

THE MEANING OF THE GREEK REVOLT OF 1821 IN CONTEMPORARY TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

This article seeks to investigate how the Greek Revolt of 1821 in Peloponnese (*Mora İsyanı/Ayaklanması*), is perceived in the digital contents of today's Turkey. The research has 2 steps. Firstly, Turkish academic literature in different disciplines of social sciences will be analysed. How the events of 1821 were explained and portrayed in the academic resources will present the general view of Turkish academia about the issue. Secondly, online digital content will be the focus of the study. To do this, Google Search will be used and how 1821 was covered or referred to in the Turkish online digital content will be analysed. Quantitative and qualitative content analyses will be the methods of the study. In total, 100 digital content links were examined for the study. 43 of them were included in the quantitative and qualitative content analysis. Others were eliminated due to the examples of unrelated content, short texts, and repetition of the previously selected material.

Keywords: *Greek Revolt, 1821, Turkish-Greek Relations, Turkish Digital Content, Content Analysis, Google.*

1821 YUNAN AYAKLANMASININ MODERN TÜRKİYE'DEKİ ANLAMI

ÖZ

Bu makale, 1821 yılında Mora'da yaşanan Yunan Ayaklanması'nın günümüz Türkiye'sinin dijital içeriklerinde nasıl algılandığını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmanın 2 adımı vardır. Öncelikle sosyal bilimlerin farklı disiplinlerinde Türkçe yayımlanan akademik literatür incelenecektir. 1821'de yaşanan olaylarının akademik kaynaklarda nasıl tasvir edildiği ve Türkçe literatürün konuya ilişkin genel görüşü ortaya koyulacaktır. İkinci adımda ise çevrimiçi dijital içerikler çalışmanın odak noktası olacaktır. Bunun için Google'ın arama özelliği kullanılacak ve 1821 Yunan Ayaklanması'nın Türkçe çevrimiçi dijital içerikte nasıl ele alındığı analiz edilecektir. Çalışmada yöntem olarak nicel ve nitel içerik analizi kullanılacaktır. Çalışmada toplam 100 adet dijital içerik linki incelemeye alınmıştır. Bunlar arasından 43 adeti nicel ve nitel içerik analizi örnekleme dahil edilmiştir. Araştırma konusuyla direkt ilgili olmayan içerikler, kısa metinler veya örnekleme seçilen metinlerin tekrarı içeriklere sahip olanlar analizlere dahil edilmemiştir.

***Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yunan İsyanı, 1821, Türk-Yunan İlişkileri, Türkçe Dijital İçerikler, İçerik Analizi, Google.*

INTRODUCTION

History is not only the story of our past. It is not only a field of social sciences. History creates today. It shapes today's understandings and relationships. It is a very strong tool to form today's politics and political discourses. History is probably the most political discipline and every state or politician enjoys using it for their own purpose. Most historians are actually officers or academics working for state universities' history departments and often praise the existing order by using the state's documents and archives (Kırmızı, 2019). By this means, history is often an instrument to justify today's political decisions and political views. This justification is usually performed by politicians' speeches and accordingly disseminated by the media coverage. Therefore, the media contents often serve the state to produce and represent the state's homemade historical reality.

History has actually become a commodity in the media coverage to sell in the market. History is conveyed in a formation that is decided by its creators. The expectations of the creator and the receivers are the key at this point (Kanat,

2012). Historical events' own reality within the time of when they happened is not the priority. The historical narrative is shaped by the rules and expectations of the environment that it is created in. This is a phenomenon that can show itself all around the world. For instance, 'the History Wars' is a public debate in Australia where the discussions appear in different media sources such as printed media, broadcasts, and digital content (URL-1).

In most cases, a historical discussion comes to the media agenda by politicians' referring to the past while evaluating today's issues. Accordingly, the topic highlighted by the politicians makes the headlines in the traditional and digital media, and some even prepare YouTube videos to enlighten the discussion in a more detailed way. While the history itself appearing in the digital media more than ever compared to previous traditional ways to disseminate historical knowledge, also new age historians are now able to work on digital communities and write about digital contents for the future's historiography (Tikhonova et al, 2020). An important part of the digitalization of history shows itself on social media. Historical discussions are usually popular in social media posts. There are shining with visual materials and usually triggering sensational issues. However, the level of discussions and superficiality of the posts often result in an understanding of history largely disconnected from the past but become a reality of today. The historical event's importance in the past is lost and it is seen as something being witnessed right now on social media's own reality. This situation decreases the possibility of understanding historical events according to their own period. By this means, historiography based on genuine documents becomes a faraway ideal in the environment of social media mess (Çelik & Elbasan, 2018). This is something that can be witnessed when it comes to the content about Turkish-Greek relations in the digital world.

