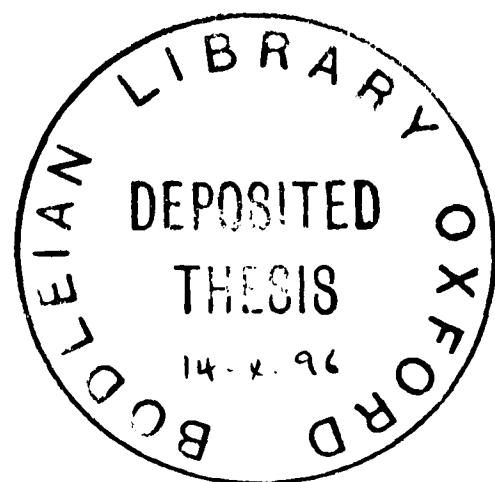


British Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire 1876-1908



Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the D.Phil. Modern History
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Abstract

The title of this thesis is 'British Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire (1876-1908)'. The thesis explores the 'cultural dimension' of relations between the Ottoman Empire and Britain in this period, involving an examination of ideas about and representations of Ottoman society and its peoples. The overall aim is to stress the importance of these representations in influencing and affecting relations between Britain and the Ottoman Empire.

Nineteenth-century writings about the Ottoman Empire produce strong images of Ottoman society and stereotypes of the Turkish and Christian populations. These images are reconstructed and their significance examined. The approach is contextual and perceptions are analysed in the historical, material and cultural framework of late Victorian Britain. Descriptions of Ottoman society are treated as representations of that complex reality, with varying degrees of accuracy and inaccuracy, reflecting or distorting conditions in the Empire. In addition the relationship between older ideas and ideas developing at a new historical conjuncture of late nineteenth-century imperialism are considered important factors in determining the overall image of the Ottoman Empire in the late Victorian mind.

In these ways the conclusion stresses the importance of, and the relationship between ideas about the Ottoman Empire, and the concrete factors of inter-state relations of which they are part. As such the subject contributes to an understanding of the multi-dimensional nature of nineteenth-century relations between a weak and strong state in the International system, and the degree to which culture and ideas are informed by these relationships of power. The study contributes to a greater understanding of the Eastern question and sheds light on many of the ideas that have come to influence modern historiography about the Ottoman past and the appreciation of Ottoman and European diplomatic history.

Abstract

The subject of this thesis whose title is 'British perceptions of the Ottoman Empire 1876-1908' bridges the field of nineteenth-century imperial and cultural history and the history of the Ottoman Empire. The study explores late Victorian ideas about the Ottoman Empire during a period of intense British and European economic and political involvement in Ottoman affairs. For the Ottoman Empire it was a time of rapid economic, political and territorial change. The Ottoman Empire was disadvantaged in many ways in its relationship with a strong European States system. The thesis stresses the importance of these relationships of power in the way that the Ottoman Empire was represented. It explores the ways in which older ideas about the Ottoman Empire were reframed in this new context of relations between a Britain as a strong power and the weak Ottoman Empire. The thesis contends that a greater understanding of Anglo-Ottoman relations can be achieved by viewing relations not only on the level of diplomacy but also on the level of ideas and culture, which is termed the 'cultural dimension' of inter-state relations.

The thesis departs from traditional approaches to the study of the Ottoman Empire which have generally focused on the diplomatic relations between Europe and the Empire, or on the development of nation states in the Balkans and Middle East out of the Ottoman past. These approaches, many of which themselves developed out of the tradition of thought laid down by nineteenth-century scholarship, have often been biased in their portrayal of the Ottoman Empire. Later historical accounts represent distinct 'opinions' and ideas which often overlook the complexity of conditions in the Ottoman Empire, because of the strongly interested nature of views.

The present study explores how ideas of a text book familiarity about the Ottoman Empire such as the 'sick man of Europe, as' the 'Islamic East', 'the persecutor of Christians' developed. It examines the historical nature of these later ideas and thus contributes to a greater understanding of Anglo-Ottoman relations. It shows the relationship between interests on many different levels and how ideas about other societies are produced and how images are constructed. Such an approach stresses the significance of perceptions and the role that ideas play in general in the process of inter-state relations.

