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## **Two Worlds – Two Cultures. Poles and Turks in Exile**

### Introduction – a short history of mutual relations

There are numerous scientific works on Polish–Turkish relations, which describe the issues of economic cooperation, political relations and very rich mutual history which starting from the Middle Ages had a lot of interesting topics related in majority to the Turkish conquests in Europe. According to Professor Tadeusz Majda: “Turkic speaking peoples began reaching our region in the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century. A significant part of the Eastern Europe, Black Sea steppes and Crimea were inhabited by the Turkic peoples such as the Pechenegs, the Khazars, the Polovtsy (the Cumans). These peoples are known to us only from historical sources, in later centuries they were exterminated or mingled with other Turkish tribes that entered the land” (Gliński 2015).

The origins of diplomatic relations with Turkey date back to the year 1414, when the Ottoman Empire conquered the Balkan Peninsula Poland sent the first representatives: Skarbek of Góra and Peter Armenian to Turkey. However, the establishment of diplomatic relations failed to protect Poland from successive Turkish invasions. In the period from the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century Turkish invasions plagued Poland almost continuously, which generated the necessity to maintain a strong army and sign pacts and alliances with other European countries (Derwich 2004a, pp. 35-38, 83-88). The greatest international implication had the Battle of Vienna of 6<sup>th</sup> September 1683 which was won by the forces of the Holy League led by the Polish king Jan III Sobieski (Derwich 2004b, p. 113). This battle was of great importance for Poland as, firstly, it slowed down the Turkish expansion in Europe and, secondly, it completely changed the relationships between Poland and Turkey.

Since this event the relations between the two countries were given more peaceful dimension and Turkey took a favourable attitude towards Poland on political issues and

became its important trading partner. The positive nature of Polish-Turkish relations was clearly revealed during the partitions of Poland (more: Cegielski, Kaździela 1990), when Turkey proved to be one of the few countries standing in opposition to the aggression of Russia, Austria and Prussia against Poland. In this tragic period in the Polish history Turkey not only did not recognise partitions and aggression, but supported insurgent governments admitting to its territory Polish representatives at the time of the November Uprising (1830-1831) and January Uprising (1863-1864). Among other forms of support from Turkey for enslaved Poland a few topics are worth noting:

- support for the activity of the political camp called the Lambert Hotel<sup>1</sup> (Hahn 1992, pp. 3-25);
- the establishment of the Sultan's Cossacks Division during the Crimean War in 1855;
- the formation of the Polish Legion during another war between Russia and Turkey in 1877 (Derwich 2004c, p. 15-16).

The history of Polish–Turkish relations is also related to General Józef Bem who as Murat Pasha (Yusuf Paşa) was a Turkish general and served in the Turkish army. Not only did General Bem find refuge in Turkey at the time of partitions, but the country turned out to be “the second home” for many Polish figures, including Adam Mickiewicz, Michał Czajkowski and the Dictator of the January Uprising – Marian Langiewicz who was buried at the British military cemetery of Haydarpaşa in Istanbul. The historic village of Polonezkoy (Adampol) is also noteworthy as it was founded by and for the Poles in 1842 based on the decision and by means of Adam Czartoryski's funds. Polish refugees after the November Uprising of 1831 were the first to settle there. Participants of the Spring of Nations of 1848 and the Crimean War of 1853 joined them later (*Polska wieś w Turcji* 2010).

After Poland regained independence in 1918 the mutual relations between the two countries continued to develop positively as evidenced by the 27 bilateral agreements, two of which were concluded in the interwar period. The first of them is the Treaty of Friendship between Poland and Turkey signed on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1923 (*Traktat Przyjaźni między Polską a Turcją* 1923), which included declarations of cooperation, friendship and peaceful intentions. This agreement constituted the legal basis for mutual relations until 1993, when the new treaty called *the Pact of Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Turkey* was signed in Warsaw on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1993

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<sup>1</sup> The **Hotel Lambert** – the monarchist conservative-liberal camp founded in 1831, which operated in exile after the November Uprising and focused mainly rich circles of the Great Emigration society.

