amurath: [...]...Your felfe fhall leade a wing in Servia,/In our immediate Warres, we are to meet/The Christians in Caffanoe's Plaines with fpeed:" (V.i.1536-9). Then the scene returns back to the battle between Christians and Ottomans. Cobelitz is hopeful and sure that the heavens support them: "But looke, looke in the ayre (me thinks) I fee/An hoft of Souldiers brandi/hing their fwords;/Each corner of the Heaven fhoots thunderbolts,/To naile thefe impious forces to the Earth. (V.ii. 1550-1553), while we observe the Turkish side in V.iii. The stage direction states that "The Heavens seem on fire, Comets and blazing Starres appeare." And Amurath is disturbed:

*Amurath: Why fet the world on fire? How now (ye Heavens)
 Grow you fo proud that you muft needs put on curl'd lockes;
 And cloth your felves in Perivigs of fire?
 Mahomet (fay) not but I invoke on thee now!
 Command the puny-Christians demi-God
 Put out thofe flafling fparkes, thofe Ignis fatni, (V.iii. 1605-10)*

Then arise four fiends in the shape of black “Turkish kings” and attempt to warn him of his tragic end: “O Amurath! Thy Father’s come, /To warne thee of a suddaine doome,/Which in Caffanoe’s fields attends/To bring thee to thy Helli^{fh} friends.” (V.iii.1641-4). The battle ends with the victory of the Turks, Lazarus is slain, Cobelitz faints and falls for dead. The incidents that take place after the Ottoman victory is narrated by Knolles as follows:

Amurath after this great victorie, with fome few of his chiefe captains taking view of the dead bodies, which without number lay on heaps in the field like mountains; a Chriftian fouldier, fore wounded and all loodie, feeling him, in ftaggering manner arofe (as if it had bin from death) out of a heape of flain men, and making towards him, for want of ftrength fell down diuers times by the way as he came, as if he had been a drunken man: at length drawing nigh vnto him, when they which guarded the Kings perfon would haue ftayed him, he was by Amurath himfelfe commanded to come nearer; fuppofing, that hee would haue ctaned [craved?] his life of him. Thus, the haf fe dead Christian preffing neere vnto him, as if he would for honor fake haue kif fed his feet, fuddenly ftabbed him in the bottome of his bellie with a fhort dagger, which he had vnder his foldiers coat, of which wound that great King and conquerour prefently died. The name of this man, (for his courage worthy of eternall memorie) was Miles Cobelitz: who before fore wounded was fhorthly after in the prefence of Baiazet cut into fmall pieces. (200)

In the play, “Enter Amurath, Bajazeth, Nobles to see the spoile” meanwhile “Cobelitz rifeth as awakt, amazed leaning on his Sword, ftumbling ore the dead bodies, lookes towards Amurath” . He moves towards Amurath determined realize his life’s purpose: “And I fhall performe my lifes true taske” (V.iv. 1777). Cobelitz seeming to kneele “ftabs him with a pocket Dagger”. Amurath is devastated to be killed by such a base person: “And mufti I like th’unhappy Roman, dye/By a flaves hand?” (V.iv.1782-3). Amurath asks him if he fears what is going to happen to him, but Cobelitz is brave: “Ha, ha, ha!/I thanke the (great omnipotent) that I/Shall ere laugh out the lag end of my life!” (V.iv.1801-3). Cobelitz indicates that while “your witty furies fhall invent/For me, fome never heard of punishment;/I fee a guard of Saints ready to take me hence.” (V.iv.1819-21) and eventually dies. He is presented as a martyr who has sacrificed himself for Christianity, while Amurath’s punishment is a forewarning of the certain victory of Christ:

*Amurath: O now have I and Fortune tried it out.
With all her beft of favours was I frown’d.
Stay (Soule!) a King, a Turke, commands thee ftay!
Sure I am but an actor, and muft ftrove
To perfonate the Tragicke ends of Kings.
[...]
O but I fee Neme fis at hand:*

[...]

*What? Not one Earthquake? One blazing Comet
T'accompany my foule t'his Funerall?*

[...]

*Quake Pluto, for 'tis I come
A Turke, a Tyrant, and a Conquerour," (V.iv. 1846-1873)*

Amurath dies and Bajazet is king. Following Lala Schahin's council, he calls Jacup, his younger brother and is strangled to death.

Since Turkish Sultans mainly represented Islam for playwrights and the audience, English Renaissance tragedies about the Turkish Sultans were predominantly Christian plays comparing 'non-ideal' Turkish rulers with 'ideal' Christian personages. In this respect, Goffe's *Amurath the First* contains a great density of biblical allusions, where Amurath functions as an anti-type in comparison to his Christian counterparts, Eumurphe and Cobelitz. When faced with Eumurphe, a Saint-like Christian, he is tamed for a while, but gives in to his nature and kills her, which brings on his tragic end. On the other hand, being killed by Cobelitz after the battle, illustrates the working of God's divine judgement. The punishment awaiting Amurath at the end of the tragedy is a forewarning of the ultimate victory of Christians against the 'Mohemmedan' Turks.

Works Cited

- AKSOY, Nazan, *Rönesans İngilteresinde Türkler*. İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1990.
- BURIAN, Orhan, "Interest of the English in Turkey as Reflected in English Literature of the Renaissance", *Oriens*, Vol, 5, No.2 (Dec.31, 1952), 209-229.
- BURİAN, Orhan, "A Dramatist of Turkish History and His Source: Goffe in the light of Knolles", *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, Vol 40 (Issue 3-4), 1953, 166-271.
- CHEW, Samuel, *Crescent and the Rose*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1937.
- EMECEN, Feridun, "Kosova Savaşları", *DİA*, Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları 2002, 221-4.
- GOFFE, Thomas, *The Courageous Turk and Raging Turk*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1963; rep. 1974.
- İNALCIK, Halil, "Murad I", *DİA* İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları 2006,156-164.
- KNOLLES, Richard, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes, from the first beginning of that Nation to the rising of the Othoman Familie: with all the notable expedition of the Christian Princes against them. Together with the Lives and Conquests of the Othoman Kings and Emperours*, London: printed by Adam Islip, 1603; reprinted 1631.
- MARLOWE, Christopher, *The First Part of Tamburlaine the Great*, In *Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays*, Edited with an Introduction by J. B. Steane, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1969; reprinted 1980, p.101-179.
- PARRY, V. J., "The Various Editions of Knolles", *Richard Knolles' History of the Turks*, Edited by Salih Özbaran, İstanbul: Numune Matbaası, 2003, pp.47-58.
- ŞENLEN, Sila, "Ottoman Sultans in English Drama Between 1580-1660", *OTAM*.19 (2006), Ankara: Ankara Basımevi, 399-405.
- ŞENLEN, Sila, "Richard Knolles' The Generall Historie of the Turkes as a Reflection of Christian Historiography", *OTAM* 18 (2005), 379-393.
- ŞENLEN, Sila. *The 'Civil Infidels': A Study of the Representations of the Turks in Renaissance Drama*. M.A Dissertation. University College Dublin, 1999.
- SLOTKIN, Joel Elliot, "Now will I be a Turke': Performing Ottoman Identity in Thomas Goffe's *The Courageous Turk*", *Early Theatre* 12/2 (2009): 222-35.
- VITKUS, Daniel, *Turning Turke: English Theatre and the Multicultural Mediterranean 1570-1630*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.