The study is based on a wide range of published material, the most important of which

is travel and general literature, including studies and histories of the Ottoman Empire. In addition it has made use of periodical literature for this period. These writings were amongst the most influential in Britain as a source of general ideas about the Ottoman Empire. The approach to these sources is contextual. Perceptions and ideas are considered in the historical, political, economic and cultural context of late Victorian Britain. British perceptions are considered more as ideas with varying degrees of accuracy and inaccuracy than merely reflections of the 'reality' of Ottoman conditions. The language of description used by British writers and the resulting images have been analysed in a way that shows ideas to be constructions and representations of the complex reality of Ottoman society.

This research makes a contribution to several bodies of study and historical debate. It contributes to the study of ideas about the Middle East and Turkey which is part of the debate about how the Islamic world has been understood and represented in the West. To date there has been little written about the image of the Turk and this thesis thus makes an important contribution to this neglected subject. It illustrates the importance of ideas in their relationship to the wider context of relationships and contributes to a greater understanding of the relationship between ideas and policies of European states towards the non-European world. It makes a contribution to the Eastern Question by exploring this important cultural dimension and it sheds light on many of the ideas that have come to influence modern historiography of the Ottoman past and the appreciation of Ottoman and European diplomatic history.

Note on Terminology

In transliterating Turkish proper names and titles the transliteration system of the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies has been followed. The term Turk rather than Ottoman has been consistently used throughout to avoid confusion, except when reference is made to government and administration where the terms Ottoman Government, Ottoman rule and Ottoman Empire are used.

BRITISH PERCEPTIONS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE 1876-1908

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study in the history of ideas about Ottoman society and populations in the period 1876-1908. The idea for this subject developed out of historical interest in the Ottoman Empire and was informed and enriched by long-standing academic and personal involvement in the central and most directly related state to emerge out of the Ottoman past, the Republic of Turkey. Modern Turkey like the Ottoman Empire has experienced both the negative and positive impact of Europe. Consciously and unconsciously it still feels the pressure of the negative image of the Ottoman Empire projected by Europe onto the present day Republic. It was this link between past and present assumptions and images and a general awareness of the significance of ideas that initiated the present enquiry. The study sought to widen present understanding of past relations between Britain and the Ottoman Empire through consideration of this cultural dimension of diplomacy. The thesis reconstructs and examines perceptions about the Ottoman Empire in the context of late Victorian imperialism and considers the place of these ideas as a dimension of inter-state relations.¹

For over five hundred years the Ottoman Empire was in a close relationship with the states of Europe. For at least four hundred of these it was an enemy representing a rival religion to Christianity, and a military threat to Europe resulting from its presence in Eastern Europe, and in the former territories of the Byzantine Empire in Anatolia. Before the nineteenth century it was an object of fear, fascination, repulsion, religious antagonism and also occasionally a grudging respect and envy.² In the European imagination of the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire

¹ The effect of ideas can be seen most directly in issues relating to Turkey's proposal to gain entrance to the European Union and the negative response that this has generally received. Assumptions which are often negative in nature and based upon a cultural and religious prejudice are still present implicitly in the pronouncements of politicians, journalists and other commentators. For a discussion of Turkey's relationship with Europe especially on the level of culture see essays by Johnson, G et al. (1988) in *Turkey and Europe in Cultural Context* produced by the Centre of Middle Eastern Studies, Cambridge.

² For pre-nineteenth century ideas about the Ottoman Empire see: Chew (1965); Cunningham (1992), 79-114; Humphrey (1974); Jones (1978); Rose (1937); Rouillard (1938); Schwoebel (1937); Shaw and Heywood (1978); Vaughan (1957).

was the 'sick man of Europe', weak and declining and suffering a variety of ills. This image of sickness and decadence still forms an implicit part of the European consciousness and encompasses many notions about the nature of the Ottoman Empire and the Turk. Yet, the image of weakness, unlike the image of greatness, has not to date attracted substantial scholarly attention.³

British ideas about India, China, Persia, Egypt and the Arab Middle East in general have been explored, but not ideas about the Ottoman Empire except for periods before the nineteenth century, or studies specific to nineteenth-century crises such as the Greek War of Independence 1821-31, the Balkan crisis of 1875-8 or the Armenian question of 1894-6.⁴ Studies of these crises generally focus on diplomacy and the documentation of reactions, rather than images of the Ottoman Empire and often the standard 'truths' about the Ottoman Empire are reiterated and reinforced in these accounts. There is no comprehensive study that has considered the place of the Ottoman Empire in British or European thought in the nineteenth century which was a period of intense involvement and interconnected histories between these states. Studies of the Ottoman Empire in general have concentrated on the history of diplomacy, the development of nationalism and the internal development of Ottoman society. The study of ideas and the role that they played in relations between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, which forms the subject of this thesis have been less well researched.

