To the Editor
The Illustrated London News

May 13th 1966

Dear Sir,

In an age when the rapidity of communications and the progress in the science of history has allowed nations to know each other better, I was surprised in reading in your issue of April 30th, 1966 such a violently prejudiced article as that by Sir Arthur Bryant, entitled "Our Notebook".

If the Turks were guilty of "genocide" they would not have harbored in the Ottoman Empire subjects of so many races and religions, to whom they allowed full tolerance and protection, in observance of Islamic law. Mehmed II (not I), when he conquered Constantinople, had found the city in the state of decay and misery from which it not recovered after the Fourth Crusade, when the scenes of carnage and pillage lasted for several days, thousands of Greeks were massacred, and within a few days the works of art that had been accumulated for nine centuries were destroyed for ever, sanctuaries were pillaged, (prostitutes danced in the shrine of St. Sophia), graves were rifled, and a whole district of the town was burned down. Then began the great dispersal of Byzantine artists and craftsmen throughout western Europe. Mehmed II restored the city. He installed the Greek Patriarch in all the pomp and authority he had enjoyed under the Byzantine Emperors, even giving him juridical power in civil affairs, so as almost to form a state within a state. The same privileges were subsequently granted to Armenian and Jewish congregations. When the Jews fled the horrors of the Inquisition they found protection in the empire ruled by Suleyman I (whom we call the Lawgiver and you call the Magnificent).

The term "genocide" can be applied to the conquerors and settlers in the Americas where the natives are wähligh exterminated.

The following quotations from the Quran prove that it is erroneous to speak of "the fanatic intolerance of the Muslim creed‖.

"Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christian, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah, and the last day, and does good, they shall have their reward from the Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve." (II, 62; repeated, V, 69).

"...cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which God's name is remembered..." (XXII, 40).

"There is no compulsion in religion" (II, 256)
On trouve un exemple frappant de la tolérance islamique en étudiant l'histoire de Jérusalem à travers les siècles.

Le khalife Omar prit possession de la ville après une entrevue courtoise avec le commandant de l'armée qui défendait Jérusalem et garantit aux citoyens tous leurs droits.

En 1099 quand les armées de la Première Croisade pénètrent dans Jérusalem dix mille "Sarrasins" furent massacrés dans le temple, les croisés chevauchant dans le sang et leurs montures en avaient jusqu'aux genoux. On n'épargna ni les femmes ni les petits enfants. Après s'être rassasiés de carnage on procéda au pillage. Les Juifs furent entassés dans les synagogues et brûlés vifs.

En 1187 quand Saladin délivra Jérusalem il fit preuve du plus haut degré de générosité et de mansuétude.

Sous l'empire ottoman les soldats turcs emêchaient les prêtres des différentes sectes chrétiennes de s'entr'égorg er pendant la célébration des fêtes religieuses.
3 می 1966

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Dear Madam,

I have just read your essay entitled, "Turkish Women in Turkish Literature in the 19th Century".

You say, p. 48, "As the law existed at that time, in accordance with religion, only men possessed full right to divorce their marriage partners..."

May I remind you of the following clause in verse 228, Ch.II, in the Quran:

ود يُلُمُّ الله ان لا فننا ما أَعْمَلُونا ۚ إِنَّا لَا نَزَّلْنَا نُورًا إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ أَلْفَ ابْتِغَاهُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَى

The most accurate interpretation I saw in English is by Maulvi Muhammad Ali, M.A., L.L.B., "The Holy Quran, containing the Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary", Second Edition, 1920, "And it is not lawful for you to take apart of what you have given them, unless both fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allah. Then if you fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allah there is no blame on them for what they give up to become free thereby" (II, 229).

Under the Ottoman Empire this law was generally overlooked by lawyers, but when the Constitution was reestablished in 1908 it was brought to light. Lawyers were forced to observe it, and a special clause could accordingly be added to the marriage contract.

I should also like to draw your attention to the fact that the Qoranic law assures women full and absolute control of their property, a right of which Western women were deprived until recent times, and which it took feminists a long and strenuous struggle to obtain.

Yours truly,

Samira Morali

(Mrs.) Senina Morali
(16 Temmuz'da 228. yıldönümü) 2002'de 23 yaşındayım. Bu yıl, 23 yaşındayım. 

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