

TURKISH İMAGE IN THE GREEK PERCEPTION

(Origins and Cultural Outlet for Friendship)

EDITORS

PROF.DR.MUSTAFA KAYMAKÇI

ASSOC.PROF.DR.CİHAN ÖZGÜN-ASSOC.PROF. DR.NİLÜFER ERDEM

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Editors: Prof. Dr. Mustafa KAYMAKÇI, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cihan ÖZGÜN, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nilüfer ERDEM

Director: Yusuf Ziya Aydođan (yza@egitimyayinevi.com)

Coordinator: Yusuf Yavuz (yusufyavuz@egitimyayinevi.com)

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Address: 1813/4 Street, No.2/6, H.2 Ethem Bey Apt.Bostanlı-Karşıyaka/İzmir/Turkey

Tel:(232)362 06 44

info@rodosistankoyturkleri.org.tr

www.rodosistankoyturkleri.org.tr

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sevkiyat@egitimyayinevi.com

Kitabevi Őubesi: Eđitim Kitabevi, Őükran mah. Rampalı 121, Meram, Konya, Türkiye

+90 332 499 90 00

bilgi@egitimkitabevi.com

İnternet Satış: www.kitapmatik.com.tr

+90 537 512 43 00

bilgi@kitapmatik.com.tr

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The Turkish Image in Western Philosophy

Onur Bilge KULA

Erasmus of Rotterdam: Destructive Turks are the most loathsome

In his essay entitled “*A Most Useful Advice Concerning Proposals of War against the Turks*”, Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469-1536) discussed the European attitude towards Turks. Erasmus, who lighted the way for Enlightenment in the West by criticizing all kinds of oppression and bigotry, described the Turks as follows, “*The vulgar Turks, whose destruction is commonplace, are of the most loathsome, the most uncertain origin.*”¹ The philosopher also claimed that “*Turks were a non-European people because they were of Asian origin.*”

This particular definition by Erasmus, who philosophized the anti-war sentiment in Europe, became established in Western philosophy centuries later, especially with the contribution of Herder. In “*Epistula ad Paulum Volzium*” (*Letter to Paul Volz*), the philosopher expressed the view that “*Turks are also human and they can give up their savagery*”.² Then again, Erasmus proved that he was an anti-war philosopher devoted to universal humanitarianism with such expressions as “*Only evil is alien to a man not another man.*” and “*War is a lethal disease of human thought.*”

Wilhelm Leibniz’s³ Orientalism and the Turkish / Islamic Image

Leibniz (1646-1716), one of the most prominent philosophers of early Enlightenment philosophy, described religions other than Christianity including Islam as

- 1 Erasmus von Rotterdam (1530): “Aus Ratschlage Herren Erasimi von Rotterdam/ Die Türcken zu bekriegen” (“On the advice of Messrs Erasimi of Rotterdam / Fighting the Turks”); UI 2112, A text in my private archive obtained from the Austrian National Library
- 2 Erasmus von Rotterdam (1990): “Epistula ad Paulum Volzium” (Letter to Paul Volz); (In.): “Ausgewaehlte Schriften”(Selected Writings); Translated into German and published by: Werner Welzig; Band I, BWG, Darmstadt, pp. 2- 55
- 3 The sources used in this study are based on the publication translated from Latin to German by Herbert Herring and the edition published by Scientific Book Society (Darmstadt) under the title “Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz: Philosophische Schriften” (Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz: Philosophical Essays). In the study, the numbers of the volumes and pages are given only after the volumes included in the said publications are identified.

“false” in the preface to his work *“Essays of Theodicy on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man and the Origin of Evil*, more simply known as *Théodicée*⁴.

The concept of Muhammadanism and Orientalism

In the words of *Leibniz*, “*Fatum Mahometanum*” (*Islamic Fatalism*) is “a false conception of necessity and this fatalism, being applied in practice, has given rise to fate after the Turkish fashion.” The philosopher, who regards the expression of “*Islamic Fatalism*” identical to the understanding of fate after the Turkish fashion, continues his evaluation on the subject as follows: “It is said of the Turks that they do not shun danger or even abandon places infected with plague, owing to their use of such reasoning as that just recorded.” (II / I, p.17).

Leibniz determined the expressive content of the concept of “*Fatum Mahometanum*” as “unreasonable, intolerable, blind fatalism” (II / I, p. 293). Blind fate incompatible with reason, according to the philosopher, “is the worst of all because it overthrows foresight and good counsel” (II / I, pp. 293-295). As the philosopher argues, as a result of this understanding of predetermination, “good and bad deeds avail to nothing, since nothing can be changed and it is sufficient to believe that everything is predetermined” (II / I, p. 491).

One of the possible inferences that can be drawn from this determination is that Turks cannot distinguish between “good and bad actions” because of their understanding of fate based on such an absolute belief. Those who cannot distinguish between good and bad actions cannot generate moral values, nor can they question their existing moral values in a philosophical sense. According to *Leibniz*, Turks are one of the Asian and Muslim communities that demonstrate such irrational behaviors. This irrationality is a consequence of the Turks’ understanding of fate. According to the argument of the philosopher, “the pre-determination and pre-arrangement of causes cannot be justified by a necessity that resists randomness, freedom, and morality” (II / 2, p. 363). The understanding of the predetermination of causes is an important issue that “distinguishes the Islamic Fatalism from the Christian Fatalism and what is irrational from what is rational”; because, according to the philosopher’s narrative, “Turks are not concerned with causes; however, Christians and all other conceptions derive the outcome from the cause.”

By means of these determinations, *Leibniz* opposed the understanding that subordinates the human mind and will to a higher authority or power, and contributed to the development of critical thinking and liberation of the mind, and subsequently to Enlightenment. In addition, he distinguished the Turks, whom he described as

4 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz: “Die Theodizée von der Güte Gottes, die Freiheit des Menschen und dem Ursprung des Übel” (The theodicy of the goodness of God, the freedom of man and the origin of evil)” (or: “Théodicée”), WBG, Darmstadt 1985

“people who are not concerned with causes”, from those who are “perceptive”, from those who are able to reason, in other words, from those who try to understand causes. In a way, he has portrayed them as “unperceptive”.

The Turkish Image and Philhellenism in Voltaire

In a “speech”⁵ he delivered in 1878 on the centennial of *Voltaire’s* death, *Victor Hugo* made the following remarks, “He was more than a man; he was an age. He had exercised a function and fulfilled an extraordinary mission.” This mission, in most general terms, is Enlightenment. “The age or century of *Voltaire* is the 18th century.” Reflecting his Eurocentric character, *Hugo* said “Gentlemen, the privilege of giving names to periods belonging exclusively to Greece, to Italy, and to France is the highest mark of civilization.”

According to *Voltaire’s* narration in his satirical novel “*Candide*”⁶ (1756), Turks were “polite” people (p. 107) who did not know “syphilis, a disease then specific to Europe” in the 18th century (p. 52) and were involved in “slave trading”. In the figure of *Sultan Ahmet III* that he had fictionalized in his work, the Turks were a people “who beheaded their viziers, who were in fights for the throne” (p. 221); and who called non-Muslim prisoners “infidel dogs” (p. 229). The Ottoman administration “banished begs, effendis, pashas, qadis to all parts of the empire”, made the “exile” a repeated practice. Along with exile, “beheading” had become commonplace. For example, *Candide* and his friends saw “heads decently impaled for presentation to the Sublime Porte” (p. 242). As described in the novel, the Turk does not ask questions; does not question facts and events; he only resigns himself to the sovereigns.

Voltaire: This barbarian people should be expelled from the land of Socrates and Plato

The poem⁷ *Voltaire* dedicated to Prince Eugene of Savoy in 1716 includes the following lines: *Chase those Muslims / Remove the obstacles / Destroy those arrogant circumcised people / Filled with the passion of struggle / Trample on the turbans / Put an end to this life in the Ottoman palace now.*” The same year, he wrote the following words to *Princess of Talmont* about the Turks: “I do not like these people who do nothing but destroy and are enemies of all arts.”

5 The speech made by *Victor Hugo* on the centennial of *Voltaire’s* death on 30 May, 1878 (In.); *Voltaire: “Kandid Ya Da İyimserlik”* (Candide or Optimism), (Translated by: *Server Tanilli*), Cem Publications, Istanbul, 1994, pp.253-265

6 *Voltaire: “Kandid Ya Da İyimserlik”* (Candide or Optimism), (Translated by: *Server Tanilli*), Cem Publications, Istanbul, 1994. Excerpts and cross-references were taken from this work. No page numbers were given.

7 *Voltaire’s* views on Turks and Islam in his works and writings other than the item “Muhammadanians” in “*Candide*” and “*The Philosophical Dictionary*”, was translated into Turkish by my dear colleague Prof. Dr. *Kemal Özmen*, a faculty member at *Hacettepe University Faculty of Letters Department of French Language and Literature*.

Addressing *Friedrich II*, the King of Prussia, *Voltaire* wrote: “It is my most sincere wish that these barbarian Turks would be expelled from the land of *Xenophon, Socrates, Plato, Sophocles, Euripides*.” The philosophers mentioned above symbolize Hellenism, and consequently Philhellenism. For *Voltaire*, it was a shame that Greece was under Turkish rule.

Voltaire makes the following assessment about the Turks in his work entitled “*Essay on the Customs and the Spirit of the Nations*”: “Nobody has heard of a city founded by the Turks. They have left the most beautiful buildings of Antiquity in ruins and now rule over these ruins.”

Voltaire's views that have contributed to the establishment of the Orientalist discourse in Europe with respect to Turks and Islam mainly include “to devastate”, “the enemy of arts”, “expulsion of the barbarian Turks from the land of *Xenophon, Socrates, Plato, Sophocles and Euripides*”. In particular, expulsion of the barbarian Turks from Greece, which is the “land of *Xenophon, Socrates, Sophocles and Euripides*”, is the basis of “Philhellenism”, one of the main sources of philosophical Orientalism.

4

Voltaire's concept of Muhammadanism

Orientalism and Philhellenism are based on not only a geographical East / West distinction but also on religious differences between Christianity and Islam. The term Islam is not often used in Orientalist discourses. “*Muhammadanism*”, used as an alternative to Islam, apparently has a degrading and dismissive emphasis which reduces Islam to a person's doctrine or ideology. Following *Leibniz* in this regard, *Voltaire* is an exemplary philosopher / author. In his “*Philosophical Dictionary*”, *Voltaire* made a permanent contribution to the spread of the aforementioned understanding by using the concept of Muhammadanism instead of Islam. *Voltaire* literalized some of his views in his tragedy “*Mohamet*”⁸ (1742) and perpetuated them in the “*Philosophical Dictionary*” (1765), especially in the article entitled “*Muhammadanism*”, which he arbitrarily judged against the backdrop of Turks. Thus, the philosopher / author paved the way for the establishment of “*Muhammadanism*”, instead of “Islam”, in the “collective consciousness” and “*Orientalist discourse*” of the West as a reductionist and contemptuous concept.