Although the history of ideas about the Ottoman Empire has not been comprehensively studied, there are nonetheless strong, definite and enduring images and assumptions now of a text book familiarity about 'the sick man of Europe', 'the unspeakable Turk' and 'Ottoman decline'. These notions are echoed in twentieth century literature dealing with the Ottoman Empire, which includes the diplomatic study of the Eastern Question and Balkan and Arab Nationalist

³ Studies of this image are few in number and have generally concentrated on short periods of time in which the focus has been less on images but more on the effects on British society. See: Cunningham (1992), which is a short essay exploring the notion of the 'Sick man of Europe'; Shannon (1963); Wirthwein (1935).

⁴ For studies of other non-European societies see: Bearce (1961), for India; Curtin (1968), for Africa; Daniels (1960, 1966); Kabbani (1988) and Nasir (1979), for the Islamic world; Gail (1951), for Persia; Roberts (1988), for China; Yokoyama (1988), for Japan. For reactions to the Balkan crisis of 1875-8 see: Shannon (1963); Wirthwein (1935). For studies of the Armenian question see: Salt (1992).

historiographies. These are generally based on notions and assumptions such as: the 'decline' of the Ottoman Empire, the 'unnaturalness' of the Ottoman state, the Ottoman Empire as the 'persecutor' of Christians, the idea of the 'retrogressive' effect of Ottoman rule. Many notions about the Empire are negative in the extreme and the Ottoman Empire appears as the state upon which all later problems of development are blamed. These ideas constitute a version of history in which the ending of the Ottoman Empire is depicted as the desired, natural and inevitable end. Many accounts are strongly influenced by political, religious, nationalist and cultural bias.⁵

Many of these assumptions have been challenged in the work of Ottomanists both in Turkey and elsewhere, who have taken the study of the Ottoman Empire in its own right. This revision of the Ottoman past suggests that some of the notions which developed in the nineteenth century are questionable and can be approached as ideas and representations, rather than as accurate and irrefutable truths about the Ottoman world as they have sometimes been and are often still presented.⁶ The reign of Abdülhamid (1876-1908) in particular has been more subject to assumptions and bias than other period of nineteenth-century Ottoman History.⁷ The overwhelming image of the Ottoman Empire in this period is negative in contrast to the Tanzimat period which precedes it and also the Young Turk period which succeeds the reign. The negative image is found both in contemporary and also later perceptions.⁸ Much of the negativity surrounds the perception of the reign as pan-Islamic, anti-Christian, and anti-Western. Contemporary and secondary writings are full of imagery about the cruelty and fanaticism of the Turk and the decadence and decay of the Empire. It is this negative image which predominates in the period 1876-1908.

Late nineteenth-century ideas are differentiated from ones earlier in the century by their lack of relativism and general intolerance towards the Ottoman Empire. Ideas range from an

⁵ See Seton-Watson (1935); Shannon (1963); Vuchinich (1955). See also Yapp (1987) 92-6 for a critique of this literature.

⁶ For studies of the Ottoman Empire that have proved corrective see: Braude and Lewis (1982), 2 Vols; Inalcik (1973); Jelavich (1983), I; Shaw and Shaw (1987), II; Vuchinich (1954).

⁷ For a discussion of the historiography of this period see: Koloğlu (1987)

⁸ There is to date no comprehensive study of the reign of Abdülhamid and the reader is dependent on older, largely impressionistic accounts, amongst which are: Haslip (1958); Pears (1917); Wittlin (1940).

extreme and total condemnation of Ottoman society, to less negative ones that mock rather than condemn, but which are nonetheless dismissive in tone. Perceptions share a common language of description which is imbued with notions about the racial, religious and cultural superiority of Europe and assumptions about civilised and uncivilised races. This language is widespread and represents a collective framework for the expression of ideas about Ottoman society and peoples. In contemporary accounts the Ottoman Empire emerges as a decadent and backward society and the Turk as inferior, unprogressive, fanatical, incapable of progress, change or reform. In contrast to this negative image of the Turk is a positive image of the Christian populations of the Empire who are represented as progressive, linked to Europe by religion, race and culture and capable of improvement. Although there are ideas that depart from purely negative depictions, positive representations are not dominant in the writings of this period. Overall, there is a shift in perception away from views that are favourable towards the Ottoman Empire and the Turks, to ones that are negative, contemptuous and intolerant.