(Układ o przyjaźni i współpracy między Rzeczpospolitą Polską a Republiką Turecką 1995).

This agreement is just a small part of the whole spectrum of forms of cooperation between Poland and Turkey, which constitutes a separate area of enquiry. However, it is worth noting that the year 2014 saw the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Polish-Turkish relations, which was crowned by the Declaration on the ceremonies commemorating the 600th anniversary of the establishment of Polish-Turkish diplomatic relations, signed in Warsaw by the Heads of Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the two countries: Radosław Sikorski and Ahmet Davutoglu (*Podpisano deklarację ws. 600-lecia stosunków polsko-tureckich* 2013).

### Study on Polish Refugee during the exile: short history of Adampol

While examining migrations towards Anatolia, Adampol (Polonezköy) that turned out to be a settlement after the migration of Polish people to Ottoman territories in the age of 19<sup>th</sup>. Afterward Poland was annexed by Russia in 1830, 10.000 people who are intelligentsias emigrated from Poland in the beginning of 1831, a part of those people settled into Ottoman territories (Ministry of Interior 2015). The group of Lambert from those who migrated, which was trying to improve armed struggle against Russia, opened Eastern Agency. The foundation of Adampol that was historied village of Polish people in Turkey was made by this agency (Eren 2011).

Between 1772-1795, Polish lands was shared by Russia, Austria and Prussia. Poland lost its independency in the following years. Within this period, a revolt commenced especially against Russia in 1830. However, a great emigration started after failed revolt (Erdoğmez, Erol 2009, p. 37). A part of Poles who had to leave their country took shelter in Ottoman Empire and Ottomans took them under protection. Poles taken under protection was assigned a field in Istanbul in 1842. In this field, a village was founded by Prince Adam Czartoryski. The village is called 'Polonezkoy' in Turkish and located in Beykoz county. When it comes to the repatriation of Poles, Sultan Abdulmecit declared that the repatriation was impossible (Toros 1983, p. 20). The failure of the new revolts broke out in Poland (Duman 2013, p. 92), made the emigration accelerated. Thus the population of the village increased. At the first place, 12 refugees came in 1842 and the emigration phases are in table 1.

**Tab. 1.** Socio-Economic Phases in Adampol

Period	Phase	Income Sources	Population	Social Conditions
1842-the end of 1800s	Agricultural Society.	Agricultural production. Animal Husbandry. Hunting. Aids from Poland.	12 (1842)	The limited relations with external environment.
			100 (1851)	The continuation of traditions and religious life.
			121 (1856)	
			More than 200 (1863)	
			More than 150 (1900)	
The beginning of 1900s-1960s	Transition Society.	Animal Husbandry. Agricultural production. Trade. Landlords.	154 (1935)	The continuation of traditions and religious life, the relations with external environment.
			141 (1940)	
1960s-Pre-sent	Modern Society.	Tourism and Recreation.	194 (1965)	Tight relations with external environment.
			196 (1970)	The continuation of traditions and religious life, Turks' coming to village with the purpose of working and settlement. The emigration of young population.
			279 (1980)	
			359 (1985)	
			546 (1990)	
			739 (1997)	
776 (2000)				

**Source:** Erdonmez C., Erol S.Y. 2009, p. 37.

The population increased with the migration of Turks and it climbed over 800 in 2000s. After Poland gained its independency back in 1918, Poles living in Adampol went back to Poland. Poles continuing to stay in Turkey were provided enfranchisement in 1938. In 1894, Ottoman Empire conferred citizenship to immigrants who were living in that area (*Istanbul Polonezkeyi Tatil Kultur ve Gezi Rehberi*). The dwellers in Adampol were given title deeds of tamed soils by Poles.