Immanuel Kant: European mind is superior

In his “*Writings on Anthropology, Philosophy of History, Politics and Pedagogy*” under the subtitle “*Division of the human genus into its different races*” of his

8 *Voltaire's* tragedy “*Mohamet*” has not been translated into Turkish. Goethe published the German version of the said play in 1799 and wrote a tragedy by the same title based upon the original play.

work entitled “*Of the Different Races of Men*”⁹, Kant assumes four races in order to derive all of the enduring distinctions immediately recognizable within the human genus. They are: (1) the white race; (2) the Negro race; (3) the *Hun* race (*Mongol* or *Kalmuck*); and (4) the *Hindu* or *Hindustani* race. As stated by Kant, “the most distinct habitat” of the white race is Europe. “*The mind of Europeans is superior*”, thus Kant places them in a distinct position in terms of mental qualities. The philosopher assumes that Europeans, who are superior in intelligence, will naturally advance in the field of civilization by taking advantage of these superiorities. According to Kant, there are two categories as a radical and distinguishing feature: 1. the black skin color of the Negro, 2. the superior mind of the European.

Irrationalities prevail in Asia Minor

Using a systematic and analytical approach, Kant examines the notions of world citizenship, justice and legal concepts under the subtitle “*The Story whose truth is the Arbitrary Enlightenment of the Readers*” of his work entitled “*Writings on the Philosophy of Ethics and Religion*”¹⁰. In this work, he emphasizes that people in Asia Minor, that is, Anatolia, are very interested in “*witchcraft*” and false beliefs. According to Kant’s generalist example, Anatolia is a place dominated by fallacy and superstitions. Europe, on the other hand, is where the mind focuses. Consequently, superstitious people have no place in Europe; they should go to Anatolia where there is no need for a questioning mind.

Kant scarcely thematizes the Turkish concept within the system of thought. Under the subtitle “*Vom Schläfe (Related to Sleep)*” in his “*Writings on Anthropology, Philosophy of History, Politics and Pedagogy*” (Chapter One, Volume 9), he says that the Turks are “*self-restrained*”. Kant examines the concept of “*people*” (*populus*) in the subtitle of “*Human Nature*”¹¹. Expounding his argument by showing the Turks as an example, Kant makes the following assessment related to the Turks in this regard: “*Turks; They use the term Frengistan (literally ‘land of the non-Muslims’ in English) when referring to Christian Europe and categorize communities by taking their characteristic deficiencies as a criterion in order to identify their national structures.*”

First of all, two dimensions rise to prominence in the above cited assessment. One of these dimensions is that a person, a group, or a nation needs an “other”

9 Immanuel Kant: “Von den verschiedenen Rassen der Menschen” (Of the Different Races of Men); (In.): “Schriften zur Anthropologie, Geschichtsphilosophie, Politik und Paedagogik” (Writings on Anthropology, Philosophy of History, Politics and Pedagogy); Band 9, Darmstadt 1983.

10 Immanuel Kant (1983): “Das Völkerrecht” (The International Law); (In.): “Schriften zur Ethik und Religionsphilosophie” (Writings on Ethics and Philosophy of Religion); Second Part, Band 7, Darmstadt

11 Immanuel Kant (1983): “Der Charakter des Volkes” (The character of people); (In.): “Kritik der Vernunft und Schriften zur Naturphilosophie” (Critique of reason and writings on natural philosophy); Band 8, Darmstadt

in order to understand and define oneself. This dimension is evaluated in current scientific debates within the context of the “*self versus non-self*” or “*we / us versus them / others*” relationship. Since the “*self*” per se is not an identifiable element, there is a need for an opposite, ergo “*a stranger*” or “*the other*”, for the sake of disambiguation.

Turks prevented *citizenization* of Europeans

At the end of the chapter, *Kant* asserts that the countries under the rule of the Turks and Russians “*prevent the citizenization of their people*”. The argument posited by *Herder*, *Hegel* and *Marx* that the people under Turkish rule prevented their citizenization perpetually and permanently remains on the agenda as of the 1800s particularly with regard to Balkan peoples under Ottoman rule.

Kant continued his arguments with respect to Turks and Russians with the following statements: “*Russia and European Turkey, both predominantly Asian countries, believe that they are superior to Frerengistan. These two peoples, one of Slavic and the other of Arabic roots, have dominated a large part of Europe to such an extent that no other people could have succeeded before and destroyed the environment of freedom there, thus preventing citizenization of the people living there.*”

Defining the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans with the concept of European Turkey as it is used by *Marx* and *Engels* later, *Kant* asserts that by categorizing other national communities according to their own structural deficiencies, the Turks have behaved like European peoples and that no people other than Europeans could exhibit such an attitude. The philosopher reaches the following judgment with a very distinct European-oriented and Orientalist viewpoint: “The inability of peoples other than Europeans to adopt such an approach demonstrates their intellectual limitations.”

Kant draws an analogy between Turks and Europeans in that they assess the distinctive characteristics of other nations in the same manner. This determination can be evaluated positively with respect to the Turkish image. Nevertheless, the resemblance of Turks with European peoples at least in this respect can be explained with the intellectual limitations of other peoples.

Greeks will regain their authenticity so long as they are liberated

Kant emphasizes that the Russians and Poles do not possess the natural capacity necessary for development. He includes the following views regarding Turkey: “*Turkish nations in Europe lack the qualifications required for natural development; they have never possessed the natural capacity required for a certain national character, and nor will they ever acquire this capacity in future*”.

It is not very clear which communities or nations *Kant* refers to by the expression *the Turkish Nations in Europe*. In a context which also includes Russia and Poland, however, it can be assumed that *Kant* refers to the Christian Balkan peoples of Slavic origin under Ottoman rule at the time with his definition "*Turkish Nations in Europe*." *Kant* excludes the Greeks from this assessment. *Kant* definitely posits that Turkish Nations in Europe cannot develop a national character and thinks that they are not even worth mentioning together with other nations. He only holds the Greeks separate and recommends that they be evaluated with caution.

Kant perceives the innate, natural character in the synthesis of human blood and distinguishes it from the artificial characteristics features acquired later. In this context, he describes the Greeks as follows: "*Despite the great oppression of the Turks, the Greeks have not lost much in terms of formation of their perception styles, bodily forms, figures and facial features. As a matter of fact, when religion and forms of government give Greeks the freedom of recreating these characteristics they will reestablish their authenticity.*"

At this point, it should be noted that according to *Kant*, Greeks reflected their various characteristics such as vitality, joy of living and indifference with their manner of perception. The effects of the accumulation of Ancient Greek thought, which is a concealed power and a constitutive element in the history of thought in Europe and especially Germany, are evidently revealed in *Kant's* evaluation of the Greeks.

Herder: 'What are Barbarian Turks of Asia Doing in Europe?'

In order to explain the viewpoint of *Herder*, one of the philosophers who left a trail in the history of German culture, towards the Turks, it is necessary to examine his opinions of the East, Europe and, the peoples "foreign to Europe" as expressed in his own words. *Herder* concretized his ideas on the East in his work "*This too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity*"¹², and he asserted that the East was "*the place where the crudest despotism prevailed.*" On the other hand, according to the interpretation made by *Herder*, who establishes that the East is "*God's exclusive domain, a place of fine sensibility*", there is a tendency to adorn everything with a divine splendor and glow. In the East, there is respect mixed with reverence for power and respect mixed with fear and timidity for wisdom and power. This "*childlike respect*" is regarded as normal by the Easterners while it seems meaningless to Europeans.

Greece is the environment of freedom and Europe's hope

Zest and cleverness of Phoenicians created a kind of comfort and prosperity and paved the way for the transition to the Greek "*taste, freedom*". Thus, the Egyptians

12 Johann Gottfried Herder (1982): "Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit" (This too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity); Works, Second Band, Carl Hansen Publishing House; München, Wien, pp. 9- 99.

and Phoenicians became the cofounders of the West and Greece, despite all their contradictory ways of thinking. Herder carries on his coherent assessment as follows: “Greece has developed Europe’s ability to be pleasantly communicative; it harmonized the tendencies towards freedom and love, desire and joy. Inclosing or carrying in its bosom the possible efficiency and hopes of the Europeans, Greece will forever preserve the place where humanity spent its youth and marriage.”

The following determinations that go far beyond the positive attitude towards the Ancient Greek cultural accumulation and explain the Philhellenism, which constitutes the basis of Orientalism, belong to Herder. He describes Greece as, “*This noble youth is the lover of all beauties, the adorer of all niceties; it is a flower whose conscience as well as bodily form flourishes and blossoms.*” This handsome young man has developed wisdom, virtue, joy, desire, and whatever else he needs for life. He despises unskilled labor, work, barbaric splendor and simple pastoralism. He transformed craft into art.

Thanks to cultural contributions of Egypt and Phoenicia, “*Greece has become the cradle of humanity, love among peoples, good laws / customs and the most pleasant things in religion, traditions and arts.*” Greece is “*an intermediate country of culture; everything coming together from two corners has brightened up and ennobled this culture.*” Having glorified the Greeks in this manner, Herder associates every free nation, republic and their colonies in Europe to one root, with everything Greek, with Ancient Greece. Thus, he exhibits a firm Philhellenist approach. Judging from Herder’s argument, most of the achievements of humanity that have led to the birth of Greece are lost. The sacred veil of the Eastern religion has been lifted and the curtain of mystery in front of wisdom has been unveiled. Greece “*is made up of the most beautiful and the most pleasant of every place and everything, and it should always prevail.*”

Anatolia is the cradle of cultures and the earth mother of Greece

In his work entitled “*Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Humanity*”¹³, Herder states that “*the mankind is a whole; people are diverse.*” With this discourse, Herder clearly reveals that he deems humanity as the product of common acts of people. Herder’s holistic and universal understanding of humanity becomes even clearer in the following statement: “*The human mind, by its very nature, seeks unity in diversity.*” This determination demonstrated by Herder is comparable with the ideas of tolerance and pluralism that became more evident in the 13th and 15th centuries in Anatolia, and accepts the principles of tolerance, association and maturation as principal objectives.

