RELIGION AND WORLD CIVILIZATIONS

How Faith Shaped Societies from Antiquity to the Present

VOLUME 2

MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN WORLDS

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By taking over the Caliphate, the Ottomans further increased their prestige and thus were considered to be the protectors of Muslims and the flag-bearers of Islam. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this authority was demonstrated when some weak Muslim sultanates in Asia and Africa asked the Ottoman caliphs for help in their fight against Western empires (e.g., Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian). The Ottoman caliphs usually responded to these requests for aid by conducting land and naval military expeditions and sending military experts and firearms, but they were not able to provide such support as they grew weaker in the following centuries.

The first official document through which a powerful foreign power recognized the Ottoman sultans as caliphs was the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca signed with the Russian Empire in 1774. According to this treaty, the Muslim Crimean khanate was granted political independence from Ottoman authority, but the authority of the Ottoman caliphs was still recognized in religious affairs until the early twentieth century. Thus, the Ottomans also noticed that the caliphate could be used for international issues.

Moreover, the Ottomans exercised authority over Muslims outside of the Ottoman borders through the caliphate. For example, the British also accepted the universality of Ottoman caliphs and asked Selim III (r. 1789–1807) and Abdul Majid (r. 1839–1861) to advise them on how to prevent Muslims in India from revolting. America made a similar request as well from Abdul Hamid II (r. 1876–1909) in the late nineteenth century concerning the Moro Muslims of the Philippines. All of the caliphs aided in these requests and intervened with local Muslim populations, who responded agreeably to the Muslims caliphs' instructions to them. The power of the caliphate in these kinds of matters, as an institution, was recognized by the British, French, Italians, and Russians, whose colonies were often in Muslim lands. Although the Ottoman Empire weakened politically and militarily as of the eighteenth century, the caliphate contrarily became an effective instrument of diplomacy in international affairs until the early twentieth century when it was abolished by the Turkish Parliament in 1924.

ERCAN KARAKOC

See also: Volume 1: Byzantium: Fall of Constantinople (1453); *Volume 2: Medieval Arab Civilization:* Abbasid Caliphate; Fall of Baghdad and the End of the Caliphate; Mecca-Medina War; Muhammad and the Foundations of the Islamic State; Rashidūn Caliphate; Umayyad Caliphate; *Seljuk and Ottoman Civilizations:* Abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate; Collapse of the Ottoman Empire; *Jihad,* World War I, and the Ottoman Empire; Ottoman Empire; *Volume 3: Early Modern and Modern Africa:* Establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate in West Africa

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Establishment of Secular Republic of Turkey

The origins of the establishment of the secular Republic of Turkey are found in the failures of the Ottoman administration during World War I and its aftermath. It was then that victorious Allied forces occupied much of the Ottoman Empire, prompting a Turkish nationalist response under the leadership of the statesman and soldier Mustafa Kemal (d. 1938), whom some have argued resembles U.S. president George Washington in his importance to the founding of the republic. Once revolutionary Turkish forces succeeded in expelling occupied forces, they abolished the Ottoman administration and established a new Turkish republic, eventually enshrining the principle of secularism in their new constitution during a period that saw radical social and cultural change.

The Ottoman Empire lost the World War I against the Allies. It had to sign the Armistice of Mudros on October 30, 1918. As of the beginning of November, the Allies occupied many places in Anatolia, northern Iraq, and Syria. Istanbul, the capital, was occupied on November 13 as well. The strategic positions of the Turkish Straits were taken under the control of the Allies and the Ottoman army was completely demobilized. Yet Articles 7 and 24 of the Armistice stipulated even more disastrous conditions from the Turkish viewpoint. Article 7 gave the Allies the right to occupy any strategic places in the empire in response to any threats to the security of the Allied forces. Likewise, Article 24 stated that in case of a disorder in the six provinces, referred to as Armenian Vilayets in the English text, the Allies reserved the right to occupy any part of

these provinces. These provisions made the Turkish people feel that they were under the threat of captivity in their own homeland, inspiring many to look to the leadership of General Mustafa Kemal.

The National Struggle, or the Turkish War of Independence, against the occupiers started with Mustafa Kemal's arrival in the city of Samsun in May 1919. From there, he and his colleagues stated their reasons for the National Struggle; encouraging the Turkish people to take a stand against the occupations and laying out a plan for how they could gain national independence. Next, they organized regional and national congresses to bring the Turkish nationalists together. These congresses concluded that a representation committee (Temsil Heyeti) chaired by Mustafa Kemal would be established. In addition, all regional defense associations were united under the Association of the Defense of Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia. In December 1919, the committee relocated to Ankara, later the capital of modern Turkey, as the headquarters of the independence movement for the remainder of the war.



Kemal Atatürk, president of Turkey from 1923 to 1938. He was a central figure in the establishment of a secular Turkish republic that replaced the longstanding Ottoman government. (Library of Congress)

Meanwhile, the Ottoman administration held general elections at the end of 1919 and the last Ottoman Parliament convened in January 1920. The new MPs were mostly Turkish nationalists who supported independence and unanimously adopted a six-point declaration called the National Oath (Misak-ı Milli), which was accepted as the political manifesto of the Turkish War of Independence. In response, the Allied forces completely took Istanbul under their control with a military operation in March. Leading nationalists, including MPs, were arrested and the Ottoman Parliament was closed by the sultan in April as a result of pressure by the British.