It is not possible to understand the discussions in Turkish-Greek relations by only looking at today's political, economic, military, and strategic developments. It is also crucial to focus on the historical dimensions of the relations. Historical representations, perceptions, thoughts, and emotions should also be evaluated while contemporary Turkish-Greek relations are scrutinised (Örenç, 2011). Therefore, it is important to analyse how contemporary contents in the digital world are portraying the Greek revolt in 1821, a historical event which was a turning point for all modern Greek history and the Ottoman's position in the Balkans in the upcoming century.

Almost the whole territory of Modern Greece used to belong to the Ottoman Empire in the period between the 14th century and 1821 and 1923. This situation for almost 4 centuries period in the soil of Modern Greece and Cyprus was called

‘Turkocrazia’ in Greek and in the majority of Western historiography (Cassia, 1986; Millas, 1991). However, there is no specific naming for this term in the Turkish literature. It is usually seen as an example of Ottoman expansion in the Balkans as part of the tradition of *fetih ruhu* or *gaza* (soul of conquering). The Greek revolt in 1821 is usually called “*Mora İsyanı*” or “*Mora Ayaklanması*” in Turkish literature. It refers to a rebellion and an uprising. It is very rare to name it a ‘war of independence’ in the Turkish context.

There are several studies analysing Turkish-Greek relations in the traditional media (*inter alia* Tılıç, 1998; Özer, 1999; Ozgunes & Terzis, 2000; Lazarou, 2009; Erdem, 2018; Paksoy, 2019). However, analysing Turkish-Greek relations in digital content does not exist in the literature. Therefore, focusing on digital content is the first originality of this research. The second originality is about the topic and the research framework. Turkish-Greek relations are usually analysed within the context of contemporary political discussions or recent political events that happened in the last couple of decades. This article is interested in the Greek revolt of 1821 and how it is portrayed in the Turkish digital content such as news reports, blogs, opinion articles, YouTube videos, social media posts, etc. All in all, the article seeks to answer these two research questions:

RQ1. How does the Turkish digital content represent 1821?

RQ2. What kind of adjectives, pronouns, labels are used in the content?

METHOD AND SAMPLE

In order to find answers to the research questions, quantitative and qualitative content analyses were chosen as the methods of the study. Research categories were built on two research questions mentioned above. The questions were asked to each analysed material and the answers were coded into a coding sheet. Findings will be presented by using the notes in the coding sheet together with the important points mentioned in the literature review about 1821. The main focus of analysis is written and verbal material. Visual findings will be used if only they have an impact on the text.

The research sample consists of online digital content published and indexed by Google Search. The time sample covers the period between 22 March 2019 and 28 March 2020. By this means, the content about 25 March celebrations of the Independence Day of Greece in the years 2019 and 2020 are included in the sample. Most research materials in the sample are blogs, digital learning content, and news reports, or opinion articles from different news corporations published in Turkish. The traffic or the impact of the websites are not considered. Any digital text about Greece and 1821 in the Turkish language are included in

the sample. Academic articles found in Google Search were already analysed during the literature review. Therefore, the academic content discovered in the search was omitted in order to keep the empirical work more focused on popular perceptions. Other criteria in choosing the research material are:

-The text must include the keywords ‘Yunanistan 1821’ (Greece 1821) and it should somehow refer to the Greek War of Independence.

-If any content is relisted on the search list by Google, they were skipped and only the first content (or the original provider) was included in the sample.

-Each Google Search list includes 10 links per page. The first 10 pages of Google search are included in the analysis (URL-2). This means that the research sample consists of 100 digital items. While approaching the pages 8 and 9, the findings already started to be similar. This means that around 10 pages would be relatively enough to say that the sample has reached a saturation point (see Gray, 2009). Finally, all 100 digital content links were examined for the study. 43 of them were included in the quantitative and qualitative content analysis. Others were eliminated due to the examples of unrelated content, short texts, and repetition of the previously selected material.

Table 1. Numbers and criteria about Google search

KEYWORD	TİMESPAN	NUMBER OF GOOGLE PAGES	NUMBER OF DIGITAL CONTENT	NUMBER OF ANALYSED DIGITAL CONTENT
Yunanistan 1821	22 March 2019 and 28 March 2020	10	100	43

HOW DOES TURKISH ACADEMIC LITERATURE REPRESENT 1821?

This section seeks to understand how Turkish-Greek relations changed during the time of the Ottoman Empire and what kind of events prepared the upcoming Greek War of Independence in the 18th and 19th centuries. The section aims to answer these questions by mostly referring to Turkish academic literature. Only in a few cases, non-Turkish resources were used to enrich the context. This will make it possible to see how Turkish academia explains the Greek revolt. By this means, we will be able to see if there are links or similarities between the narrative in the Turkish academic research and the Turkish digital content about 1821.