13 Johann Gottfried Herder: “Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit” (Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Humanity); 2nd Band München-Wien 1982, pp. 99- 340.

According to *Herder's* determination, Anatolia offered "*Greece not only the originality and unity of its language but also the opportunity to reap the benefits of the cultural productions of other peoples*". In reference to the massacres carried out against Native Americans, "*Europeans were the first to commit inhumane acts.*" With this determination, *Herder* does not hesitate to criticize and warn Europe, which he regards as the focal point of civilization and development.

Its proximity to Asia Minor, a piece of land encompassing many cultures, has had a very positive impact on Greece. Thanks to Asia Minor, the Greek language, which in fact is a mixture of many languages, has become original. By taking advantage of all kinds of characteristics of the communities inhabiting Asia Minor, the Greeks clarified their lineage-breed originality. Asia Minor is therefore the mother of Greece. The Greek language is a vivid and poetic language formed in the harmony of diversity, dance and music as well as in the free communication of various lineages and colonies.

What are Barbarian Turks of Asia Doing in Europe?

Herder, who discriminated among peoples based on criteria such as European and non-European in his work entitled "*Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Humanity*" wrote, "*Among all the communities living in Europe, only Asian-origin Hungarian are not European.*" Completely foreign to Europe, "*the second wave of Huns arrived under the command of Genghis Khan and destroyed Europe with fire and sword.*" From *Herder's* point of view, the *Mongols*, seen as the forerunners of the Turks along with the *Huns* and *Pechenegs*, were "*wild wolves of Asia and the destroyers of the world*". The Arabs, who dominated Spain and Italy for a while, also influenced other languages and cultures, and "*their contributions to the development of science enlightened the 'barbarian' Europe of those times.*"

Among the peoples he defined as non-European, *Herder* made reference to Turks apart from Bulgarians. In his work "*Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Humanity*", *Herder* described Turks, whom he regarded as a foreign people in his work "*Thoughts on the Philosophy of Human History*" as follows: "*Although Turks, who are from Turkestan, have been in Europe for more than 300 years, they are still foreign to Europe. They put an end to the thousand-year-old Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium; OBK) that had started to be a burden to the Turks and the world; they involuntarily and unwillingly drove the arts towards the West, Europe. With their attacks, they took the European states under their control and heroically protected them for centuries, and their presence prevented absolute dominance of any other foreign power in the region.*"

"They turned the most beautiful countries of Europe into deserts; they transformed the once wise Greek people into disloyal and loathsome barbarians. Hence,

their misdeeds far exceeded their good deeds. So many works of art were destroyed by these ignorant people; many of them perished permanently on account of these oblivious people.”

“The Turkish Empire, which has turned into a huge dungeon for all Europeans living in its territories, will collapse in due time. What are these foreigners, who still want to remain as Asian barbarians for thousands of years, doing in Europe?” (Herder 1982, pp. 288- 299).

The main aspects that come to the fore in the above assessments can be expounded as follows: Turks are of Asian origin. Although Turks have been in Europe for more than 300 years, not to mention European integration, they could not even adapt to Europe and remained as foreigners. By dominating most beautiful countries of Europe, the center of enlightenment, art, philosophy and progress, they destroyed the cultural accumulation, development and power of progress of these countries. They have transformed the people of Greece, one of the most beautiful countries of Europe, into loathsome barbarians. Since the Turks destroyed the independence and freedom of the European peoples, the Turkish Empire is a huge prison for all European peoples living in this empire. Although Turks have lived in Europe for centuries, they insist on remaining as Asians and refuse to acquire the cultural values of Europe.

According to viewpoint and value system of *Herder*, who regarded Greek cultural heritage as one of the main sources of European culture and who emerged as a Philhellenist to a certain extent, it was unacceptable that the Turks, who lacked the ability to create culture, had brought the Greeks under Turkish dominance and denied their freedom. *Herder's* universal approach in the European context was in clear contradiction with his dismissive attitude towards Turks and Asia. Nevertheless, the clues to the solution of this contradiction are again in *Herder's* views and must be sought and pursued there.

A significant note: Ataturk particularly focused on language and history during the last decade of his life. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, who had also read *Herder's* abovementioned book during this time, must have been dismayed by *Herder's* dismissive and offensive views regarding the Turks in lieu of the glorification of the Greeks. In July 1932, Atatürk dictated his article entitled “*An Overview of the Origin of the Aegean Civilization*” to *Hasan Cemil Çambel*, a member of the Turkish History Review Board. *Çambel* presented Ataturk's article at the First Turkish History Congress as a paper.¹⁴

14 For detailed information, see: Onur Bilge Kula (2018): ‘Türkiye’de Aydınlanma ve Atatürk Devrimleri’ (Enlightenment in Turkey and Ataturk’s Reforms); Tekin Print House, İstanbul

Orientalism, the East and the Turkish Image in Hegel's

Philosophy

The concepts of East, Asia, Asia Minor, Islam, South and Turks are among the topics examined by *Hegel* from many perspectives. *Hegel* addresses the relationship of thought / spirit (or mind)-consciousness-will-religion under the subtitle "Separation of the Orient and Its Philosophy"¹⁵ in his work "*Lectures on the History of Philosophy*".

Will and consciousness are not free in the East

One of the prominent concepts that come to the fore in *Hegel's* philosophy is will. In this respect, the philosopher evaluates the spirit of the East, and thereby the Easterner, as follows: "*The finitude of will is the character of the Easterner; his will is finite; not yet generalized. Therefore, there is only the master-slave position / relationship. This is the domain of despotism. The fear (Furcht) associated with external factors is a directing category in itself. Will is not independent of this finite factor; for thinking is not yet free for itself. Freedom is not being finite but being alone.*"

According to the quotation, *Hegel* deems the will of the Eastern man to be "*finite, impermanent*"; he thinks that this impermanence of will, which is an indicator and outpouring of the autonomy of the individual, results in a master-slave relationship. The finitude of the will *Hegel* refers to also determines the freedom consciousness and sphere of the Eastern people. The freedom of the individual with a finite will is also limited. Moreover, the non-generalized nature of will as well as fear prevents the thought of the Eastern man from gaining autonomy. Hence, thought cannot possibly be liberated in the East; and man cannot evolve into an individual by becoming independent.

Only the despot is free in the East

The despot, who has the power of governance in the East and only he himself has the right to be free, does whatever crosses his mind; naturally enough, once in a while he does good deeds too. He does these good deeds not because it is enforced by law, but because he feels like doing so as arbitrary acts. In keeping with these inferences, arbitrariness and enforcement determine the political life and relationship manner of the society in the East. Consequently, arbitrary and enforcing approaches and practices are never questioned.

Hegel expounds the spiritual characteristics of the East as follows: "*Needless to say, the spirit (or mind) is born in the East*", but there is a relation therein: The subject is not the person. The subject is in objective substantialness as something

15 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1965): "Abscheiden des Orients und seiner Philosophie" (Separation of the Orient and Its Philosophy); (In.): "Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie" (Lectures on the history of philosophy); (Band 1, Complete Works, 17. Band), Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt.

negative and submerging. The most paramount level the individual can attain is the happiness of the eternal afterlife and immersion in substance; therefore, the passage of consciousness, or the distinction between the individual and substance is considered extinction.

Thus, “*a relationship that lacks thought takes place*” because (in the East) the supreme aspect of relationship is “*unconsciousness*”. Man exists against this substance; finds himself as an individual. Substance is general; whereas the individual is singular. Man is distinct from substance so long as he cannot reach the happiness of the afterlife at issue; it is outside the unity; “*has no meaning or value.*” It is anything; it lacks justice and law; is finite. It finds itself predetermined by the nature. The will here is not a substantial will; it is “*arbitrariness*”, it is waywardness.

As stated by *Hegel*, Orientals “*cannot be easily personified*” for the reason that their intellectual activities have not become totally worldly yet. They still melt away within afterlife schemes or visions. The personification of the individual is possible with his “*being independent of what is substantial, and becoming singular*”. As long as the Eastern spirit is not scrutinized with what is mundane and provided that it cannot show the consciousness and determination to justify its existence with what is worldly, the concepts of justice and law will not develop; hence, arbitrariness, which is the main origin of despotism, will prevail in social life.

What pertains to the East must be eliminated from philosophy

Hegel's propositions related to the East can be characterized as follows: that said “*characteristic benevolence, greatness and supremacy*” is not impossible in the East; but they exist depending on “*natural determination or arbitrariness*”. There do not exist as objective requirements of accepted ethicality, morality, or legality that are respected by all and valid for all.

Nothing is stable in the East; the more ambiguous the essence of the Orientals is, “*the more ambiguous*”, unrestricted and independent the character can be. As a result, here (in the East; O.B.K) there is no differentiation at the level of philosophical cognition. General knowledge related to the substance belongs to the philosophical cognition. “*What pertains to the East must be eliminated from philosophy.*”

In line with *Hegel's* generalized approach, there is no law and morality in the East; because “*the subject has not been liberalized.*” Otherwise stated, since the subject cannot be liberalized, legality and ethicality are not a matter of debate.

Hegel hardens his judgments related to the mentality and behavior of the Easterners: “*Orientals cannot possibly develop characteristic measures because they lack subjective freedom.*” Also, there is “*no conscience and no morale*” in the Easterners. What Orientals call knowledge is not substantial or general information; thus, it cannot be assessed as being philosophical knowledge. The natural inference to be made from this assessment is as follows: Eastern ways of thinking and

products of Eastern thought should be removed from philosophy since they lack philosophical core and quality.

Self-consciousness is liberalized only in the West

Hegel makes the following evaluations of these determinations under the subtitle “*The Beginning of Philosophy in Greece*” in the same work: “*Philosophy actually starts in the West*”; freedom of self-consciousness emerges only in the West. “*The individual withers in the gleam of the East*”; *the light turns into a lightning that flashes within itself and creates its own world in the West from that moment on.*” For this reason, the happiness of afterlife in the West (supreme happiness) is of a kind in which the individual will survive and resist what is substantial. The unique “*thought finds its existence in what is general*”. This aloofness or “*the infiniteness of personality and self constitutes the existence of thought.*” That’s what thought is and cannot be any other way any longer. In accordance with the philosophy of *Hegel*, who establishes a direct association between real existence and freedom, it is common knowledge that the primary condition which existence is based upon is personal freedom. If the sovereign’s arbitrariness is the law and the sovereign wants to introduce captivity, *Hegel* identifies with the Westerner in this respect and makes the following determination through the mouth of the Westerner: “*We say this cannot happen because we have such a consciousness. Everyone knows that he cannot be captivated ... Therefore, we stand on the ground of the real philosophy in the West.*” The liberalization of self-consciousness is the liberalization of the individual mind. Therefore, liberalized self-consciousness is the basis of Enlightenment.