From Ottoman period to present, there was no pressure about religion or language rights. The strongest indicators of that might be counted as having church in the village and gathering of Poles in the churches in the important days. In Adampol where more than 80 poles are currently living, village headmen have been always a Pole. This had positive impact on affairs among those two countries and nowadays has been going on. So and so, Poland is the country that put support behind Turkey when it comes to EU membership of Turkey.

The positive impact on affairs might be seen by looking into educational area. In every year, Turkish students go to Poland and Polish students come to Turkey on the basis of various student exchange programs. The one of the most common programs is Erasmus and datas belong to different years are in table 2.

**Tab. 2.** Incoming and Outgoing Student Numbers within Erasmus

Years	Outgoing	Incoming
2004	72	21
2005	224	103
2006	434	191
2007	731	316
2008	895	409
2010-2011	1511	566
2012-2013	2705	623

**Source:** *Incoming and Outgoing Student Numbers within Erasmus*; Ministry of EU; European Commission.

When it is taken glance at Tab. 2, a remarkable increase in the number of Turkish students that is going to Poland within Erasmus, as the same as Polish students coming to Turkey. 21 Polish students came to Turkey as Erasmus in 2004. This number has increased roughly 30 times during the period of 2012-2013. In addition to that, when examining the exchange activities within Erasmus programme, Poland is in the first two rank as a preference of Turkish students. It is possible to Express that Germany, now in the first place, will leave its place to Poland in the near future.

The other fact that proves the intimate relations between Poland and Turkey is an increase in the number of Polish tourists coming to Turkey in the recent years. In table 3 it is shown that Polish tourist numbers coming to Turkey by years.

When examining those numbers, the number of visitors decreased in the years of 2003, 2012, 2013. However, a remarkable increase can be observed in the general sense. While the number was 150.993 in 2001, it has gone up to 510.569 by the 220% of increase.

**Tab. 3.** Polish visitors entering into Turkey by years

Years	Tourist Number	Years	Tourist Number
2001	150.993	2008	397.971
2002	150.588	2009	419.475
2003	102.153	2010	428.275
2004	138.611	2011	486.319
2005	181.021	2012	428.440
2006	190.770	2013	423.129
2007	276.783	2014	510.569

**Source:** Turkish Statistical Institute.

### Narrative Interview Report with Frederik Novvicki from Village Headman of Adampol

**Ahmet Kostekci:** Firstly when and how many Poles came to Ottoman lands and what was the reason?

**Fredrik Novvicki:** It was inevitable that leading people of revolts left Poland because of the fact that countries willing to share our lands exist and the failure of revolts especially against Russia. A part of Polish citizens came to Ottoman lands. The essential settlement was in 1842. The first name of the village is Adampol. The village was founded in 19 March of 1942. 8000 Polish soldiers became an ally of Ottoman army and fought against Russia. After that 14 Polish soldiers settled in this village.

**Ahmet Köstekçi:** Have you ever felt a pressure regarding your religion and language in Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic?

**Fredrik Novvicki:** We have never seen it both in the time of Ottoman and Turkish Republic. The finest indicator is, the village headman has always been a Pole with the support of Turks as well.

**Ahmet Köstekçi:** How many Poles and families currently live and dwell in Adampol? Do you have any kind of problem now?

**Fredrik Novvicki:** 22 families dwell and 85 Poles live in Adampol now. We might have problems just like the other people in the earth. However those do not pertain to us. Every people might confront with those kind of problems.

**Ahmet Köstekçi:** Have Polish students that came to Turkey for Erasmus ever visited Adampol? Is it possible to give a number?

**Fredrik Novvicki:** Yes, we know them. Most of them visit our village. I can not give accurate number but it is possible to say that most of them visit.

**Ahmet Köstekçi:** How learn your children Polish language here and is there any institution for Polish language?

**Fredrik Novvicki:** We continue to learn Polish from our elders at home. There is no institution for Polish language learning and our children learn from us as well.

