ANALYSIS OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ATATURK IN TURKISH INDEPENDENCE WAR AND ITS EFFECTS ON HIS DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

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Abstract - In this study, effects on his personality counted on situations Mustafa Kemal was born in, his family and condition of the Ottoman Empire and psychology was analyzed. It was analyzed that how to form his thoughts at military schools and on duties he took, effects of his psychology and savior role he assumed on his decision-making process. When everybody including Sultan was hopeless about independence, he was sure to save his country and fully trusted his nation. The psychology he had directed the Turkish Independence War and provided the establishment of Republic of Turkey. There were different factors that prepared him to national struggle. Most important ones are books he read, battles he took part and his travels to Europe. Books that Mustafa Kemal has written, interviews with him, newspaper articles and memories of people beside him were used while this study.

Keywords - Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, Turkish Independence War, First World War, National Struggle.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mustafa Kemal was born in Thessaloniki in 1881. Years that he was born were period of regression of Ottoman Empire and it had hard times. His personality was affected by nationalist movements in his region, memories of his father about conflicts against bandits and devotion of his mother to him.

He enrolled in Şemsi Efendi Primary School that a modern school on his father’s wish. Mustafa Kemal began his military life in a Military Secondary School without his mother’s knowledge and his thoughts were shaped in Military High School and War College. In War College he criticized the situation his country in and oppressive regime of Sultan and he developed his thoughts of saving his country from this situation. He was congratulated by his instructors because he was so clever, knowledgeable and researcher. He was seeing himself as the person who will save Turkish people when he was just in military high school. He was expelled to Syria after War Academy because of criticisms against Sultan. He fought against Italians in Tripoli. He improved his leadership skills and developed his power of struggle against difficulties in this war. He proved his courage and military skills with a few soldiers in Gallipoli Battlefront he was assigned and became “Gallipoli Hero”.

Mustafa Kemal read 3997 books in different fields in his life. These military, political, linguistic, literal and many kinds of books affected him in different aspects. Also, travels in Europe he attempt with Crown Prince Vahdettin and Picardie Maneuvers are important events that affected him.

He was determined to save his occupied country. He started the Independence Struggle in Izmir in May 19, 1919. At first he declared in Havza Circular Letter that his homeland will not be divided. He invited people that be able to represent their nation and officers that will support him for struggle. After that he moved to Sivas and Erzurum and organized congresses. He founded The National Assembly and attributed the National Struggle to his nation. He accomplished to awake and reorganized Turkish people even though Istanbul Government canceled his rank and declared a death order for him. He changed his nation’s ill fortune as stopping Greeks in Sakarya War. He had a big self-confidence and relied on his nation. So he undertook all authorization and responsibility and won Supreme Military Command Battle. He defeated Greeks in The Battle of Dumlupinar and founded independent Republic of Turkey.

1.1. WORLD WAR ONE AND MUSTAFA KEMAL
1.1.1. His Attendance of Gallipoli Front

Gallipoli War is the war that made Mustafa Kemal a well-Known person on the world. He began to show his military skills and got a lot of big successes in that war.

Allied Powers brought soldiers from all around the world and fleet that the biggest one by that time to Gallipoli and they began to apply their plan to land in April 25. Liman Von Sanders, commander of the front, placed Turkish troops to positions that he thought enemy will land. But enemy troops landed a different place, Chunuk Bair. Mustafa Kemal was informed about enemy landing but because of lack of communication he couldn’t get a permission to attack. He offered to Yanyali East Pasha, Army Corps Commander, to attack but commander said he couldn’t do that without permission. Mustafa Kemal didn’t wait for order and moved toward to Chunuk Bair. In that attempt he underwent a big risk. If the attack hadn’t been from this place, rest of the army would get a big problem to respond enemy. This risk
that Mustafa Kemal took demonstrated that he was so brave and self-confident.

Foresight of Mustafa Kemal was true. Enemy attacked to Chunuk Bair with a lot of troops. He stopped enemies with big success. One event in struggles showed how he was determined and ready to die: He stopped a troop that running away from front because of being out of ammo and he said: “I order you to die not to fight! Other troops can take place here before we all die”1. And order troops to fix bayonets. He could stop enemy troops in here.