Philosophy starts in Greece

Hegel asserts that philosophy has started in this country since there are free inter-individual relations, determinations and laws of the general will in Greece, and expresses that there are also prisoners there, which in turn restricts the flourishing of freedom. As maintained by *Hegel*, freedom emerges in the East, in Greece and in the German country in the following aspects: “*Only one person is free in the East. Some are free in Greece! In the German country, man is free because he is human.*” Depending on this schematic and linear understanding of freedom, freedom or civilization develops and becomes stronger as one goes from the East towards the West.

It is possible to interpret the determination that “*only one person is free*” in the East in the following manner: It appears that only the sovereign is free in the East. However, only one person cannot be free; however, other people must also be free for this to happen. Freedom requires both individuality and sociality; and it can exist and develop so long as it is shared with others. Since the sovereign in the East does not allow anyone but himself to be free and he does not create and share freedom with others, he in fact puts himself in an environment of unfreedom.

Easterners are not aware that man is free because he is human.

Addressing the relationship between consciousness-substance and consciousness-thought again in the opening chapter of the *“The Philosophy of History”*¹⁶, Hegel proposes the following arguments related to the Oriental view on the subject: *“Easterners are not yet aware that the spirit and the human being alone are free because they are like this. They are not free either as they do not know this. All they know is this: One person is free; hence such freedom includes only arbitrariness, savagery, weakness or softness and mediocrity of passions. Again, such freedom is just a natural state or arbitrariness. Therefore, this one person is nothing but a despot and he is not a free man.”*

Hegel’s determinations related to the Easterners’ understanding of freedom can be simplified as follows: The Easterner does not know that he is free simply by virtue of the fact that they are human. He has been deprived of such self-consciousness; he cannot be liberalized because due to this deprivation. The sphere of freedom is left to one person, namely the despot, who perceives freedom as doing whatever one pleases. This single person whose behavior is determined by arbitrariness cannot be free, even though he feels himself free, owing to his “uniqueness, for freedom cannot exist in a particular or singular manner, but rather collectively with others. Hence, freedom is an alien concept to the East.

Repeating the assertion that the Greeks were free on a relative basis, Hegel discloses the following at the same point: *“The consciousness of freedom was born in the Greek people; thus, they became free; but, just like the Romans, they thought only some of them were free; they couldn’t know that human beings were free by virtue of the fact that they were human.”* The logical inference to be drawn from this determination may be: Although the Greeks might have created the idea of freedom; however, they could not liberalized all people because they failed to eradicate captivity and achieve individual autonomy of people. In consequence, they could not comprehend that all human beings should be free in keeping with the principle that man must be free simply because he is human.

Hegel’s concept of Muhammadanism and Orientalism

According to the analysis of Hegel who said *“The Crusades are the Trojan War against Muhammadanism”*, *“the revolution of the East has ripped all sorts of particularity and dependence to pieces and enlightened the heart / soul.”* The reason for this is that the East has *“made everything including subjective consciousness dependent on the abstract one and this knowledge of the abstract has been turned into the solitary purpose of reality.”* This situation is *“the unrelated relationship of existence.”* The determining principle of the East is *“negativity.”* The only *“positive*

16 G. W. F. Hegel: *“Philosophie der Geschichte”* (The Philosophy of History); Band 11, Stuttgart 1965.

thing here is falling into the state of nature and the servitude of the spirit." As I emphasized above, falling into the state of nature means falling into barbarism in a philosophical sense.

Muhammadanism "*created spiritual generality by destroying particularity.*" In other words, Islam did not give the individual the opportunity to singularize; on the contrary, it dissolved and destroyed him within generality. "*Within this unlimited and indefinite spiritual generality and purity / virtue, the subject has but one purpose.*" That purpose is to achieve this "*generality and purity.*"

This determination can also be interpreted as follows: A person who loses all kinds of particular characteristics tries to recreate the "*unlimited and indefinite spiritual generality*" in which he dissolves, instead of trying to find himself or his individuality in the field of Islamic culture. This unlimited and indefinite spiritual generality impedes the emergence of certain individuals and prevents efforts to diversify and attribute plurality to the relations among these particular individuals. This being the case, man can only be thrown between extremes / excesses; he generates fanaticism or becomes part of the fanaticism developed by what is general.

The European uses his mind / wisdom freely

As maintained by *Hegel*, there is the European Christian, who distinguishes between what is general and what is particular, as opposed to the lethargic Eastern Muslim, who believes in ambiguous supremacy and is taken captive by his motives. *Hegel* understands thought from "*the general*" and single human "*existence*" from "*the individual*". From *Hegel's* perspective, the most prominent feature of the European is that he uses his mind freely, he is self-confident and also self-consciousness, he participates in historical-social processes and determines them together. *Hegel* goes on to define the "*European thought / spirit*" as follows: the "*European thought / spirit*" puts the world against it; becomes independent of it. It eliminates this contradiction by resolving it; it adds its distinction and diverseness to simplicity. Hence, the "*infinite compulsion of knowledge*" prevails in European thought / spirit. This situation is alien to other races. *Hegel* systematizes his views as follows "*because the world is a particular concern to the Europeans. They want to recognize / get to know the world; he wants to attain the other in front of him. He wants to visualize the genre, the law, the general, the thought and the inner rationality in the transformations / alterations of the world.*"

The European thought / spirit seeks to establish the unity between its essence and the outside world performatively as well as theoretically. According to *Hegel's* approach, the "*European thought / spirit*" can also be perceived as the intellectual justification of European colonialism or Orientalism because the European spirit "*makes the outside world dependent on its goals with the energy that enables it to dominate the world.*"

Half-bred barbarians of Asian origin

In “*The Philosophy of History*”¹⁷, Hegel’s considerations about Turks are as follows: In the Reformation period, “*The common external interests of European states are against the Turks.*” Turks pose a danger that carries the “terrible power” originating from the East and Islam to Europe from the East. Hegel clarifies his evaluative viewpoints related to the Turks, who are the bearers of this “terrible power”, as follows: Turks formed a solid core at that time, “*they are a strong nation and their power is based on conquests.*” That’s why; they waged endless wars and stopped only when they laid down their weapons.

While addressing the “*Elements of the Christian German World*” in his “*The Philosophy of History*”, Hegel classified Hungarians, Bulgarians, Serbs and Albanians as peoples of “*Asian origin*” and describes them as “*broken remnants of barbarians*” settled in Europe during reciprocal raids. Again according to Hegel, these peoples, whom he classified as “*broken barbarians of Asian origin*”, served as “*advanced forces*” in the wars Christian Europe waged against non-Christian Asia. “*As a matter of fact,*” Hegel continues, “*the Poles saved the besieged Vienna from the Turks.*”

Like Herder, Hegel did not consider Hungarians and Bulgarians as European peoples; however, the political authorities that determined the enlargement process of the European Union accept these two nations as European.

Rude Turks have an incidentally found mind

In “*The History of Philosophy*” mentioned above, Hegel thematizes the evolution process of philosophical thought under the subheading “*The Transition Period*”. According to Hegel, who suggests that subjects can form and mature their senses, opinions, hearts and minds only through their own efforts, “*people whose hearts have morally matured and who have proceeded towards thinking and making intellectual analyses, can develop beautiful feelings, sensations and tendencies*”. The subject, who does not mature his mind with such an internal effort, adopts “*the mind he incidentally finds in front of him and the power of knowledge developed by others*”. Such individuals who adopt the mind developed by others, act in accordance with their motives and regard the human mind they find as natural sensation and knowledge, instead of assimilating it through critical analysis.

Hegel first makes mention of Indians as an example of societies that acquire this incidentally found mind without criticism, discrimination, and analysis. As the philosopher puts it, Indians who bless the cow, throw out their newborn ba-

17 G. W. F. Hegel (1971): “*Philosophie der Geschichte*” (The Philosophy of History); Band 11, Stuttgart- Bad Canstatt

bies, kill them, and commit all kinds of inhumanity. *Hegel* thinks, “*Turks also has such a mind. When the incidentally found human mind and natural emotions of the Turkish people are taken as a criterion, this leads to emergence of loathsome principles.*”

According to *Hegel's* approach, the Turks could not develop their self-consciousness and mind with their self-endeavor or internal effort; they just found the mind and consciousness developed by others before them. The find in question could not differentiate the mind, and they have failed to utilize it for the sake of authentication and liberation. This failure in turn led to repulsiveness, and extroverted aggression.

Even the Turks have granted freedom of belief to minorities

Another book in which *Hegel* referred to Turks by their names is “*Miscellaneous Writings from the Berlin Period*”¹⁸. *Hegel* describes the real properties of the church in Europe, and obviously in Germany, and the administration of these assets in the section called “*On the English Reform Bill*”.

The philosopher makes the following assessment related to the Turks: “*Even the Turks left their churches to Christians, Armenians and Jews under their sovereignty. When churches fell into ruin as constructions, their repairs were sometimes prohibited. In such cases, the permission for repairs was granted in exchange for money. However, the British expropriated all the churches of the Catholic people they had defeated.*”

At this point, the expression “*even the Turks*” is quite remarkable. This expression is used by the philosopher to mean worse than the worst. As maintained by *Hegel*, it was impossible to comprehend what the so-called civilized British had done to the Catholics, while even the barbarian Turks granted the Christian people of the Balkans under their sovereignty the widest freedom in matters of faith.

The Turkish image, Orientalism and Philhellenism in some writings of Marx and Engels

I tried to address in detail the books by ten of the philosophers included in this article and the writings and letters of Marx and Engels on the “*Eastern Question*” in my book entitled “*Orientalism and the Turkish Image in Western Philosophy*”¹⁹.