This study focuses on these dominant perceptions as they developed in the period 1876-1908 and explores their significance. It examines the most important themes and ideas about the Ottoman Empire as they emerged in the context of late Victorian society and culture. It shows how the late nineteenth-century image of the Ottoman Empire is affected by the imperialist context of relations to produce an overwhelmingly negative image. British representations of the Ottoman Empire in this period created a context of thinking and ideas about the Ottoman Empire which were influential both at the time and in later years contributing eventually to the erosion of the traditional policy of support. From the beginning of the period in 1876 this change in thinking is evident and is part of a more general shift in British views towards the non-European world as a consequence of European imperialism. It is this particular culture of imperialism which determines perceptions of the Ottoman Empire throughout this period 1876-1908. Negative ideas about the Ottoman Empire formed part of a wider context of relations and contributed to the diminution of support evident at a later time. The contribution of the study lies in giving importance to the wider process of inter-state relations.

Scope and Focus of Thesis: The Balkans and Anatolia

The thesis focuses on perceptions of two main areas of the Ottoman Empire: the Balkan provinces and Anatolia. Writers and observers in Britain made a mental and political division

between different areas, such as the Balkans, Anatolia and the predominantly Arabic speaking areas, which constitute the modern Middle East. This study is delimited to those areas that are roughly analogous to the present day Republic of Turkey including Istanbul and Anatolia and the former areas of Ottoman rule in the Balkans. It begins with an examination of ideas about the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire and looks at the main ideas which developed out of the crisis of 1875-8, moving on in later chapters to consider Anatolia.

Perceptions are placed in a broad framework both conceptually and also in the range of subjects and time period covered. The thesis is organised into chapters dealing with the Balkans and Anatolia divided respectively in time by the Congress of Berlin in 1878. This division in time and areas coincides with the production of literature about these areas both before and after 1878. During the Eastern crisis 1875-8 there was a proliferation of literature about the Balkans and other aspects of Ottoman society. The quantity of writing about the Balkans then diminishes as British and European attention shifts away from the area after the Congress of Berlin and interest moves to other parts of the Empire. Anatolia comes into public view from this time attracting minor but yet reasonably constant attention from 1878, and especially in the mid-1890s as a result of the Armenian question 1894-6. It too then subsides in the public mind as the crisis passes away.

The Congress of Berlin of 1878 represented both historically and conceptually a new moment in Anglo-Ottoman relations and is thus important for the study of British ideas about the Ottoman Empire. This new moment constituted a confirmation of the power of Europe in deciding the affairs of the Empire. It corresponded to a general change in British and European consciousness and understanding of the non-European world which paralleled and worked in conjunction with the process of European expansion and colonisation. The Congress of Berlin therefore provides both an historical and also an intellectual divide for British thinking about the Ottoman Empire. After 1878 the Ottoman domain was no longer considered an essential territory to protect. Rather, it too like other areas of Asia and Africa was considered an area of European imperial interest. This reality of relations and power affected British perceptions of the Ottoman Empire and was representative of a developing imperial consciousness in Britain from the late 1870s. Although this shift in consciousness and policy is evident in perceptions of the Balkans before 1878 in the desire to end Ottoman rule there, it is stronger and more explicit in the period after this time. The study traces this theme of Western dominance and Victorian self perceptions

of their own superiority in society, economy, religion and culture. These are the standards against which Ottoman society was measured and compared.⁹