A book written by Volkan & Itzkowitz (2002) refers to an interesting point. They argue that when Ottomans started conquering the Greek mainland in the 14th and 15th centuries, the Greek national pride was not injured. It was a change from one empire to another. The idea of the Greek nation did not exist at that time.

Pre-Christian heritage was not known very well. Being an Orthodox Christian was the majority of Greeks' main priority. Even in some cases, their view about Muslims could be better than what they think about Catholics. Some were even happier with the new tax system of Ottomans compared to the Byzantine era. Most of all, the new Ottoman administration respected the Orthodox church and a long term of somehow contented period started for Greeks living in the Balkan peninsula and Anatolia. Throughout 'Turcocrata', many Greeks found positions within the state, some even reached high-ranking seats. Most *dragomans* (official interpreters) in the Ottoman palace were chosen among *Phanar* Greeks. Moreover, some Greek statesmen were appointed as *voivoda* (governors) in Transylvania and Moldavia regions (Volkan & Itzkowitz, 2002). Again, many Ottoman citizen Greeks worked in different European capitals at Ottoman Embassies. For instance, Jak Agriopulo Efendi was an Ottoman Greek and became the Ambassador of the Ottoman Empire in Berlin in 1804. Ottoman Greeks were also economically powerful. The trade network in the Eastern Mediterranean was mainly run by Ottoman Christians. Their financial power was going to be assisting the Greek revolt in the upcoming years (Sonyel, 2011).

Things were going to change while approaching to the 19th century. Ottomans were losing their power in the economy, military, and technological developments. More importantly, the impact of the French Revolution was going to change the identities all around the world, and strongly in the Balkans. The Ottoman's *millet* system was struggling to cope with the new social order. Montenegrins, Serbs, and Greeks were the first nations revolting against the Sultan to establish their own state. Among those, Greeks were going to be the first to be recognised by the Western powers (Volkan & Itzkowitz, 2002; Keridis, 2009).

Most Greeks inside the Empire were also motivated for the revolt. Christian merchants were contributing with their financial aids while the elite *Phanar* Greek bureaucrats having a big impact on the construction of the new Greek national identity (Keridis, 2009). The schools and libraries opened by the Greek business people were one of the pioneer developments in the formation of the new identity (Örenç, 2011). Ottoman Greeks who had education in Western European countries were also remarkably influential in the rise of Greek nationalism (Gürel, 2018).

Even though the Church had an impact on the start of the revolt, especially the call of Germanos, the Orthodox Metropolitan of Patras, the revolt had a nationalist and somewhat secular character in the long run (Örenç, 2011). In Sonyel's words, the Greek revolt in Peloponnese was mainly built on the ideas of ancient Greek heritage and secular rationalism. Rising of Greek nationalism that much somehow decreased the power of religion in some circles of the revolt. The impact of the

French Revolution was already important for young Greek intellectuals. The Patriarchate in Istanbul was not content with those changes in Greek society. Compared to the unknown future of the revolt, existing relations with the Sultan hold less risk for the Church (Sonyel, 2011). In addition to what was happening inside the empire, the support of European powers, namely Britain, France, and Russia were the main determinative of the revolt's success at the end. According to Gürel (2018), the establishment of Modern Greece was a side product of the Western powers' policies towards the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century.

In the beginning, the revolt in 1821 was an internal security problem for the Ottomans. In the second stage, the event became an international issue. The 19th century was important for the rise of philhellenism in Europe. Greek classics were translated again into different European languages. Studies referring to the connection between European identity and the ancient Greek heritage became more popular among European intellectuals. All these developments motivated the European help for the revolt in Peloponnese (Öreñç, 2011). The revolt expanded to different areas in the south of Modern Greece and then to some islands in the Aegean Sea. The issue was also getting popular in the European wide public agenda. A leaflet distributed in Hamburg in 1821 reads "Call for the youngsters in Germany: Humanity and duty are calling us to help our brothers noble Greeks... Muslims' power in Europe is ending. Europe's most beautiful country should be rescued from the monsters... God is with us..." (Öreñç, 2011: 111).

The revolt was also empowered by using journalism. Many new titles were distributed in the south of Modern Greece and Western European countries. *Logios Ermis* was a famous one published between 1811-1821 in Vienna by pro-revolt Greeks (Sonyel, 2011). Besides, renowned English Poet Lord Byron sponsored some of the titles working for the Revolution (Bayramođlu, 2006).

