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The Turkey effect

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The collapse of Russia in the late 1980s and the failure of Western Europe to graduate from American tutelage have left America the only superpower in the world, an unprecedented political event in world history.

America's monopoly of world power is dangerous, however. The United States is now the new Roman Empire, but without the Roman Empire's Greek experience. Military America is now fortress America, dismissing international law and conventions while flirting with tyranny at home. The American military giant has already embarked on global conquest, starting with a war in Iraq for the control of Middle East oil.

Second, this new military America is also dismissing the Greek legacy of its Western culture. On November 4, 2004, George W. Bush, the first uncrowned emperor of the United States, recognized a former province of Yugoslavia as the Republic of Macedonia! Imagine the country of the lover of the Greeks, Thomas Jefferson, buying the lies of Bulgarians and Albanians trying to pass for Macedonians, who could only be Greek. Or, more accurately, Bush giving a Greek title to a former communist group of non-Greeks because they deploy a few soldiers in Iraq.

Third, America's military alliance in Europe, NATO, should have expired the moment Russia's communist empire expired. But it did not. NATO, emboldened by America, brought into its orbit countries that used to be part of the Soviet Union. Strangely, this European subsidiary to American power that includes Greece is reviving the cold war with Russia while treating Greece like a colony.

The main reason for the bad feelings between the NATO "allies" and Greece is the Turkey effect, the insulting decision of the United States to including Turkey, Greece's most bitter enemy, in NATO. The United States, working under the poisonous climate of the cold war, and not little self-interest, dismissed its cultural and political debt to the Greeks for the illusion of drawing Turkey against Russia. But Turkey only follows its own rules, pretending to be on the same fence with the West while remaining an Islamic country with deep historical hatred for the West. Turkey uses NATO

merely for upgrading its military. And because Turkey is convinced America is still fighting its cold war against Russia, it is possible that NATO encourages Turkey's outrageous behavior towards Greece.

In 1955, Turkey used a pogrom against the Greeks of Istanbul, destroying the property and livelihood of some 80,000 Greeks, in effect, exterminating millennia of Greek civilization in Asia Minor, the Greeks' Ionia. The British actively encouraged Turkey in that barbarous onslaught on the Greeks because the British hated the Cypriot Greeks who were resisting British colonialism in Cyprus. America dismissed the whole Turkish atrocity outright, telling Greek government officials to immediately shake hands with the Turks.

In 1974, with the blessings of England and those of America, Turkey invaded and captured a third of the Greek island of Cyprus. The Turks killed thousands of Greek Cypriots, forcing close to 200,000 to become refugees in their own land.

The Turks also plunder Cypriot antiquities, converting churches to stables and mosques, while vilifying Cyprus' 12-millennia-old culture and history.

The United Nations issued several resolutions condemning the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, urging Turkey out of Cyprus, but Turkey, knowing that America and England share its strategic interests, has been ignoring the United Nations.

Turkey also keeps violating Greek air space, provoking Greece to nearly daily confrontation. On May 23, 2006, such unfriendly behavior turned lethal. Greek and Turkish F-16 fighter jets "collided" over the Greek island of Karpathos in the Aegean, killing the Greek pilot.

Despite Turkey's aggression toward Greece, which is preparing the ground for war, the European Union, doing America's favor, is courting Turkey for a possible EU membership. And Greece, pretending to be overly forgiving or generous towards Turkey or, more likely, forced to a pro-Turkish attitude by EU or the US, has been an active booster for Turkey's membership to EU. Of course, the pro-Turkish policy of EU and US, based on the delusion EU membership would neutralize Turkey's Islam, strikes another blow against the Greek foundations of Western culture.

How could anyone expect more than 70 million Turkish Moslems, now governed by an Islamic government, to become Europeans? They have no legacy of European civilization. Thinking of Europe one immediately comes up with a galaxy of Greeks: Homeros, Aischylos, Sokrates, Platon, Hippokrates, Aristoteles, Aristarchos, Archimedes, Alexander the Great, Ploutarchos, Galen, Ptolemy; and another galaxy of non-Greek Europeans: Dante, Desiderius Erasmus, Philip Melanchthon, Galileo Galilei, Nicholas Copernicus, Isaac Newton, Beethoven, Voltaire, Friedrich Nietzsche, Emile Zola, Charles Darwin, Albert Einstein, Pablo Picasso, and Leo Tolstoy. But thinking of Turkey no name comes to mind, except the violent legacy of a state that terrorized and slaughtered the people of Southeastern Europe for about five centuries.