Mustafa Kemal was promoted to Colonel after his successes. When he heard that enemy troops will land with two thousand soldiers, he offered to unite all troops and wanted to take control of army. General Liman Von Sanderstalked jeeringly at first but he accepted the offer2. Mustafa Kemal, now commander of the entirefront, accomplished to quit enemies from Gallipoli and became a hero. This event increased his confidence to himself and Turkish soldier and made him looking to future more hopeful.

1.1.2. Mustafa Kemal is in Eastern Front
Mustafa Kemal was promoted to brigadier general after Gallipoli Front. He was assigned in Eastern Front against Russians and after that in Hejaz-Yemen Front. He was always sending massages to government to say that policies they follow are wrong and these policies will cause collapse of the state3. But Enver Pasha didn’t listen to him and followed faulty steps.

Mustafa Kemal turned back to Istanbul when he realized that his effort will not work. He Talked to Enver Pasha. He worked to convince Crown Prince Vahdettin to make him commander of the Ottoman armies in Prince’s visit of Germany and after that but he couldn’t. He got a treatment in Europe for one month and he assigned to Syria Army, a troop that about to die. He defeated by Enver Pasha but he didn’t give up at all.

1.1.3. His Duty in Syria Front
Mustafa Kemal saw Turkish people during his train trip to Syria. They were all old, women and children that in a miserable condition. When he arrived to front conditions were so bad. He thought that poor and starving soldiers can’t win any war. Liman Von Sanders was hopeless about winning the war and he left command of the army to Mustafa Kemal. Mustafa Kemal was happy to take the control. He sustained to defense and stopped English furtherance in Aleppo. Meanwhile Enver Pasha and near friends had been left Ottoman Empire and Ali Riza Pasha Government was established. Mustafa Kemal expected to be promoted as War Minister for his success in Syria but he became Commander of Southern Army. It was a big disappointment for him. He worked so hard to reorganize his soldiers and rearm them. He was distributing guns to small public groups to strengthen southern of country4.

Armistice of Mudros was transmitted when Mustafa Kemal were trying to strengthen Southern Front. According to Armistice our soldiers were going to retire, cities in east were going to be under danger of invasion; a lot of lands were going to be occupied, our war ships were going to be given to Allied Powers and control of Straits was going to be given to Allied Powers5. When Mustafa Kemal heard that he fastened his works, he sent objection and warning messages to Istanbul. Because of his objections his duty was canceled he was called to Istanbul back.

Mustafa Kemal turned back to Istanbul in November 13, 1918. When he saw Allied Powers war ships in Istanbul Strait he said: “They will go back how they how they came”6.

II. TURKISH INDEPENDENCE WAR AND MUSTAFA KEMAL PASHA

2.1. Arrival of Mustafa Kemal Pasha to Samsun
Mustafa Kemal shocked when he turned back to Istanbul. The city was full of Greek, English, Italian and French soldiers. People were in poverty and hopelessness. Government had been resigned. Control was in the hand of Sultan but he was not doing anything against enemies and just watching their activities. Mustafa Kemal tried to reorganize Assembly but he couldn’t be successful. He couldn’t get anything from meetings with Sultan.

Allied Powers split land of Ottoman Empire during World War One between each other with secret conventions. Ottoman was supposed to be defeated because of defeat of Germany. Allied Powers got close to their goals with that defeat. Allied Powers soldiers entered Istanbul after Armistice of Mudros. Greeks landed twenty thousand soldiers to Izmir. Meanwhile minorities were revolting different places of country and wasting time of army.

Mustafa Kemal arranged secret meetings with his close friends7 in his house in Şişli. They discussed about how to save country and made plans. They decided that they have to reorganize public and start at some point. But Istanbul was not true place for it. They couldn’t move under pressure of Allied Powers.