Mustafa Kemal invited supporters who could escape the Allied forces to Ankara where a new governing body and a parliament were formed on April 23, 1920. The parliament represented a revolutionary assembly in the nature of a "Constituent" with extraordinary powers and consisted of escapee MPs and the members of the Association of the Defense of Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia. Mustafa Kemal became the head of the assembly and the provisional government. The Ankara government first set up a regular army with the demobilized Ottoman soldiers, then suppressed the revolts by those who were pro-sultanate and caliphate. Meanwhile, the Ottomans and the Allies signed the Treaty of Sèvres on August 10, 1920. It included very harsh territorial and non-territorial provisions according to which the last remaining lands of the Ottoman Empire were divided up and shared by the British, French, Italians, and Greeks. Moreover, Armenia would be established as an independent nation in eastern Anatolia and the U.S. president Woodrow Wilson would, as arbitrator, determine its borders. Also, in southeastern Anatolia, a region was allocated for the Kurds to establish a future state. The Ankara government immediately rejected this treaty, declared the signatories traitors, and introduced the armed conflict phase of the National Struggle.

The Ankara government first dealt with the Eastern Front. The wars with the newly formed Republic of Armenia began in September and ended with the Treaty of Alexandropol in December 1920, which required Armenia to reject the Treaty of Sèvres. But, shortly after the treaty, Armenia came under the control of the Bolshevik Red Army and a Soviet administration was formed. This led to the Ankara government signing the Moscow Treaty with Soviet Russia in March 1921 and the Treaty of Kars with three Transcaucasian republics of the Soviet Union—Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia—in October 1921, which finalized Turkey's eastern borders and ended the dispute with Armenia.

Next, the Ankara government dealt with the Southern Front, where conflicts took place between the irregular national forces commanded by nationalist officers and the French and their Armenian allies. With the Treaty of Ankara signed on October 20, 1921, this front was closed as the Ankara government was officially recognized by France, an Allied Power. The Italians also withdrew from the places they occupied without engaging in conflict with the Ankara government.

The hardest struggle in the Turkish War of Independence was fought against the Greeks supported by the British on the Western Front. The Greek forces had already landed in Izmir (Smyrna) on May 15, 1919, as part of their Asia Minor Campaign. They advanced as far as the interior of Anatolia, and in August 1921 even reached the outskirts of Ankara, the center of the National Struggle. Violent clashes broke out between the Greek and newly formed Turkish armies. A decisive moment came when the Turkish army won the Battle of Sakarya, lasting twenty-two days, in September 1921. As a result, the Greeks lost their offensive capabilities and retreated. After a year of preparation, Turkish forces launched the Great Offensive on August 26, which ended with the expulsion of the Greek forces to the Aegean Sea and the recapture of Izmir on September 9, 1922. For the Greeks, their celebrated Asia Minor Campaign turned into the Asia Minor Catastrophe. The Turkish army continued its march to retake Istanbul and the Turkish Straits as well. The Mudanya Armistice was signed between the Ankara government and the Allies on October 11, 1922. Soon after, the sultanate was abolished by the Turkish Parliament in Ankara on November 1, 1922, thus ending the Ottoman Empire. The peace treaty between the Ankara government and the Allies was signed in Lausanne on July 24, 1923, which officially recognized Turkey, the new Turkish state. The Lausanne Treaty, which superseded the Treaty of Sèvres, is the only treaty that still remains valid.

After the War of Independence, Mustafa Kemal oversaw many reforms to modernize and westernize Turkey and the Turkish nation. During this process, a republic was declared on October 29, 1923, and he became the president of the Republic of Turkey. The caliphate was abolished and madrasah and religious courts were closed in 1924. The new Civil Code, which gave women important rights, was adopted in 1926. The same year the Gregorian calendar was adopted instead of the Hijri and Julien calendars. The Turkish alphabet, which is based on Latin letters instead of the Ottoman alphabet consisting of Arabic scripts, was put into effect in 1928. In 1931, the measurements law was accepted abolishing the former Arabic length and weight measurement and replacing them with the metric system. Women were given the right to elect and be elected as deputies in 1934. By 1935, eighteen women and four non-Muslim deputies had been elected to the Turkish Parliament. In 1934, the Surname Law was adopted and Mustafa Kemal took the surname Atatürk meaning "Father of Turks." The weekly holiday was changed from Friday to Saturday afternoon to Sunday in 1935. The article "the religion of the state is Islam" was removed from the Constitution in 1928 and the principle of secularism was added to the Constitution in 1937. Turkey also pursued a peaceful foreign policy during the founding period and Atatürk's expression "Peace at Home, Peace in the World" became the motto of Turkish foreign policy. Accordingly, Turkey became a member of the League Nations in 1932.

Atatürk passed away on November 10, 1938. One of his close friends, İsmet İnönü, was elected as the new president. In 1939, World War II began, and Turkey remained neutral by following a balanced policy throughout the conflict. After the war, Turkey transitioned to a multiparty system and became one of the founding members of the United Nations. It fought alongside with the United States in the Korean War, and then became a member of NATO in 1952, taking part in the Western Bloc throughout the Cold War. Despite some setbacks, negotiations for full membership in the EU as a secular, democratic, and constitutional state have continued since the 1980s.

Ercan Karakoc

See also: Volume 2: Seljuk and Ottoman Civilizations: Abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate; Armenian Genocide; Collapse of the Ottoman Empire; Founding and Influence of the National Vision Movement on Modern Turkey; *Jihad*, World War I, and the Ottoman Empire; Millet System; Ottoman Empire

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Founding and Influence of the National Vision Movement on Modern Turkey

The National Vision (Milli Görüş) is a religious-political movement that was established in 1969 by the Turkish