In Öreñç's words "Greek rebels' only goal was to gain independence and fighting until the time there is no Turk left in Peloponnese" (Öreñç, 2011: 27). As the time the revolt became more serious, Sultan Mahmud II had to ask help from Muhammad Ali Pasha to send his Egyptian Naval Forces to Peloponnese. This was an immense help for the Ottoman Army to quell the revolt. The number of killed Ottoman soldiers and Greek rebels during the revolt is not clearly known. The same applies to the number of civilian casualties. There can be two reasons to explain the lack of data. Firstly, there was not any proper population census within the Empire yet. Secondly, as Ottoman historian Lütfî Efendi claims, the Sultan was trying to hide the number of Muslim casualties to prevent a harsh reaction towards the Ottoman Greeks living in the other regions of the Empire (Öreñç, 2011).

The Battle of Navarino in 1827 changed the balance in the war. The Ottoman Naval Forces, including the Egyptian fleet, were completely burned and sunk by the Russian, French and British fleets. This made the Ottoman Empire an empire without any naval forces (Örenç, 2011). Accordingly, the Navarino disaster for the Ottomans paved the way to recognize the Greek State by signing the Treaty of Edirne in 1829 (Gürel, 2018). All in all, the revolt in 1821 succeeded to establish a new state in the south of the Balkan peninsula. The new Greek State was going to expand its borders towards the north and the Aegean islands, including Crete throughout the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

FINDINGS: 1821 IN TURKISH DIGITAL MEDIA

In this section, the analysed digital content will be presented under different categories. This will help to understand the representation of 1821 according to different aspects of the event. Starting with the quantitative data results, the table below shows the distribution of different themes in the Turkish digital content about the Greek revolt. Each analysed digital item includes at least one theme. Therefore, the total of themes is not equal to the total of analysed digital items.

Table 2. Distribution of Themes In The Turkish Digital Content About The Greek Revolt

THEME	FREQUENCY
Political Tool for Today	18
Massacre	13
Western Project	13
The Decay of Ottomans	4
Other	4

The quantitative findings above depict a limited but the general picture of how 1821 is portrayed in the Turkish language digital content. As the numbers suggest, the historical event is mainly discussed within the understanding of today's political issues. Besides, 1821 is seen as a massacre and a Western-made project in the Turkish view. In order to see what is behind the numbers, the qualitative approach is used to better comprehend what the digital content tells us. The sub-sections below explain what is between the lines when Turkish digital content about 1821 is analysed.

1821 as a Political Tool for Today

This sub-section is interested in the contemporary reflections of 1821 in the Turkish language digital media content. Politicians create their political discourse

by talking about their aims and their vision for the future. However, their political discourse is usually created by how they decide about their stance concerning the events or discussions that happened in the past. Therefore, they often refer to the past, no matter it is recent or old history. When the political issue is related to the past, the framework of discussions is not only chronologies. History becomes a tool for politicians and the historical events transform into political stories. The Turkish version of Euronews published a news report referring to former President of Greece Prokopis Pavlopoulos' visit in Tripolitza. The President says "We are sending messages from Tripolitza to our neighbour Turkey. We the Greeks want to give up division and revenge. We want to live in peace and friendship" (URL-3). After 6 months, this time Pavlopoulos appeared on BBC's Turkish version. He was talking about the celebrations of 1821 in Greece. The then President said, "Molon Lave" to Turkey. The news item explains that the expression was used towards the Persian army by the Spartans in Ancient Greece. It means "come here if you have courage" (URL-4). This shows that political discourses in Turkish-Greek relations are not only fed by the Ottoman past or the events in the 20th century. The discourses can be created by using even the ancient figures and stories.

The comments section of a YouTube video about 1821 highlights how Greece is seen in contemporary Turkey. The video presents so many historical visual materials about the revolt such as *evzones*, other rebels, tsars, and sultans. The video ends with some cynical messages about the *evzones* and their famous *fustanella*. There are 83 comments under the video and one calls Greeks as "the spoilt child of Europe", which is a famous nickname for Greeks in Turkish media and political discourse for a long time (URL-5).



Visual 1. Representation of *Evzones* and *Fustanella*
In A Youtube Video In Turkish Language
Source: URL-5

When the digital content about 1821 is analysed within the context of its reverberations in today's politics, coming across with the popular political issues between Greece and Turkey is inevitable. In a local news portal, published in Bursa, the revolt in 1821 was represented as a campaign against peace between Turkey and Greece (URL-6). The portal argues that Greece used the 200th anniversary of 1821 to create perception management about Turkey. The text argues that the Greek Constitution still calls Istanbul as "Konstantinopolis" and accepts it as the spiritual centre of the country (URL-6). Another example in a news portal called Armenian News Agency's Turkish language version is more striking. In the report, Panos Kammenos, former Foreign Minister of Greece associates the Kurdish struggle for independence with the Greek revolt in 1821. He uses the pronoun "we" and refers to his togetherness with Kurds living in Turkey. He says: "We and Kurds are brothers. My biggest dream is to see the independence of Kurdistan one day". His analogy does not refer to any historical reality and serves as a typical example of daily populism. This means that 1821 can be easily employed to stir up today's relations between Greece and Turkey. The report's tone and the comments made by Kammenos would aggravate the situation in the Aegean Sea (URL-7). The same topic was found in another news item in the sample. Former Defence Minister of Greece asking independence for Kurds and he thinks that this will be the '1821' of Kurds (URL-8).