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1 Unaydin, 1930, p.30-31
2 Kinross, 1965, p.114-115
3Volkan, & Itzkowitz, 1998, p.143
4Volkan, & Itzkowitz, 1998, p.154
5 Aydemir, 1969, Volume 1, p. 331; Kinross, 1965, p.159
6Rauf Orbay, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Kazim, Karabekir, Ismet Inonu
7 A district in Istanbul.
Mustafa Kemal informed about something when he was thinking about how to go Anatolia. Greeks living on Black Sea Region were fighting for freedom as armed groups. Turkish Militia Forces were fighting against them. Allied Powers wanted Ottoman Empire to stop attacks against Greeks. When Mustafa Kemal heard that he wanted to be promoted to this region. It was hard but he accomplished to be promoted this region as Inspector of Third Army. He had five cities and two divisions under his order. Also he had right to order every city governor around country and appropriate armories.

That promotion was great opportunity for him. The place that will be starting point for national struggle was clear now: Samsun. Mustafa Kemal expressed his emotions after that event: “It was great! Destiny prepared a great condition for me; I can’t describe how I was happy when I got them. I bit my lips because of my excitement when I went out of Sultan’s room. I was free and there was a great way to run for me. I was like a bird that ready to fly”10.

We can describe psychology of Mustafa Kemal when he was on his way of Samsun by a ship in May 16, 1919:

1. Mustafa Kemal thought about was as a bad event without saving his country and always wanted peace. He emphasized that Turk were waiting for peace but they didn’t afraid of battle11. He said “We don’t want war, we are pacifist. We want to see existing of peace and serve for it”11. Also after Supreme Military Command Battle, when he saw wounded people on the ground he said “This is a shame view for humanity but we are protecting our country.” And he mentioned about war a bad event without saving country.

2. He was full of confidence to his nation and faith to winning of dependence. He expressed his faith with these statements:

I had no power in my hands when I arrived Samsun in May 1919. I just had inner resources coming from nobility of Turkish people and filling my heart. So I began to work with trust of Turkish Nation. I was sure a sun will rise on us, that sun and power will warm up us and it will strengthen us. I could see it with my eyes12.

I looked at horizons of Istanbul in ship taking me and going from Istanbul, Bosporus to Black Sea. I cried for people of Istanbul whose defense was blocked, hearts were bleeding and brains were burning. But I was sure that my brother will be saved and this sureness was a resource of defense for me13.

Mustafa Kemal arrived Samsun in May 19, 1919. When he realized here is not safe enough he decided to go Amasya with their friends. Their car’s maximum speed was 15 km and making trouble so many times but his friends says he was so happy and he were even singing during the trip14.

2.2. Circulars and Congresses

Mustafa Kemal arranged meetings with notables of the city when his arrival to Amasya and gave exciting speeches to people. He always emphasized that Sultan was under control of the Allied Powers. He published Amasya Circular in here. Some articles of the circular that has an important place in history: Integrity of country and independence of nation was under danger. Istanbul government didn’t do its job. Our nation had to save its own independence. We had to establish a national council to announce our voice to world. We have to gather a national congress in Sivas and delegates all around the Ottoman must attend it. We have to arrange a congress in Erzurum for west of the country15.

After circular an arrest warrant was published for Mustafa Kemal and he moved to Sivas. He was welcomed by people with excitement and enthusiasm like a hero. He became happy to see people that have desire to save their country and this view was a source of hope and spirit. Also he relaxed so much because of the words of Kazim Karabekir16: “I and my army are ready for your orders sir!” In here he resigned from military and continued his life as a civilian.

Erzurum and Sivas Congresses were arranged in an order and National Pact decisions were accepted. According to these decisions: country will not be separated, a national assembly will be established with national will, national will be source of decisions, patronage and mandate will not be accepted.

Mustafa Kemal didn’t express his thoughts about Sultan and Caliphate. Because Turkish people were adhere to Sultan for centuries. He declared in Erzurum that his purpose was save the Sultan under control of Allied Powers.