The Turks are still celebrating their capture, in 1453, of Constantinople, the capital of the Greek medieval empire. Turkey is the country that George Horton, the American consul general in the Ottoman Empire during World War I, described as “the blight of Asia.” The Ottoman Empire became Turkey while Horton observed its genocidal policies against its non-Moslem minorities. In early twentieth century, in fact, the Turks sealed the doors between them and Europeans: They killed 1.5 million Armenians; then they turned against the Greeks, murdering 1 million of them and expelling from Asia Minor another 1.5 million.

So the Turks don't fit in Europe: Turkish Islam and the exterminationist strategies of Turkey against the “infidel” non-Moslems are antithetical to Western values. Even the few millions of them living in Germany and other European countries, including Greece, find it difficult, if not impossible, to become European. They care less about the West. Turks in Greek Thrace look to Turkey for culture and protection. Next to Turkish aggression in the Aegean, they are the main trigger for a future Greco-Turkish war. Greece ought to find an acceptable humanitarian method of repatriating them to Turkey.

Fortunately, the people of France and Holland put the Turkish project of EU into deep freeze. They rejected the EU constitution primarily because of the Turkey effect.

If the Turks really want to join Europe, they will have to reinvent themselves, probably an impossible task. They never had a Renaissance, Enlightenment or Scientific Revolution. Theoretically, they must water

down their Islam, opening their culture to democracy, secular ideas, human rights, and the rule of law. They will have to start that process by coming to terms with their history, admitting and apologizing for their genocide against the Armenians and the Greeks. Second, they must change their behavior towards EU, which they claim they want to join. Congressman Donald M. Payne is right in suggesting that the Turkish government is displaying near contempt for policies affecting its European orientation.

Above all, Turkey must get out of Cyprus and cease provoking Greece. Both NATO and EU must oversee the removal of all Turkish forces and Turkish settlers from Cyprus. Failure in this crucial policy affecting a full member of EU, Cyprus, would have deleterious consequences for both alliances, including terminating any prospect for a European association of Turkey. The recent, 2002-2004, misuse of the United Nations by the United States and Britain to force the dissolution of the Republic of Cyprus by legitimizing the 1974 atrocity of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus should never be repeated or the “international system” will become meaningless. Fortunately, Greek Cypriots smelled the rat in the UN’s Annan plan, rejecting it in April 2004.

EU has also to become real EU by protecting its homeland first. The test of that solidarity ought to be in guaranteeing the integrity of Greek borders and the independence of Cyprus. If the majority of Cypriots decide Cyprus ought to become part of Greece, no one ought to prevent or be able to prevent such a union. In that case, Cypriot Turks should have the option of becoming Greek citizens or repatriate to Turkey.

If this modest proposal could materialize, especially now that the Middle East is in flames and Cyprus showed the world its hospitality and essentiality in a hazardous region, the Turks might decide that it would be in their interests to respect international treaties, a crucial requirement in becoming part of a civilized world.

It would help, of course, if Turkey’s patron, the US, ceased to boost its ego while distancing itself from Turkish policies. Start that transition by speaking truth to Turkey about Turkey’s genocidal past, standing by John M. Evans, American ambassador to Armenia who discussed publicly the Turks’ Armenian genocide. Yet the State Department fired Evans this past May, showing that the US is still doing the bidding of Turkey, a country unwilling to face its past. Unless and until that changes, Turkey remains a dangerous

country. And as long as America trades its values for the extremely unlikely prospect of Turkish alliance in its war against Islam, American policies will remain a double-edged sword for EU, Greece, Cyprus, and Armenia.

With this unsavory record, EU should test Turkish intentions and policies for at least a generation before deciding if Turkey could be trusted in Europe.

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