Apart from the Kurdish issue, discussions related to Cyprus are also inevitably common. One opinion article, published by a Turkish Cypriot news portal can be seen as a typical example of the reflection of 1821 in today's political discussions. The author criticises a Greek Cypriot politician who claimed that the establishment of EOKA is a brother of the foundation of the Greek revolt in 1821. "Brother" and "mother" metaphors are strong in the text. The author criticised the representation of EOKA as the brother of 1821, and Greece is seen as the mother of Cyprus (URL-9). Besides, another report connects 1821 with the Cyprus issue. During the ceremonies organised by Greek Cypriots in Nicosia, some Greek Cypriot officials condemned Turkey and said that Greek Cypriots are inspired by the ideals of 1821 (URL-10). Again, another example refers to the issues between Turks and Greeks on Cyprus island. The author claims that Turkish Cypriots started to have problems because of the revolt that happened in Peloponnese in 1821 (URL-11). This means that the Greek revolt in 1821 is seen as the start of problems in the Cypriot society.

Not disconnected from the Cyprus issue, the discussions on the Eastern Mediterranean basin is more popular in political agenda in recent years. 1821 is mentioned in an opinion article about the discussions on Turkish and Greek territorial waters. The author refers to the Turkish massacre in Tripolitsa in 1821

and establishes a historical framework for his article about contemporary issues in the Eastern Mediterranean (URL-12). Besides, enlisted in the Google search sample, one Twitter account summarises events that happened in the revolt of 1821 and finalises his narrative by referring to today's popular term "*Mavi Vatan*" (The Blue Homeland) doctrine (URL-13), which is becoming a very popular naming while explaining Turkey's policies on the Eastern Mediterranean basin.

Today's political discussions and reflections of 1821 are sometimes transmitted by referring to the other country's media coverage. *Akit*, a Turkish conservative tabloid paper, criticises a report published in the Greek press by *Ta Nea*. *Akit* complains that the Greek press praised Nikitas Stamatelopoulos aka '*Turkofagos*', who was one of the Greek national heroes of 1821. *Akit* claims that the same nickname was used in the terror attack in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2019. According to how *Akit* framed the report, it was implied that the Greek press prefers this kind of representation on purpose. In the following paragraphs of the same report, *Akit* refers to *Ta Nea*'s interest in the development of the drone industry in contemporary Turkish defence technologies (URL-14). The same news topic was also published by another pro-government tabloid papers *Takvim* and *Güneş*. The papers explain that *Turkofagos* means "Turkish eater" (URL-15; URL-16).

In some cases, 1821 is associated with some political discussions focusing on religion. In a news report, a former Turkish Minister claims that the Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul is aiming to have an Ecumenic status. He empowers his ideas by referring to the events in 1821 and claims that the Patriarchate was a house of sinister during the Greek revolt (URL-17). Another example is about the absence of a single active mosque in today's Athens. The report is about the first mosque construction in the Greek capital and the text argues that a new mosque construction is happening the first time since the Greek revolt in 1821 (URL-18).

The sample referring to today's political discussions usually targeting Greece and Greek politicians. Only in one example, the content was criticising the Turkish authorities. The item is about a poster referring to a meeting in Ankara with the title of "Pontus Genocide". The author criticises the Turkish Government and asking how come this can be allowed. Then, the author argues that nobody can talk about the Turkish Genocide of Peloponnese in Greece (URL-19).

1821 as a Massacre

As discussed in the literature review, the Greek revolt for independence caused many brutal fights not only for rebels and soldiers but also civilians with Turkish, Greek, Albanian, and Jewish background. This sub-section will present how the

digital content referred to the casualties and violence in the war. When the overall content is considered, the word ‘massacre’ usually refers to the violence performed by the Greek rebels against the Muslims in Peloponnese. If the violence is the predominant issue in a text, it is often associated with the violence in the city of Tripolitsa in 1821. Compared to the temper in other cities, Tripolitsa is explained with adjectives and descriptions the most. EkşiŞeyler is a popular blog/platform where mainly youngsters discuss almost anything that is possible to discuss and explain. In the blog, the author quotes William Alison Phillips, a British historian, while explaining the massacres in Tripolitsa. Phillips claims “People were tortured before killed... Roadsides were full of dead bodies... Muslim women and children were chopped like buffalos...” (URL-20). The Tripolitsa massacre is not only highlighted by the Turkish digital media companies. Euronews’ Turkish version also uses the term ‘massacre’. The news portal claims that Tripolitsa was taken by Greeks in 1821 and many Muslims and Jews were slaughtered. The word “to slaughter” is pivotal in the text (URL-3). In addition to the word ‘slaughter’, ‘disappearance’ is another important word to define the situation of Turks living in Peloponnese. In his opinion article, Erhan Afyoncu, a Turkish history Professor cites William St Clair. The article claims that thousands of Turks ‘disappeared’ without any record or mourning in the spring of 1821. Words such as ‘war crimes’, ‘bloodshed’ and ‘pogrom’ were also used to explain 1821 in the Turkish digital media content (URL-21).