Mustafa Kemal were sending long massages to Ferit Pasha Government and criticizing their jobs constantly. Because of his efforts government was receiving resign massages from all around the country. Because of pressures Ferit Pasha resigned and Ali Riza Pasha Government was established. New government found favorable policy of Mustafa Kemal and accepted National Pact decisions. Mustafa Kemal had bi efforts in meetings with Ali Riza Pasha. After that development he arranged big

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9 Aydemir, 1969, Volume 1, p.392
10 Enginun, 1996, p. 5-10
11 Addresses and Speeches of Ataturk 1, 1924, p.181
12 1.4.1937, Cumhuriyet Newspaper
13 Addresses and Speeches of Ataturk 5, 1924, p.101
14 Volkan, & Itzkowitz, 1998, p.184
15 Atay, 1968, p.196
16 A big and successful commander of East Armies.
17 Aydemir, 1969, Volume 2; p.108


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2.3. Move to Ankara from Sivas

Mustafa Kemal moved to Ankara for its safe environment in December 27, 1919. He was traveling with a loan of money. Because he had no money as he was going to Samsun. He provided establishment of new National Assembly in Istanbul after big efforts and meetings in January 11, 1920. He attacked Maraş, and took from France to make a pressure on them.

England annoyed from activities in Ankara. They raided National Assembly in Istanbul and arrested ministers to send jail in Malta. After that Mustafa Kemal declared an order to arrest all English officers in Ottoman.

Behavior of England increased desire of independence of Turkish people to fight. Population of Ankara doubled because of migration form all around the country. Mustafa Kemal was getting all opportunities he wanted gradually. He had a chance to establish new National Assembly and a chance to make National Struggle with all Turkish people because there was no assembly in Istanbul. Grand National Assembly of Turkey was established in April 23, 1920. Ankara became center of National Struggle after Mustafa Kemal’s arrival here.

Mustafa Kemal lived in a School building in Ankara at first. This building was protected by a few soldiers and not safe. Sometimes telegraph wires were cut and guard dogs were killed. Mustafa Kemal couldn’t sleep at nights and felt himself like he was in cage. But he didn’t lose his hope and courage in negative conditions. When he got a bad new or in a bad situation he was standing up and got rid of negative mood. He was motivating people around him and maintaining his job. After a while he moved a house in Çankaya.

2.4. Days of National Struggle

Greeks were moving forward in Izmir. Militia forces were fighting against them they had not enough power. People in Anatolia waiting for Mustafa Kemal’s move and they wanted him to indicate some signals about saving of country. After sign of Treaty of Sevres people became so angry and all eyes were on Mustafa Kemal.

Allied Powers prepared papers of Sevres and sent to Sultan. They made pressures him to sign it immediately. But it was impossible to sign it. According to treatment, they separated lands of Ottoman for themselves and left us a little bit land.

To increase pressure on Ottoman, Greek troops in Izmir moved forward Istanbul. They defeated militia forces in Izmıt and occupied Bursa. These events caused decrease of confidence to Mustafa Kemal and hope.

Members of parliament reacted to occupation of Bursa because it was the first center of Ottoman. They declared their anger on platform in a meeting and after that Mustafa Kemal went on the platform. He relaxed members and said them being patient and logic. Because they had no well-equipped troops and power to fight. An early step could ruin everything. Their first goal was saving Anatolia.

Treaty of Sevres was signed after occupation of Edirne by Greeks. Ankara Government didn’t accept this treaty. After that Mustafa Kemal strengthened East Front under control of Kazım Karabekir against Russia threat. Kars was taken from enemy and Gyumri Treaty was signed with Armenians. Our east borders were determined with Moscow Treaty.

Ismet Inonu defeated Greek troops that attacked to Eskisehir. Allied Power shocked because of this defeat of Greeks by Turkish troops that one-third of them. After that they called Ankara Government to London to talk about Treaty of Sevres again but they didn’t accept requests of them. These requests were those: control of straits will belong to Ottoman, Greeks will leave Izmir and foreign soldiers will quit Istanbul.

After defeat of Greeks again in Second Inonu War, Mustafa Kemal and his friends were so happy. Mustafa Kemal said that “Bad destiny of Turkish Nation” began to change. But conditions in South were not the same. King Constantine came to front and decreased attacks of troops. Greeks occupied Kutahya and turned through Ankara.