**Fredrik Novvicki:** Sincerely... When you go to Poland, give our best regards to all Poles. I am going to have more conversation with you and mention about Poles from Ot-toman era to present, the history of Adampol, by giving more details with historic aspect.

**Ahmet Köstekçi:** Thank you very much for your time. I am going to also arrange a schedule to come and listen all details about Adampol as soon as possible.

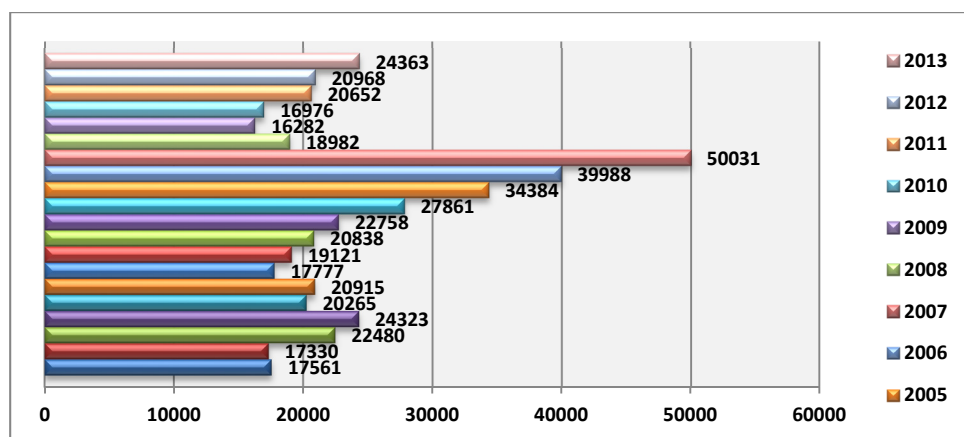
## The Turkish population in Poland

In the light of unofficial data, approximately 5 thousand of the Turks permanently reside in Poland, nevertheless this number is probably higher. The specific feature of this diaspora in Poland is the lack of larger centres of the Turks (outside Warsaw and its environs) and their absence among national and ethnic minorities that inhabit Poland. This is due to the fact that *the Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Language* of 2005 obligates diasporas living in Poland to fulfil certain conditions, including a minimum number of 1 thousand people, the time of at least one hundred years of ancestors' residence, and holding Polish citizenship (*Ustawa z 6 stycznia 2005 r. o mniejszościach narodowych i etnicznych oraz o języku regionalnym 2005*). In the case of the Turks, it is very difficult to meet the requirement of the length of residence within the Polish territory by the required number of representatives of this nationality and this is why it was not accepted as a national or ethnic minority.

Only a declaration of national identity distinguishes a national minority from an ethnic minority in Poland. As far as the first one is concerned, there is the necessity to identify with the Polish nation, while in the case of the second one there is no such requirement. Therefore, when speaking of the Turkish minority in Poland one should consider formal issues limiting granting such a status to the Turks. This does not mean that the Turks do not live in Poland or do not visit it. Quite contrary, in addition to these above mentioned five thousand Turks residing in Poland, the country is very eagerly visited by the nationality for educational, commercial, and tourism purposes. Data from the Border Guard Headquarters shows that 473 855 Turks arrived in Poland in the years 1994-2013. They were mainly representatives of business, tourists, students, scientists, diplomats, military people and migrants – applicants for Polish citizenship, short-term or temporary settlement as well as for refugee status.

During the period under consideration, one can observe two breakthroughs. The first one is connected with the accession of Poland to the European Union – on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004, when for the first time the number of Turkish nationals arriving in Poland drastically increased from 22.8 thousand in 2003 to 27.8 thousand in 2004, and in 2007 when Poland joined the Shengen area on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2007 the number of the Turks visiting Poland increased by over 10 thousand compared to the year 2006. After 2007 the scale of expansion on the part of the Turks fell below the level seen before its accession to the European Union. It happened due to restrictions for migrants and tightening of visa conditions. Detailed quantitative data is shown in Fig. 1.