Some nationwide Turkish news organisations go further and call Tripolitsa a “genocide”. An opinion article, written by a Turkish journalist, Ardan Zentürk, discusses 1821 in this kind of context. His article is mainly focusing on the massacre in Tripolitsa. He names this event as the start of the Turkish genocide in the following 101 years. He cites a British historian, William St. Clair while using the word ‘genocide’. The article also criticises the Greek claimed ‘genocide’ in Pontus, *i.e.* the eastern Black Sea region of Turkey. Zentürk’s discussion shows how much 1821 is suitable to be used together with different events throughout the history of Turkish-Greek relations in the context of violence (URL-22).

The focus on Tripolitsa originates obviously from the event’s own importance. However, it is visible in the digital content that Ali Fuat Örenç’s book (2011) about the Turks of Peloponnese had a remarkable impact on the authors of blogs, news reports, etc (URL-23). Many digital content creators cited him while writing about the revolt. The book is mainly based on the forgotten Turks of Peloponnese and how they were slaughtered throughout the revolt, especially in Tripolitsa. His work was also cited several times in this article’s literature review.

In one blog, the author criticises why the Turks of Tripolitsa are forgotten. The

author argues that this massacre is not commemorated and the rebels are not condemned because they are inheritors of the Hellenistic culture (URL-24). The same blog claims “Greeks showed the brutality inside them in Tripolitsa”. Besides, the author argues that the Greeks’ brutality was not only against Turks. Many Albanians and Jews of Peloponnese were also targeted during the revolt. At the end of the piece, the Turkish author connects the massacre in Tripolitsa somehow with the Armenians, and claims “‘we’ were massacred by the Greeks and Armenians” (URL-24).

On the aforementioned blog EkşiŞeyler, there is one article with the title “the long summary of how Greece separated from the Ottoman Empire”. ‘War crimes’ is an important word in the piece. The author claims that war crimes were performed against Muslims and Jews in Peloponnese by the rebels. The text does not only tell us the bad deeds of the rebellions. Ali Pasha of Ioannina’s (*Tepedenli*) trap against Greek women and children was also explained as an example of bloodshed. The text underlines how Ottoman Albanians, supported by the Sultan, caused the event of the Dance of Zalongo. Salient words in the text are ‘severe events’, ‘death of children’ and ‘rape’. The author also uses the word ‘pogrom’ and refers to the massacres against the Greek community in Istanbul in 1821 as a reaction to the uprising in Peloponnese (URL-20).

When the focus is Tripolitsa, casualty numbers become more salient. Onedio.com, a popular website for especially youngsters, claims “Greeks killed more than 10.000 Turks in Tripolitsa in 1821” (URL-25). Erhan Afyoncu refers to Örenç’s (2011) book while explaining the violence against the Turkish/Muslim population in Peloponnese. He argues that Turks were not only killed by the Greek rebels, they were also attacked by their own Greek neighbours. Citing William St Clair, his article claims that more than 20.000 Turks were killed by their neighbours in the first weeks of the revolt (URL-21). Some pieces are remarkably short and superficial and they should normally not have the capacity to make any realistic claims about the number of casualties. In one of those texts, 1821 is represented with the label “Turkish massacre”. So many adjectives were used to intensify the events that happened during the revolt. It is bloodshed but only for Turks. According to some authors, the event is being hidden in history and nobody is talking about the massacre. One item claims that Greek commander Theodoros Kolokotronis confessed in his journal that 32.000 Turks were killed during the revolt (URL-26). A Turkish made YouTube video about 1821 claims that 40.000 Turks and Jews were killed in a year in Peloponnese (URL-5). Another digital content claims that the Greek revolt was an important motivator of other uprisings in the Balkans and 50.000 Turks killed or escaped from Peloponnese (URL-27). Predicting or claiming the number of casualties does not have narrow limits.

One Turkish NGO spokesman drastically increases the numbers and claims that 200.000 Turks were killed in Peloponnese during the revolt (URL-28).