18 G. W. F. Hegel (1968): “*Vermischte Schriften aus der Berliner Zeit*” (*Miscellaneous Writings from the Berlin Period*); Band 20, Stuttgart- Bad Canstatt

19 Onur bilge Kula (2010): “*Batı Felsefesinde Oryantalizm ve Türk İmgesi*” (*Orientalism and the Turkish Image in Western Philosophy*); İŞ Bankası Publications, Istanbul

Turkey is the living sore of European legitimacy

As stated by these two theorists and activists in their joint article entitled “British Politics-Disraeli-The Refugees-Mazzini in London-Turkey”²⁰, the “*Eastern Question*” was brought forward again in line with European interests. According to *Engels*, this was a fact not astonishing for those who are acquainted with the course of history; because “*Whenever the revolutionary hurricane has subsided*” for a moment, one ever-recurring question is sure to turn up: the eternal “*Eastern Question*”.

Engels also wrote that Russia made another dash at Turkey no sooner had the revolutionary movements of Western Europe been quelled. In this connection, the Eastern Question that emerged in 1840 brought the Great Powers of Europe to the point of a general war. In the wake of emergence of “*the ever-lasting Eastern Question, the never-failing difficulty*,” the Europeans ask one another: “*What shall we do with Turkey?*” The following sentence expresses the Turkish image of *Engels*: “*Turkey is the living sore of European legitimacy*.” The phrase “*the living sore*” in this sentence changed into the image of the “*sick man of Europe*” over time and settled in the common memory of Europe.

Turkey is decaying and will go on decaying

Engels likens keeping up the status quo in Turkey to “*keeping up the precise degree of putridity into which the carcass of a dead horse has passed at a given time, before dissolution is complete*.” It is not difficult to imagine how negative the possible associations of this resemblance will be in terms of imagination. The analogy continues with the following views: “*Turkey is decaying, and will go on decaying as long as the present system of ‘balance of power’ and maintenance of the status quo goes on; and in spite of congresses, protocols and ultimatums it will produce its yearly quota of diplomatic difficulties and international squabbles quite as every other putrid body will supply the neighborhood with a due allowance of carburetted hydrogen and other well-scented gaseous matter*.”

These sentences clearly indicate that *Engels* believed that the Ottoman Empire would definitely collapse. Moreover, the words selected by *Engels* to describe the collapse demonstrate a distant and, as he himself put it, discriminative denotation disassociating Turkey from Europe. This discriminative approach and his statement “*Turkey is decaying and will go on decaying!*” can be perceived as the indicators of an understanding that reinforces the above-cited “*sick man of Europe*” image. Furthermore, Eurocentrism and Orientalism, which are the products of the process

20 Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels (1960): “Britische Politik-Disraeli-Die Flüchtlinge- Mazzini in London-Türkei” (British Politics-Disraeli-The Refugees- Mazzini in London-Turkey); (In.): Marx-Engels: “Werke” (Works); Band 9, Berlin

of colonization of the East that started off with the Enlightenment, clearly become more concrete with these expressions.

As believed by *Engels*, “*the problem is Turkey*” and Turkey consists of three entirely distinct portions: “*the vassal principalities of Africa, Egypt and Tunis; Asiatic Turkey; and European Turkey.*” By adopting the tradition of *Leibniz* and *Kant*, *Engels* divides the Ottoman lands in this way, and believes that of all the African territories of the Ottomans, Egypt alone may be considered as really subject to the Sultan. According to *Engels*’ viewpoint, Egypt belongs more to the English than to anybody else, and “*will and must necessarily form their share in any future partition of Turkey.*” The idea that Egypt should be ceded to Britain belonged to *Leibniz*, as I emphasized above. However, *Engels*, who supported this idea, was not mistaken in this prediction either; Egypt, though not unavoidably, fell to the share of the European states thanks to the diplomatic maneuvers of Britain and other European states.

Engels makes the following assessment related to the Ottoman territories in Asia: “*Asiatic Turkey is the real seat of whatever strength there is in the empire. Asia Minor and Armenia, which is the chief abode of the Turks for four hundred years, form the reserved ground from which the Turkish armies that threatened the ramparts of Vienna have been drawn. Asiatic Turkey, although thickly populated, forms too compact a mass of Muslim fanatics of ethnic Turkish origin.*”

As can be observed in the above quote, *Engels* adopted *Hegel*’s “*Islamic Fanaticism*” assertion. The territories *Engels* refers to as Asiatic Turkey or Asia Minor is in fact Anatolia. The expression “*too compact a mass of Islam fanatics of ethnic Turkish origin*” in the above assessment, emphasizes religious fanaticism, more accurately, Islamic Fanaticism and compactness, directly associating these two concepts with the Turks.

Islamic Fanaticism is an obstacle to progress and civilization

Of all the said races and nationalities, “*it was not to be expected that the Turks would hold the supremacy over other races*” because the Turks “*were not the most competent to preserve the supremacy*” when compared to other peoples at issue. In fact, it is seen that “*all attempts at civilization by Turkish authority have lamentably failed while the Turkish government has been supported principally by the Turkish mob in a few great cities and has availed itself of the assistance of Austria and Russia invariably to regain power and to overturn any progress that might have been made.*”

All these phrases are a simple and clear expression of Eurocentrism and Orientalism, which claim a right to represent the East, which lacks the ability and power to progress and become civilized. Furthermore, the insurrections in

the Christian provinces further weakened the Turkish authority year after year. After Greece acquired her independence; parts of Armenia was conquered by Russia; and Moldavia, Wallachia, Serbia were successively placed under the protectorate of Russia, it was admitted that *“the presence of the Turks in Europe was a real obstacle to the development of the resources of the Thraco-Illyrian Peninsula.”* It is possible to make the following inferences from the above assessments of Engels: Although the Turks hold the supremacy in their sovereignty in Europe, they are actually not suitable and competent to rule. Islam fanaticism is an obstacle to any step to be taken towards civilization.

Engels finds the following argument regarding the Turkish image worth exploring : *“And certainly there will be, sooner or later, an absolute necessity for freeing one of the finest parts of this continent from the rule of a mob, compared with which the mob of Imperial Rome was an assemblage of sages and heroes.”* The argument or precognition of Engels concerning *“the liberation of the finest parts of this continent from the rule of the Turks”* was first mentioned by *Georg Agricola*, cited above, and *Gottfried Herder*, later addressed in this book. These quotes stand proof for the fact that Eurocentrism and Orientalism have a long historical background and persistence.

Very little Hellenic blood is to be found even in Greece

Referring to similar historical background, *Engels* maintains the same line of tradition to a great extent and keeps the Turks at a distance from Europe. *Engels* underlines the following views on the Greeks under Ottoman suzerainty: *“The Greeks of Turkey are mostly of Slavonic descent, but have adopted the modern Hellenic language; in fact, with the exception of a few noble families of Constantinople and Trebizond, it is now generally admitted that very little pure Hellenic blood is to be found even in Greece. Neither their number, compactness, nor spirit of nationality, gives them any political weight as a nation, except in Thessaly and perhaps Epirus.”*

As can be seen, Engels holds the opinion that the main origin of European culture was the Ancient Greek cultural accumulation. Especially when the Greeks revolted against the Ottoman rule for their independence in 1821 and the existence of the historically rooted Philhellenism movement that accompanied this revolt and spread rapidly in Europe, especially in Germany, are to be considered, these expressions by Engels can be more clearly interpreted.

Greeks and Slavonians regard Russia as their natural protector

In his article entitled "*The Turkish Question*"²¹, Engels emphasizes that the Serbian insurrection of 1804 and the Greek uprising in 1821 were more or less directly urged on by Russian gold and Russian influence; and the revolts by Turkish pashas against the Central Government were raised with Russian funds and Russian intrigues. According to Engels' assessments, Greeks of Turkey, and the Slavonians regard Russia as their natural protector.

In the same article, Engels directs following questions regarding the freedom of religion and belief granted to Christian people in Turkey: "*Have not the Christians more religious liberty in Turkey than in Austria and Russia? Is not the Turkish government a mild, paternal government, which allows the different nations and creeds and local corporations to regulate their own affairs? Is not Turkey a paradise compared with Austria and Russia? Are not life and property safe there?*"

Barbarian Turks must be gotten rid of

Right after these questions, Engels writes that *The Daily News* can be dithyrambic in its apotheosis of Turkey, the Turks and everything Turkish, and emphasizes that this must appear quite incomprehensible to most of its readers. He deems the works of Turkish friend David Urquhart, a British diplomat and M.P., as the key to this strange enthusiasm for the Turks. Engels criticizes this diplomat, of Scottish birth, for praising the Turks: "*The Greeks, the Armenians, the Slavonians and the Franks established in the large seaports, carry on the whole of the trade, and certainly they have no reason to thank Turkish Begs and Pashas for being able to do so. Remove all the Turks out of Europe, and trade will have no reason to suffer.*"

"*And as to progress in general civilization, who are they that carry out that progress in all parts of European Turkey? Not the Turks, for they are few and far between, and can hardly be said to be settled anywhere except in Constantinople and two or three small country districts. It is the Greek and Slavonic middle class in all the towns and trading posts who are the real support of whatever civilization is effectually imported into the country. People in that part of the population are constantly rising in wealth and influence, and the Turks are more and more driven into the background. The fact is, they must be got rid of. To say that they cannot be got rid of except by putting Russians and Austrians in their place, means as much as to say, that the present political constitution of Europe will last forever. Who will make such an assertion?*"

The above sentences are clear expressions of Philhellenism, Eurocentrism and Orientalism. According to Engels, who has internalized this approach, Turks do not

21 Friedrich Engels: "Die türkische Frage" (The Turkish Question); (In.): Op cit., pp. 22- 27

know how to carry on trade, which is evaluated in terms of civilization. Their way of promoting trade consisted of looting, and all sorts of arbitrary and oppressive taxation. Even if all the Turks were removed from Europe, European trade would not suffer for this reason.”

It is the Greek and Slavonic bourgeoisie that has brought civilization to the Ottoman territories. The Turks would soon disappear if it weren't for their monopoly of civil and military power. And Turks would disappear off the face of Europe once they lost this monopoly.

Marx: What is the reason for the deep interest of the Russians in Hellas?

In his article entitled “The Story of the Life of Lord Palmerston”²², *Marx* makes reference to the concept of Philhellenism which was a very common and current intellectual movement in Europe and was functionalized as one of the intellectual roots of Orientalism, at a time when the Greek insurrection of independence was successful with the active support of European powers at the end of the 1820s.