**Fig. 1.** The number of Turkish citizens arriving in Poland in the years 1994-2013



**Source:** own study based on data from the Border Guard Headquarters.

Despite limitations, currently more than 2.7 thousand migrants from Turkey have valid residence cards, but mostly permanent ones, including 1/3 for the long-term period, two citizens have refugee status and eight people – subsidiary protection<sup>2</sup>. It should also be noted that in the years 2010-2012 the Polish Office for Foreigners considered a total

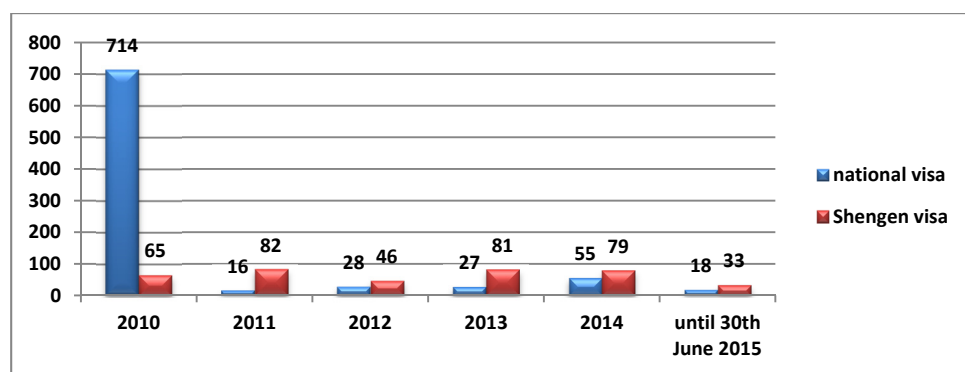
<sup>2</sup> Subsidiary protection is granted to a foreigner who does not meet the conditions for obtaining the refugee status, it is granted in the case when the return to the country of origin may expose him/her to a real risk of serious harm through a death sentence or execution, torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, serious and individual threat to life or health resulting from the widespread use of violence against civilians in a situation of an international or internal armed conflict – and because of this risk he/she cannot or does not want to benefit from the protection of the country of origin. Art. 15 of the Act of 13<sup>th</sup> June 2003 on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of Poland (Ustawa z 13 czerwca 2003 r. o cudzoziemcach, 2003).



of 236 requests for citizenship made by representatives of Turkish nationality and issued 951 visas, 193 of which were Shengen visas. From 2013 to mid 2015 there was observed an increase in the number of Shengen visas in relation to national ones issued to citizens of Turkey: in 2013, 108 visas, including 81 Shengen ones, in 2014, 134 visas, including 79 Shengen ones, in the first half of 2015, 51 visas, including 33 Shengen ones (Data from the Polish Office for Foreigners).

Figure 2 shows numerical data of visas issued to citizens of Turkey in 2010-2015.