1821 as a Western Project

As explained in the literature review, Western powers, namely Great Britain, France, and Russia had a great impact on the Greek revolt. Turkish digital content also underlines this cooperation in so many examples. There is a YouTube video in Turkish with the title “1821 Revolt: The Byzantine dream of Russia”. The video starts by telling the mystery of Alexander Ypsilantis, an important figure of the revolt. Then explains how Russians supported the Greeks and battered the Ottomans in different fronts (URL-5). The Russian impact shows itself even in the content originating from Western Thrace of Greece, published by *Birlik Gazetesi*, a Turkish/Greek news portal. The article explains that the Greek revolt was prepared by Russian Orlov Brothers in Peloponnese 41 years before 1821 (URL-29). Also, an online history education platform for students in Turkish claims “1821 is a Russian provocation” (URL-30, also see URL-31).

Erhan Afyoncu, a Turkish history professor, argues that European leaders were not motivated much about supporting the Greek revolt at the beginning of the uprising. For them, the Greek example might empower the results of the French Revolution and this could be dangerous for all European empires. Besides, for the Western powers, the Russian interest in the new Greek state would be a great danger in the Mediterranean Sea. However, the intellectuals and the public opinion were in favour of supporting a Greek State, detached from the Ottoman Empire. As Afyoncu is an academic, the points he mentioned in his opinion article are in accordance with the general findings in the Turkish academic literature. He also underlines how Prussia and Austria were against the Greek revolt. He defines the Greek revolt as a new term in the Eastern Question (URL-21).

Some content connects the help of Western powers while explaining the steps of Greek irredentism. According to one semi-academic text, the first step of the Greek irredentism was 1821. The whole expansion of Modern Greece is explained with the support of Western intellectuals for Greek independence. The text claims that “the West” is the main motivator of the revolt and the events onwards (URL-32). Besides, one opinion article underlines the increase of using the word ‘Greek’ with the help of Western powers. The article claims that the word ‘Greek’ in Western languages became popular after 1821. This was performed by Western historians and intellectuals on purpose in order to disconnect the Greeks from the Ottoman heritage (URL-33). In this context, the sample also includes the names of some Western intellectuals. One example is about the British traveller, poet, and pro-Greek revolt, Lord Byron. The author of the text claims that Lord Byron was

actually having positive thoughts about the Ottomans in the earlier period as seen in his writings after travelling in the Balkans and Anatolia. However, he became a staunch supporter of the Greek revolt in the following period. One example in the digital content suggests that Byron's Turkish Tales and his narrative poem Childe Harold's Pilgrimage represent Turks as "cruel" while Greeks are shown as "oppressed" (URL-21). Besides, in a striking example, referring to Lord Byron's words, the biggest obstacle in front of the Greek independence was "the infidels who pollute the holiness of the Hagia Sophia by their turbans" (URL-34).

In some cases, the Greeks' internal political divisions are used to better explain the case of Western help. One article, published in a newspaper's website, tells that celebrations of the 199th anniversary of 1821 caused arguments between the Greek left and the right. The analysis looks too short and superficial but it claims that the Greek left does not see 1821 as a day of independence. Instead, 1821 was a fiction organised by Western powers to create safe trade routes in the Mediterranean Sea. Also, the paper claims that 1821 was more profitable for the Greek Church compared to what the people of Greece gained. The paper argues that 1821 was a victory of the Church, not the people (URL-35). If the Turkish content is written with the tone of leftist political values, then the Western help is criticised with the naming of "European imperialist powers". One opinion article is based on the help of European powers to Modern Greece during its foundation and then its continuous border expansions. The author argues "I summarised you Greeks' historical relations with us and you saw how many times I referred to Russia, England, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy" (URL-36).

In an interview published by *Gerçek Hayat* magazine, renowned Professor Dimitri Kitsikis claims that the Greek revolt of 1821 was a Western product like Turkey's 1923. He argues that the idea of 'nation state' poisoned both countries and divided the historical unitedness of Turks and Greeks. Professor Kitsikis is known for his marginal ideas. What he argues in this interview also feeds his grand theory that Turks and Greeks should establish a new state together. The idea sounds highly fictive but it is a rare example among many opposite thoughts about contemporary Turkish-Greek relations (URL-37).

One more example underlines the impact of the 'Western support' during the revolt. However, this kind of labelling sometimes implies different meaning. In this example, the tone of using the words 'support' and 'help' several times has to do with defending the historical image of the Ottomans. The digital content referring to the Western support is in some cases actually mitigating the Ottoman failure before and after 1821 in Peloponnese (URL-38).