As conveyed by *Marx*, Russians did not care much about the freedom and religion of Greece. It was the traditional policy of Russia “*to excite the Greeks to revolt, and, then, to abandon them to the revenge of the Sultan. So deep was her sympathy for the regeneration of Hellas, that she treated them as rebels at the Congress of Verona, acknowledging the right of the Sultan to exclude all foreign intervention between himself and his Christian subjects.*”

With the above sentences, *Marx* clearly expresses that the Russians, ironically, have nothing to do with Philhellenism in essence, but they try to exploit the idea of Philhellenism just for the sake of their own expansionist goals. According to these views of *Marx*, Russia is not being honest about Greece, and is trying to create a vassal Greece under its control, instead of a “*free and independent Greece*”. Indeed, the course of events has also confirmed *Marx*. As a matter of fact, especially based on the Ancient Greek cultural accumulation, both Philhellenism and Anti-Turkism are a means to expand the spheres of influence and exploitation of European states. Which of these tools should be used is decided according to the state of affairs.

Marx “The Greek Insurrection²³: Greeks of Thessaly are more afraid of their Greek compatriots than of the Turks themselves.

The Greeks revolted against the Ottoman State administration in 1821 with the objective of gaining their national independence. This revolt paved the way

22 Karl Marx: “The Story of the Life of Lord Palmerston”; (In.) Op cit., pp. 353- 418

23 Karl Marx: “Der griechische Aufstand” (The Greek Uprising); (In.): Op cit., pp. 132- 134

for the emergence and spread of a Philhellenic climate in Europe, especially in Germany and France. Philhellenism is one of the main roots of Orientalism that took shape in the first half of the 19th century.

According to *Marx*'s analysis in his article printed in March 1954, "*the insurgents were found exclusively among the mountaineers inhabiting the southern slope of the Pindus, and that they met with no sympathy on the part of the other Christian races of Turkey, save the pious freebooters of Montenegro; and that the occupants of the plains of Thessaly, who form the only compact Greek community still living under Turkish supremacy, are more afraid of their compatriots than of the Turks themselves. It is not to be forgotten that this spiritless and cowardly body of population did not dare to rise even at the time of the Greek war of independence.*"

"*As to the remainder of the Greek race, numbering perhaps 300,000 souls, distributed throughout the cities of the Empire, they are so thoroughly detested by the other Christian tribes that, whenever a popular movement has been successful, as in Serbia and Wallachia, it has resulted in driving away all the priests of Greek origin, and in supplying their places by native pastors.*"

As revealed by the above determinations, although he affirmed the insurgence between 1821 and 1828, which he referred to as the Greek War of Independence, *Marx* was not a blinded Philhellenist. *Marx*'s assessment that "*the insurgents of Montenegro are seen by the other Greeks who form a compact community as more terrible and dangerous than the Turks themselves*" is also quite interesting. This evaluation can be regarded as a proof that even in the 1850s a significant part of the Greeks were pleased with the Ottoman rule in spite external provocations. This assessment is also interesting in that it demonstrates that the Ottoman government is well aware of the right to freely organize religious affairs granted to its non-Muslim subjects in circles that affect formation of public opinion in Europe.

In line with *Marx*'s assessments, although, on the whole, the Greeks are too clever to believe in such "*fancies*", "*they may even dream of a Byzantine restoration.*" Indeed, he asserts that the great end aimed at by the western Powers is "*to put the Christian religion on a footing of equal rights with the Muslims in Turkey.*" According to *Marx*, this is only possible by "*granting political and civil rights, both to Muslims and Christians, without any reference to either religion, and without considering religion at all.*" In other words, it means "*the complete separation of State and Church, or of Politics and Religion.*"

The above analysis of *Marx* also demonstrates that legal equality of people belonging to various religions on the basis of citizenship can only be possible within the framework of a secular state and social order. In fact, the founders and

developers of modern Turkey served with the awareness that secularism is the basic and indispensable principle that frees the mind and helps its nationals or subjects to become citizens.

The Turks have granted freedom of belief to the Christians

Marx explicates how the Ottomans achieved such an important cultural synthesis as follows: “*In the Ottoman Empire in conformity with the Oriental notions of the Turks, the Byzantine theocracy has been allowed to develop itself to such a degree, that the parson of a parish is at the same time the judge, the mayor, the teacher, the executor of testaments, the assessor of taxes. This ubiquitous factotum of civil life is not the servant, but the master of all work. The main reproach to be cast upon the Turks in this regard is not that they have crippled the privileges of the Christian priesthood, but, on the contrary, that under their rule this all-embracing oppressive tutelage, control, and interference of the Church has been permitted to absorb the whole sphere of social existence.*”

Marx saw the transitivity of social and cultural accumulation and processes in Anatolia under Ottoman administration. As a derivative of this view, he makes insightful historical determinations regarding the new qualities acquired by the Ottoman / Turkish culture together with the Byzantine cultural accumulation. In this context, he undeniably justifies the fact that the attitudes of Western states are totally inadequate. In the said article, he expresses in a definite manner that the Ottomans granted great privileges to their Christian subjects, as well as those from other religions, in regulating religious affairs. Furthermore, he hints that Christian clergymen used the privileges provided by the Ottoman administration for their own interests, and that they abused this freedom in order to suppress and exploit their fellow Christians.

Engels: “Germany and Pan-Slavism”²⁴

Friedrich Engels also distinguished himself as a prominent researcher on Pan-Slavism. One of the main topics of this article, which was first published on April 21 1855 and thematizes Germany’s attitude towards Pan-Slavist movement, is again Turkey. The reason behind this is that an important portion of the people living in the territories of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans at the time were of Slavic origin. Therefore, any event that may give rise to a change in the status of the people of Slavic origin directly concerns the Ottoman administration.

According to *Engels’* explication and conception, “*Pan-Slavism is not merely a movement for national independence, it is a movement that strives to undo what*

24 *Friedrich Engels: “Deutschland und der Panslawismus” (Germany and Pan-Slavism): (In.): Op cit, pp. 193- 199*

the history of a thousand years has created, which cannot attain its ends without sweeping Turkey, Hungary and half Germany off the map of Europe, a movement which—should it achieve this result—cannot ensure its future existence except by subjugating Europe. Pan-Slavism has now developed from a creed into a political program, with 800,000 bayonets at its service. It leaves Europe with only one alternative: subjugation by the Slavs, or the permanent destruction of the centre of their offensive force—Russia.”

In accordance with the understanding that emerges in the above determinations, Pan-Slavism is an ideological-nationalist movement that tends to become biased enough to disregard even the facts that have emerged in an historical process of a thousand years. This biased mentality aims to change the balance and the face of Europe, especially Turkey, Hungary and a portion of Germany. Pan-Slavism cannot be wrapped in the veil of national independence, although it is out of the question to reach or keep up any results. Even if this happens, such an attitude is unacceptable owing to its devastating consequences.

Marx: “Greece and Turkey—Turkey and the Western Powers-”²⁵

According to what *Marx* writes in his article dated 21 April 1854, the Greek Attaché in Istanbul was supporting every incident against the Ottoman Empire in violation of the diplomatic rules, thus “*abusing the power granted to him by the Porte.*” As *Marx* continues his discussion, he mentions the following acts of the Greeks aimed at disturbing peace and order in Istanbul: “*As the Hellenic inhabitants of Constantinople had uttered loud threats of setting Constantinople on fire and pillaging it before their marching off, extraordinary measures have been taken by the Government. The Turks patrol by day and night. Greeks confessing the Roman-Catholic religion have been allowed to remain on the responsibility of the Catholic Bishops of Pera.*”

As conveyed by *Marx*, Greeks belonging to the Roman-Catholic religion have addressed a petition to the Porte, sharply censuring and opposing the Greek insurrection, and pleaded with the Government to except them from the general measures. A deputation of the Greek subjects of the Porte from Thessaly have arrived in Constantinople and requested protection from the Government complaining that “*Hellenian robbers, as whole villages had been laid in ashes by them, and their inhabitants, without distinction of sex or age, dragged to the frontiers, there to be tormented in the cruelest manner.*”

In another article on the “Greek Insurrection” dated April 28, 1854²⁶, *Marx* addresses a letter published in the newspaper “*Moniteur*” sent from Vienna. The letter opens with the following sentences: “*The Greek insurrection does not make*

25 Karl Marx: “Griechenland und die Türkei-Die Türkei und die Westmaechte...” (Greece and Turkey—Turkey and the Western Powers...); (In.): Op cit, pp 205- 208.

26 Karl Marx: “Der griechische Aufstand” (The Greek Uprising); (In.): Op cit, pp. 209- 215

any progress in Epirus, but begins to show itself in its true character. If anybody could have thought that the interests of Christianity and nationality were anything else than a vain pretext, the acts of the chiefs of the Hellenic bands from the kingdom of Greece must dissolve all such doubts."

The said letter refers to the struggle between *Grivas* and *Tsavellas* with respect to the chief command of the insurgents and especially claims that "*Grivas, especially, has only carried pillage and incendiarism to the Christian re'ayas (Ottoman subjects OBK), of whom he pretends to be the liberator and this chief went to demand hospitality of the Greek Primate and left the day after, but not until he had pillaged his house, and carried off his wife by force.*" Thereupon, the Primate has gone to *Abdi Pasha* and asked permission to serve under his orders with a view to revenge himself for this savage act.

According to what is said in the letter, the insurgent chief has continued his acts of pillage and incendiarism in a town that helped him under the misleading Russian propaganda. He has imposed a "*patriotic tax*" upon the Christians residents. He has asked them to deposit, "*all articles of luxury in gold or silver as an offering.*"

Marx also includes some press evaluations in "*The Bombardment of Odessa - Greece*"²⁷, an article dated 02 May 1854 in which he critically describes the Greek Insurgence. Accordingly, "*the European residents at Athens have to undergo all sorts of insults. They are even assailed with sticks, no obstacle being opposed by the Greek gendarmerie.*" As conveyed by *Marx*, the insurgent *Danilo (Prince Daniel)* makes an exhilarating public proclamation to the soldiers and their commanders so as to increase their willingness to fight: "*I order the chiefs to assemble each his tribe. Each soldier is to declare spontaneously whether he is ready to march with me against the Turk, the common enemy of our faith and of our land. But I conjure all those who are not ready to brave death, to stay at home. Thus I invite all gallant men who do not hesitate to spill their blood for their country, the Orthodox Church and the holy cross, to share with me in the glory and the honor. Let us meet to fight, in the holy name of God.*" It can be said that *Marx* clearly distanced himself from nationalist movements, and deemed such movements as nationalist attempts lacking social content aimed at sustaining or consolidating the existing system of exploitation.