**Fig. 2.** The number of visas issued to citizens of Turkey in 2010 – by the end of June 2015

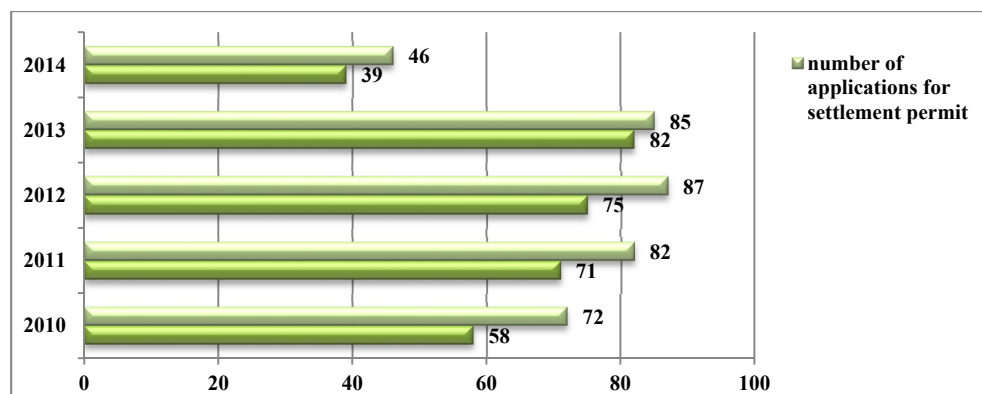


**Source:** own study based on data from the Office for Foreigners.

Currently in Poland there is “a political battle” for the visa waiver for Turkish citizens. While the government of Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz strongly supports this initiative, in many opposition and scientific circles the idea of visa waiver for the Turks is strongly criticised and negated. The journal “Nasz Dziennik” published the commentary of the sociologist Tomasz Korczyński, who sharply criticises the initiative of freeing visas for the Turks. He says, calling Turkey “a Trojan horse”, that “if the Polish government opens a Pandora’s box – tries to introduce a visa-free regime for the Turks – that Poland may face problems” (Korczyński 2014). This very extreme opinion cannot be extrapolated to the entire society, but it is worth noting that there are serious doubts and concerns regarding the opening of the Polish borders to Turkish nationality. This is related to the increasing expansion of the Islamic state in this country and the fear of an uncontrolled influx of migrants from the Middle East and Asia.

It should be emphasised that in the years 2010-2014 apart from visas, provincial governors issued 325 permits to Turkish citizens to settle in Poland, out of a total of 372 applications submitted. Figure 3 shows the quantitative data on issued positive decisions granting the right for the Turks to settle in the years 2010-2014.

**Fig. 3.** The number of positive decisions granting the right to settle in Poland issued to Turkish citizens in 2010-2014



**Source:** own study based on data from the Office for Foreigners.

It is worth paying attention to the latest data which shows that from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 Turkish citizens were issued:

- 318 invitations to arrive;
  - 868 decisions on temporary stay (out of 891 applications);
  - 51 visas, including only 18 national ones;
  - 1 refugee status permit (out of 7 applications submitted);
  - 48 positive decisions on permanent stay (out of 55 applications submitted)
- (Data from the Office for Foreigners 2015).

## Summary

History shows that since the seventeenth century Polish-Turkish relations have been correct, and even of friendly nature. Despite such huge cultural differences and geographical distance between the two countries, both in the past and at present the two nations have lived in harmony and their citizens treat one another in a relatively positive

way. Both the cultural traits and stereotypes are positive and have no bearing on the emergence of conflicts between cultures. Given the rather sparse population of the Turks in Poland and their willingness to establish contacts with the Poles, it can be concluded that the conflict of cultures between these nationalities is not likely, and minor antagonisms are natural and they occur wherever there are contacts between foreign and different nations.

What is the future for both countries and what will future Polish-Turkish relations be like? Probably peaceful coexistence cannot last much longer due to the fact that more and more fear is seen among the Poles, encouraged by the media discourse about the expansion of Islam and the strengthening of the Islamic State. Unfortunately, in Poland, it is still one of top issues, especially in the context of the political battle concerning the acceptance of migrants from developing countries.

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## **Two Worlds – Two Cultures. Poles and Turks in Exile**

### **Abstract**

The essence of the article is the analysis and description of social problems accompanying the existence of the Turks and Poles on exile. There is shown a short history of mutual relations, the size of the Turkish population in Poland, their national identity and elements of cultural assimilation in the foreign environment related to their social and economic lives. Particular emphasis is put on presenting the Turks and Poles in a foreign cultural environment.

**Keywords:** *the Turks, Poles, migrants, cultural assimilation, national identity*