1821 as the Decay of Ottomans

The majority of content about 1821 in the sample focuses on the Greeks' violence and the West's help for Greeks. The sample rarely mentions the mistakes of the Ottomans. In very few examples, it is possible to see the opposite of this general stance. One example is interesting because this time the author does not only blame the Greek rebels. The author claims that the Ottoman State did nothing to stop the Turkish massacre in Peloponnese (URL-39). Besides, an online learning platform called "lecture is history" explains the reasons and results of the Greek revolt and refers to the Ottoman failure. In this context, some of the points underlined by the platform are:

- The revolt is a sign of Ottoman decline.
- Greeks were complaining about corruptions and they were not happy with the tax system of the Ottoman Empire.
- Throughout the decades before the revolt, the Greeks became economically and culturally rich.
- Development of maritime culture among the Greeks increased their communication with the Western powers (URL-40)

All these findings under different categories suggest that the Greek revolt in 1821 is by all means not seen as a war of independence or Greeks' fight for their own nation by the digital content in Turkish. The revolt can even be considered as the rise of corruption and deterioration in the Ottoman military power, administration, and economy in some texts in the sample. However, there is no single example of accepting or welcoming the new Greek State that emerged in Peloponnese.

CONCLUSION

Contents related to the Greek revolt in 1821 are not part of breaking news or a headline at the top of the news agenda. So, digital content creators usually allocated long texts with various visual materials to narrate the stories about 1821. However, in most cases, the resource of the information is unknown. Digital content authors rarely referred to academic or valid research when they explain their knowledge about 1821. If any academic research is used, they were often used to prove the number of Turkish casualties in Peloponnese as shown in the findings section.

The article analysed how the Greek revolt of 1821 was portrayed in the Turkish language digital contents. The digital material included in the sample was analysed by using quantitative and qualitative content analysis. The article was mainly interested in answering two research questions. The findings section presented the data found in the sample and referred to the points related to the research questions. The section below will make a summary of those findings and answer the research question together with a short discussion under each title.

As the first research question of the study, “How does the Turkish digital content represent 1821?” was answered by themes found in the analysed material. When the overall content is scrutinised, it is seen that digital content in the Turkish language mainly represented the Greek revolt of 1821 by using three themes. The most popular one is using the topic of 1821 as a “Political Tool for Today”. This theme covers the event by referring to today’s political discussions between Turkey and Greece. The theme’s discursive pattern is usually fed by politicians’ comments and calls to the other side. The other theme is “Massacre” and it refers to how thousands of Turks of Peloponnese were killed during the revolt. The theme is mainly shaped by referring to historical research that was mostly conducted by Turkish historians. The theme is empowered by using several adjectives, guessing the number of casualties, and some detailed descriptions of violence in the region.

“Western Project” theme is as popular as the “Massacre” in the digital content. The theme is led by opinion articles and some blog content. It is based on the idea that the Greek revolt and Modern Greece itself are a product of Britain, France, and Russia. This idea was also a fruitful argument for some historians who would like to overlook or mitigate the Ottomans’ mistakes in the process before and after 1821. The overall representation showed that there are several links and similarities between Turkish academic literature and the digital content found in Google Search. Popular blogs, YouTube videos, and some news content often benefit Turkish history books about 1821.

In order to answer the second research question of the study, adjectives, pronouns and labels used in the digital content were also analysed. The sample presented interesting and illustrative words about the Greek revolt in 1821. There are striking examples portraying how much 1821 is influential on the Turkish understanding of Greece and Greeks. Besides, the content shows the chosen words’ power to on today’s Turkish-Greek relations. For instance, calling Greece as “the spoilt child of Europe” is an important labelling to see the political and media-wise understanding of the content.

The findings referring to Tripolitza during the Greek revolt is the strongest link of the adjectives, pronouns, and labels found in the sample. Words such as ‘to slaughter’, ‘brutality’, ‘bloodshed’, ‘war crimes’, ‘pogrom’ and ‘genocide’ were the leading ones to explain that Turks of Peloponnese ‘disappeared’ after the Greek revolt of 1821. The case of showing the ‘Greek brutality’ was supported by increasing casualty numbers up to 200.000 killed Turks during the revolt. Turkish digital content used some words with negative connotations for Turks as well. However, the context was either quoting someone or criticising some

negative opinions against Turkish people. For instance, Lord Byron was criticised as he called Turks ‘cruel’ and ‘infidels’. Besides, the pronoun ‘we’ was often used to segregate Turks and Greeks in the analysed research material.

All in all, the Greek revolt of 1821 is still alive in Turkey. It is maybe forgotten in terms of its details, even its time in the calendar but it exists in the contemporary political and historical discussions. The overall digital content suggests that Modern Greece somehow pulled apart from the Ottomans and it is a remarkably functional topic to enjoy the most in populist political discussions. The content claims that Greeks’ fight for independence was not a truly Greek made business. It was performed by some Western powers who do not like Turks. Besides, Turkish digital content strongly believes that what happened to Turks in Peloponnese is a huge massacre. After 200 years of 1821, it can be argued the Turkish digital contents usually use 1821 to make the case in whatever is claimed. 1821 is not used to sustain the discourse of eternal peace in the region.

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