Marx: Turkey is a keystone of the European system

Marx also addresses the Eastern Question in his important essay "*The War Debates in Parliament*"²⁸ dated 27 June 1854. Blaming the British government

27 "Karl Marx: "Das Bombardement Odessas- Griechenland..." (The Bombardment of Odessa - Greece ...); (In.): Op cit, pp. 216- 222.

28 Karl Marx: "Die Kriegsdebatten im Parlament" (The War Debates in Parliament); (In.): Op cit, pp. 299-

for not taking an “open, honest, determined and consistent” course, Marx asserts that before the signing of the Treaty of Adrianople, “*Britain had never contemplated constituting Greece an independent kingdom, but only as a vassal state under the suzeraineté (suzerainty) of the Porte, somewhat similar to Wallachia and Moldavia.*” After the treaty of Adrianople was signed, “*the condition of the Turkish Empire appeared to them so perilous, and its existence so precarious*”, that Britain proposed to convert Greece from a vassal state into an independent kingdom. Thus, Britain supposedly tried to counteract further weakening of Turkey by dismembering its provinces from the whole.

Criticizing the Greek policy taken by the British Administration with the above statements, Marx, as a matter of fact, approves Greece’s independence from the Ottoman Empire and conversion into an autonomous state. Therefore, Marx’s criticism of the British Administration regarding Greece originates from the fact that this country has entered Russia’s sphere of influence and the British administration has kept silent on the issue.

Interestingly, an issue which was addressed by Marx in his article “*The War Debates in Parliament*”²⁹ dated July 25, 1854 and which is still valid today within the context of Turkey’s prospective European Union membership is also associated with the admission of Turkey into the European concert. While a protocol signed on 9 April 1854 proposed the admission of Turkey into the European concert, Russia stated that it was ready to adopt everything contained in the protocol, except this particular principle, and strongly opposed the admission of Turkey into the European concert.

Turkey’s “*admission into the European concert*” also constitutes one of the main topics of Marx’s article “*The War Debates in the House of Commons*”³⁰ dated 28 July 1854. According to the comments of Marx in this article, by working up “*a military insurrection in Turkey*” the Western Powers “*would render one service to progress the service of revolutionizing Turkey, that keystone of the antiquated European system.*”

With this particular determination, Marx reveals that Turkey is regarded as an integral part of the European system. Furthermore, the same determination indicates that Turkey is part of the antiquated European system. If Western states contributed to Turkey’s reforming and renewing itself, they would also help the renewal of the European system that was unable to survive any longer. Such a

307

29 Karl Marx: “Die Kriegsdebatten im Parlament” (The War Debates in Parliament); (In.): Op cit, pp. 356-363

30 Karl Marx: “... Die Kriegsdebatte im Unterhaus” (...The war debates in the House of Commons); (In.): Op cit, pp. 364-374

service is, in the broadest sense, a service to progress. In the author's own words, it is "*a service of revolutionizing Turkey.*"

The Turks are a powerful and honest people

In his article "*Eccentricities of Politics*"³¹ dated 10 July 1855, Marx quotes the following views from Prussian Field Marshall *Karl Friedrich von dem Knesebeck's* thought-provoking pamphlet relating to the equilibrium of Europe, composed at the meeting of the Vienna Congress: "*The Turks are a powerful and honest people; quiet for centuries among themselves, if you leave them undisturbed, confidence may be placed in them. Have they ever deceived you? Are they not sincere and frank in their policy? Brave and warlike indeed; but this is wholesome and good for more reasons than one.*"

"They are the best bulwark against the encroachment of the Asiatic surplus population, and just because they have a footing in Europe they ward off every encroachment. 'A separate Grecian' or Byzantine 'State is, therefore, to be founded! Would this ameliorate the condition of Europe? In the state of torpidity into which that people' (the Greeks) 'have sunk, would not Europe, on the contrary, be obliged to be continually under arms to protect itself against the returning Turks? Would not Greece become merely a Russian colony, in consequence of the influence which Russia would possess over this State through religion, commerce and interest?"

"Rather let the Turks alone where they are, and do not arouse the restless power while it reposes. 'But,' exclaims a well-meaning philanthropist, 'men are maltreated there (in Turkey OBK). The most beautiful part of the world, including the ancient Athens and Sparta, is inhabited by barbarians!' 'It may be all true, my friend!. Before you change anything, think whether you could also better at the same moment; whether the bastinado and the rod, with Greek perfidy, would be easier to bear than the silk cord and a firman" with the Turks! The Turks are then to be maintained."

As can be seen, the Prussian war theorist *Knesebeck* particularly underlines the balancing position of the Turks between Europe and Asia. According to *Knesebeck*, the Turks are a bulwark preventing the influx of Asian people into Europe. Turks are also a major power that balances Russia, which was the very devil of Europe at that time.

Knesebeck's views on the Greeks as well as Greece are also quite interesting. Unlike many of his contemporaries, this Prussian does not behave like a blinded Philhellenist. The Greeks, according to him, "*are torpid and treacherous.*"

31 Karl Marx: "Eine sonderbare Politik" (*Eccentricities of Politics*); (In.): Op cit, pp. 305- 308

Therefore, establishing an independent Greek state means that Europe would always be obliged to protect it against the Turks. Turkey is in Europe and for European stability and security, should remain in Europe. Europe too must understand this fact.

The Turkish Empire will disintegrate and fall into the hands of European civilization!

One of the issues addressed in the above-mentioned letters, naturally enough, is the “*Eastern Question*” in parallel with the articles discussed earlier. In a letter to he wrote Engels on 10 March 1853, Marx describes this problem as the “*Detestable Oriental Question*.” To point out that that the topic does not concern him, he writes. “*What is to become of the Turkish Empire is Spanish to me.*” He reminds Engels, who is more intensely interested in the topic, of the fact that he “had to make a concession”. Marx asserts in the same letter that “*England will be compelled to come in on the revolutionary side*” when Turkey’s end comes. According to the author, “*disintegration of Mussulman Empire is inevitable*”. The Turkish Empire “*will fall into the hands of European civilization one way or the other.*”

This particular determination by Marx can also be interpreted in keeping with his discourse or thought that “*an advanced civilization dissolves an unadvanced one, making it look like itself*” with regard to India, which I will discuss in a separate section. In accordance with this approach, the “*Muslim empire*”, which is technologically and economically underdeveloped, will naturally fall into the hands of the European civilization, which, naturally enough, is a more advanced civilization in those areas. This is a purely Orientalist approach.

Turkish peasant is the ablest and most moral representatives of European peasantry

The following assessment in a letter Marx wrote to Wilhelm Liebknecht, one of the prominent leaders of the German Social Democratic Party in Leipzig on 04 February 1878, indicates that some aspects of the philosopher’s views of Turkey had changed in a positive direction over time. Marx writes the following in the said letter: “*We are most decidedly espousing the Turkish cause and for 2 reasons: 1) because we have studied the Turkish peasant (stressed by Marx; OBK)—i.e. the mass of the Turkish people—and in this way have come to see him as indubitably one of the ablest and most moral representatives of the peasantry in Europe; 2) because the defeat of the Russians would have greatly expedited social revolution in Russia, of which all the elements are present in abundant measure, and hence radical change throughout Europe.*”

In this context, *Marx* refers to the belief that possible defeat of the Russians “will greatly expedite radical change throughout Europe.” In his letter, the philosopher states that the British administrators seriously damaged the warfare skills of the Turks owing to their hypocritical attitude; and in this regard, Austria “prevented the Turks from enjoying the fruits of their victories in Montenegro.”

Furthermore he claims that the Turks laid the foundation of their own defeat because they “failed to stir up revolution in Constantinople”; thus, allowed *Damat Mahmud Pasha*, the representative of the *Seraglio Régime* and the real power behind the war, “to systematically paralyze the Turkish army.”

Marx: If Turkey falls apart, European political order suffers total collapse

In the same letter, *Marx* analyzes another aspect of this state of affairs with the following systematic approach: “Turkey and Austria were the last bulwarks of the old European political order that was patched up again in 1815; with their downfall it will suffer total collapse.”

At a time when pragmatic discussions are held on questions such as “To what extent is Turkey European?” or “What benefit can Turkey provide for Europe?” with regard to historical-cultural bases of the European political system, the depth of this consideration made by *Marx* 130 years ago is such as to shed light on the future. This particular determination can be interpreted as follows: If the European political system is a derivative of historical developments, and indeed it is, then Turkey, which shapes this said history together with Europe, is a constitutive and an essential element of this political system. As can be seen from these articles by *Marx* and *Engels*, it can be said that *Marx* developed a relatively more positive image of the Turk compared to *Engels*, who harbored hatred against Turks.

Friedrich Nietzsche’s Philhellenism and Turkish Image

Nietzsche makes interesting assessments on the history of Western culture in his work entitled “The Struggle between Science and Wisdom”. *Nietzsche* posited that “Hellenism was weakened, Romanized, coarsened, turned decorative; then welcomed as decorative culture into alliance by a weakened Christianity, and diffused by force among uncivilized peoples—that is the history of Western civilization”³² (Vol. III, p. 336).

32 The source used in this study: Friedrich Nietzsche: “Werke in Drei Bänden” (Works in Three Volumes); (Edited by: Karl Schlechta), Scientific Book Society, 1997, Darmstadt. Since all three volumes in question were published by the same publisher, in the same year and by the same person, I was content with just giving the volume and page number as references in the article.

Nietzsche's admiration for the Ancient Greek cultural accumulation manifests itself in his views towards the Greeks and the qualities he attributes to them. In this regard, the philosopher makes reference to a Chinese proverb in order to describe the personality traits of ancient Greeks. According to the said proverb, Chinese mothers give the following advice to their children: "*Reduce your heart!*"

Claiming that this basic emotion is true for all subsequent civilizations, the philosopher makes the following considerations:

- "*I have no doubt that an Ancient Greek would immediately recognize the self-reducing nature of us Europeans today*" (Vol. II, p. 740).
- Again as asserted by the philosopher: "*Every Hellene competes with his fellow Hellenes for virtue*" (Vol. I, p. 606).
- Greeks are "*the greatest masters*" (Vol. I, p. 110). "*They are the shining leaders of the Europeans*" (Vol. I, p. 126).
- "*Greeks are the creators of real art*" (Vol. I, p. 369). "*Europe owes its scientific conception to the Greeks*" (Vol. I, p. 610).

It might be useful to provide the original names and pages of individual works and / or articles in each volume so that the reader can compare the sources of the quotations and references I have included in this book.