After that occupation members of parliament increased their voiced and opposed presidency of Mustafa Kemal. But Mustafa Kemal still had the same self-confidence and faith to in the war. He went on the platform and wanted to be Supreme Military Command and all authorization. He ensured everybody to win the war if he gets all authorization. Mustafa Kemal had been offered this kind of requests in Gallipoli and Syria Fronts. He accomplished almost impossible successes after two events. Assembly accepted the offer and gave all authorizations to Mustafa Kemal for three months. Later that time was extended for six months.

Mustafa Kemal broke his rib during the preparation of defense front against enemy in Sakarya. Doctors said if he doesn’t be careful he would die but he

18 Volkan, & Itzkowitz, 1998, p. 203
19 A city of eastern Ottoman
20 Volkan, & Itzkowitz, 1998, p.225
21 A town of Ankara.
didn’t wait in hospital even one day and turned back to front. Because the most important thing for him was not his health but saving his country and independence. He emphasized that with that statement: “our land will not be left until every inch of it is covered by our blood.”

Enemy was defeated in Sakarya War and our army retreat behind Sakarya River. Mustafa Kemal was given Veteran and Marshall Degree. Our south border was determined with treaty signed with France in Ankara. After that some members of parliament wanted to attack enemy immediately and some of them wanted to sign peace treaty and stop war. But according to Mustafa Kemal those two offers were wrong. War wouldn’t stop until he save they country. They couldn’t attack immediately because most of the officers were died in front and soldiers needed so much. They had to supply their deficiencies. Greeks were established a great line of defense in Afyon and they thought it was insuperable. They gathered most of their troops in Eskişehir because they estimated attack will come from there. But Mustafa Kemal had a great plan. He pretended like he will attack from Eskişehir in mornings and he moved his troops to Afyon back in nights. He would attack enemy in a time and in a place that they didn’t expect. After last inspection of our army in August, Greeks were defeated in Primary Supreme Military Command Battle. Turkish army moved forward fifty kilometer per day and took Afyon back. After that war Mustafa Kemal ordered that: “Armies your first goal is Mediterranean, forward!” Grand National Assembly of Turkey wasn’t even informed about victory. Mustafa Kemal ordered to not inform anybody because he wanted to catch enemy unprepared.

The Battle of Dumlupınar lasted about fifteen days. In September 9, Bursa was taken from enemy and our army entered Izmir. Enemy soldiers run away with ships and city was saved. Mustafa Kemal declared some orders to soldiers as soon as they entered the city. According to order they were forbidden to harm civilians in any way. After that he made meetings with ambassadors of foreign countries.

Mustafa Kemal was so proud to be saved his country while he is passing crowded people with a car in Izmir. When he was going in home prepared for him he didn’t step on the flag of Greece. Because he thought any flag didn’t deserve to be stepped on. This was the one reason of Independence War. He thought every country deserve to live with freedom and dignity under its own flag.

Falih Rifki Atay, reporter that went his house in Izmir, he was so happy. He said Mustafa Kemal sometimes stopped, staring at somewhere without any feeling, and suddenly turned back to his happy condition.

III. RESULTS

Skills of Mustafa Kemal that made him saver of Turkey began to develop when he was a child. He learned to fight against difficulties so early. He showed his determination and self-confidence in primary school. When he was military student he improved himself and made plans for future. The biggest one of these plans was saving his country.

He always read books and improved himself, he demonstrate that he was different from others. He developed his military skills in Tripoli War and demonstrated them in Gallipoli War. He took over the front and became a hero. He took control in Syria front and save troops from ruining. He accepted responsibilities bigger than his rank when he was doing these jobs.

Mustafa Kemal always criticized mistakes Istanbul Government had and said the truths he knew every time. When he realized that it is impossible to save country in Istanbul, he went to Samsun and started Independence War. HE started this war without any possibilities and prepared victory. He gave independence to his nation back.

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24 Kinross; 1965; p.366-368
25 Acun; 2010; p.185
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