Works in Volume I include: "Die Geburt der Tragodie oder Griechentum und Pessimismus" (The Birth of Tragedy, or Hellenism and Pessimism) (pp. 7- 134); "Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen" (Untimely Considerations) (pp. 135- 367); "Menschliches, Allzumenschliches. Ein Buch für freie Geister" (Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits) (Volume I of this book: pp. 437- 736; Volume II: pp. 737- 871); "Morgenröte, Gedanken über die moralischen Vorurteile" (Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality) (pp. 1009- 1279).

Works in Volume II include: "Die fröhliche Wissenschaft" (The Happy Science) (pp. 7- 274); "Also sprach Zarathustra" (Thus Spoke Zarathustra) (pp. 275- 561); "Jenseits von Gut und Böse" (Beyond Good and Evil) (563- 759); "Zur Genealogie der Moral" (On the Genealogy of Morals) (pp. 761- 938); "Der Fall Wagner" (The Wagner Case) (pp. 901- 938); "Götzen-Dämmerung Oder Wie man mit dem Hammer philosophiert" (Twilight of the Idols or How to Philosophize with a Hammer) (pp. 939- 1033); "Nietzsche contra Wagner" (Nietzsche against Wagner) (pp. 1035- 1061); "Ecco Homo" (Here's Man) (pp. 1063- 1159); "Der Anti Christ" (The Anti Christ) (pp. 1161- 1235); "Dionysos" (Dionysus) (pp. 1237- 1263).

Works in Volume III include: "Autobiographisches aus den Jahren 1856- 1869" (Autobiographical Information from the Years 1856-1869) (pp. 7- 154); "Homer oder klassische Philosophie" (Homer or Classical Philosophy) (s. 155- 174); "Über die Zukunft unserer Bildungsanstalten" (On the Future of Our Educational Institutions) (pp. 175- 263); "Fünf Vorreden zu fünf ungeschriebenen Büchern" (Five Prefaces to Five Unwritten Books) (pp. 265- 299); "Mahnruf an die Deutschen" (Reminder to the Germans) (pp. 303- 307); "Über die Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralischen Sinn" (On Truth and Lie in an Extra-moral Sense) (pp. 309- 332); "Wir Philologen" (We Philologists) (pp. 323- 332); "Wissenschaft und Weihen im Kampfe" (Science and Consecration in Battle) (pp. 333- 348); "Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen" (Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks) (pp. 349- 413); "Aus dem Nachlass der Achtzigerjahre" (From the Estate of the Eighties) (pp. 415- 925); "Briefe" (Letters) (pp. 927- 1352).

- “*Only the Greeks have the profound and pure philosophical definition of friendship*” (Vol. I, p. 636).
- “*When we speak of the Greeks, we involuntarily speak of today and yesterday*” (Vol. I, p. 818).
- “*The Greeks are indescribably logical and simple in all their thought*” (Vol. II, p. 91).

For Nietzsche, who accepts Eastern-Western synthesis as a derivative of Greek cultural accumulation, Greeks are also:

- “*the best heirs and students of Asia*” (Vol. II, p. 701);
- “*political people*” (Vol. III, p. 281);
- “*the most humane men of ancient times, have in themselves a trait of cruelty, of tiger-like pleasure in destruction*” (Vol. III, p. 291);
- “*face the danger of laying in virtuosity of all kinds*” (Vol. III, p. 337).

Assuming that the Greeks are furnished with an extraordinary skill in a variety of domains such as art, science and philosophy, *Nietzsche* continues his evaluations exalting the Greeks as follows:

- “*The Greeks, with their truly healthy culture, have once and for all justified philosophy simply by having engaged in it.*” (vol. III, p. 353);
- “*The Greeks are amazing in learning art in a productive manner*” (Vol. III, p. 355);
- “*The Greeks were able to discover the most distinctive philosophical minds (philosophers OBK); their successors in the whole world failed to find any other minds to add to the list of these people*” (Vol. III, p. 356);
- “*The Greeks have sages; other peoples have saints*” (Vol. III, p. 356);
- “*For the Greek, man was the truth and the essence of objects*” (Vol. III, p. 363);
- “*The Greek is the most ennobled type of man so far*” (Vol. III, p. 465).

These are but some of the generic determinations of *Nietzsche* related to Greeks. *Nietzsche* complains about the wasting of “*very expensive Greek mind and Greek blood!*” and asserts that “*how to live a good life can be demonstrated in Greek mind and blood*” (Vol. III, p. 344).

Indeed, "*ancient Greece has revealed all its power in the vast number of philosophers it has reared*" (vol. III, p. 337). According to Nietzsche, "*in the Greek mothers the Greek genius again and again returned to nature*" and thus the "*Greek culture*", which the philosopher greatly approves of, "*was kept young for such a relatively long time*" (Vol. I, p. 259).

According to this unrestrained philosopher who glorified cultural and intellectual accumulation of the Hellenes, "*to rediscover the South in oneself and to stretch a clear, glittering and mysterious southern sky above one, and to become more super-national, more European, more super-European, more Oriental, and finally more Hellenic*" are extremely significant achievements and values. The philosopher also makes remarkable determinations related to the European culture, in other words, the roots and syntheses that constitute the European culture. Hellenes are over East-West, North-South, Europe-Asia dualities and supersede these territories.

In his second lecture "*On the Future of Our Educational Institutions*" delivered on 6 February 1872, Nietzsche describes the Greek Antiquity as the right and sole home of education. He states, "*The bond that truly links the innermost essence of the German with the genius of the Greek is a very mysterious one, extremely difficult to grasp.*" The difficulty stems from the comprehensive, profound and complicated nature of this mysterious bond, which is not a coincidental but rather constructive element as far as German culture is concerned. These evaluations are the expression of an understanding that regards Greek wisdom as an assurance against barbarism; longs for the Greeks; and consecrates the lands where Greek cultural accumulation was created. Moreover, these determinations are the substantial evidence of the fact that the philosopher deems the Ancient Greek accumulation as the fundamental root of the German mind / thought and culture.

Nietzsche's admiration for the Greek culture is not only limited to Antiquity. The following words explain the said disposition: "*Western culture bases its breakthrough on Greek culture.*" At this point, Nietzsche refers to the distinction between the old and the recent Hellenism and asserts that "*the more-recent and decadent Hellenism had the greatest historical force.*" Asserting that the older Hellenism was always "*falsely judged*", the philosopher underlines the assertion that "*one must be minutely acquainted with more recent type to distinguish it from the older type.*"

As the philosopher states in "*The Birth of Tragedy*", the dialogue, the most important part of Greek tragedy, "*is an image of the Greeks, whose nature reveals itself in dancing because in dancing the greatest power is only latent, betraying*

its presence in the lithe and rich movement" (Vol. I, pp. 55). As for the Hellenes, he writes the following in his essay "*Homer on Competition*", "*Every Hellene passes on the torch of the contest; every great virtue kindles a new greatness.*"

Again in his work entitled "*Homer or Classical Philosophy*", Nietzsche states that philologists constantly need the support of artists and people who have an artistic disposition. According to Nietzsche's assessment, "*the sword of barbarism hangs over the head of everyone who loses sight of the inexpressible simplicity and noble dignity of the Hellenic character*" (Vol. III, pp. 58- 59).

Accumulation and tradition of Hellenic spirit should be spread all over the world

As in the case of philosophy and culture, Nietzsche perceives the legal principle of existence or harmony of contrasts as a formative force. In this respect, he deems contrasts between brutality-philanthropy and killing-punishment as "*principles improving the Greek law.*" The philosopher thinks that noble culture has derived its first victory from the punishment of death and goes on saying, "*These lead to nausea at existence, to the view of existence as a punishment and to the belief in the identicalness of existence and liability*". However, these conclusions "*are not specifically Hellenic: in them Hellenic Greece meets India and the Orient in general.*" (Vol. III, pp. 292-293)

On the same point, the philosopher states that "*the mystery of the unity between German music and German philosophy*" can be understood by starting off from Hellenic counterparts. In his own words, "*this inestimable merit originates from the Hellenic example*". Nietzsche's tendency to glorify Hellene and to over-praise the Hellenic character explicitly concretizes in the parallelism between cultural development and Hellenization of the world. The philosopher equates "*the Hellenization of the world and, to make this possible, the Orientalization of the Hellenic.*"

According to Nietzsche, the harmonic interaction between the Hellenization of the world and the Orientalization of the Hellenic "*has determined the course of world history heretofore.*" The East-West interaction occurred so extensively that Christianity, one of the distinctive roots of European culture, for example, developed "*as part of the Eastern Antiquity*" (Vol. I, p. 380). According to Nietzsche's assessment, the spirit of the Hellenistic culture "*is found in today's Europe in an infinitely scattered manner.*" The following conclusion can be drawn from this determination: The essence of Hellenistic culture still survives in contemporary European culture. Contemporary European culture thrives on Hellenistic tradition. As inferred by the philosopher, who has internalized the Eurocentric

approach, the greatness of European culture originates from this. For this very reason, European culture, which bears the essence of a great culture like the Hellenistic culture, should spread over “*whole of the world*” by virtue of this quality. Indeed, as described by *Nietzsche*, “*the earth which so far has been Orientalized well enough longs for Hellenization again*” (Vol I, p. 380). Cultural Eurocentrism, which is based on the assumption that the European culture is higher than other cultures and which has led to the distribution of this assessment as a fundamental criterion, primarily originates from this particular approach.

Turks do not distinguish between man and destiny

Nietzsche also evaluated the Turks’ understanding of fate as an essential element of shaping life, just the way Russians do.

In the section entitled “*The Wanderer and His Shadow*” of his book “*Human, All Too Human*”, which he refers to as “*a book for freethinkers*”, the philosopher highlights the following views regarding the fatalism of the Turks: “*The fatalism of the Turk has this fundamental defect, that it contrasts man and fate as two distinct things. According to this doctrine, man may struggle against fate and try to baffle it, but in the end fate will always gain the victory. Hence the most rational course is to resign himself or to live as he pleases...The fear felt by most people of the doctrine that denies the freedom of the will is a fear of the fatalism of the Turk.*” (Volume 1, pp. 905-906)

According to *Nietzsche*, who describes the concept of the “*Fatalism of the Turk*”, which was conceptualized by Leibniz as the basis of the Orientalist and Eurocentric discourse, “*The Turks imagine that man will become weakly resigned and cannot alter anything of the future. Or that he will give a free rein to his caprices, because the predestined cannot be made worse by that course. The follies of men are as much a piece of fate as are his wise actions, and even that fear of belief in fate is a fatality.*”