Travel, periodical and other general literature in book and pamphlet form contributed to these images of the Turk and Christian populations in the Balkans. Travel literature the product of short or long term visits and residence occupied a central place in image making about the Ottoman Empire. Travel accounts both for the Balkans and Anatolia were a popular genre of literature and had an authority by virtue of their first hand nature. Writers claimed accuracy in their depiction of other societies and projected their narratives in ways that suggested to their audiences that they were merely the recorders of peoples and scenes visited and seen. Yet it is amongst these writings that the greatest degree of construction of images occurs. Travel writings generally constitute subjective impressions and are imaginative reconstructions of conditions which provide great licence for the author to invent as he places an interpretation on what he sees. The traveller travels with preconceptions taken in part from previous literature about the Ottoman Empire, or the East in general and he travels with the prejudices and standards of judgement of Victorian culture. These factors contribute to the image which emerges of the Ottoman Empire and the ways in which a common source of ideas is drawn upon is emphasised. Travel writers often saw themselves as the successors of previous generations of travellers and occasionally as pioneers, the latter category debateable because of their preconceptions about the area, which provide a ready made framework of understanding of what they saw. Knowledge gained on contact was thus refracted through many filters to produce an overall picture of conditions and peoples in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰

Other forms of general or non-travel literature including histories and studies of the Balkans and Anatolia and writings in book, pamphlet, and periodical form produced during and after the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 were also important in their contribution to a negative image of the Turk and Ottoman rule. In addition to books periodical literature was one of the main

⁹ For the Congress of Berlin see: Anderson (1983); Medlicott (1938).

¹⁰ For studies of travel literature as a genre see: Adams (1988); Dodd Ed. (1982); Pratt (1992); Sampson (1970). For bibliographical guides in addition to the Bodleian Library pre-1920 catalogues of writings and the British Library catalogues see: Bevis (1982); Cox (1935); Hamilton (1988); Weber (1953).

forms of writing and the expression of opinion in the nineteenth century.¹¹ Articles in periodicals were intended to provide an educated commentary on a wide range of contemporary, and historical political, cultural and literary issues, and subjects. Periodical articles that deal with the subject of the Ottoman Empire were generally produced at times of crisis such as that of 1875-8 and 1894-6 when the Ottoman Empire emerged into public view. However, writers are not only expressing opinions about the diplomatic crisis of the day, but also provide much in the way of an ethnographic commentary on Ottoman society, the Turks and other peoples in the Empire. They therefore contribute to ideas about Ottoman Empire much in the same way as travel and general literature do. Discussion of Ottoman affairs in periodicals and journals of the time reflect the parameters of understanding and the types of ideas used to characterise the Empire. Periodicals both reflected and contributed to the culture and often had an opinion forming role. They constituted one of the main forums of debate on issues of contemporary interest, well illustrated by the Eastern Crisis of 1875-8.¹²

The Balkans

The Balkan provinces are central to this study despite the relatively small ethnic/linguistic Turkish population. This is because for many in Britain in this period it is the Balkans or 'Turkey in Europe' as the area was known that represented the Ottoman Empire and the typified the 'nature' of the Turk. Images and ideas about Ottoman rule in Europe were essential to the development of a negative image in this period and affected perceptions of other areas of the Empire. This period of the Eastern crisis 1875-8 was thus important in shaping ideas about the

¹¹ For reference sources of periodical literature used see: Houghton (1966-89); Poole (1876-1908); Van Dann (1978). For studies of periodical literature, its audience, intentions and as a genre see: Shattock and Wolff (1982). The Wellesley Index of Victorian periodicals in five volumes edited by Houghton (1966-89) is the most comprehensive index available on the subject of nineteenth-century articles and has provided much information for this thesis about periodicals as well as articles and their authorship.

¹² The most important and influential periodicals in terms of their contribution to the debate about the Eastern question at this time were the *Fortnightly Review*, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, *Fraser's Magazine*, *Westminster Review*. Articles were most often by leading political/diplomatic figures such as Gladstone. There was a lively debate and discussion at the time about the Eastern Question and articles were in many instances responses to other articles. Often whole sections of periodicals were dedicated to the subject of the crisis such as the *Fortnightly review*. See: Autumn editions of 1876.

Empire which predominate in the whole period. Emphasis is placed on a developing representation over this period of time. The link between earlier ideas about the Balkan provinces and their effect on perceptions of Anatolia is developed as a theme.

The Balkans attracted wide interest and emerged into public light at the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 when many writings were produced. The Balkan provinces attracted interest through their geographical but also cultural and religious proximity. They were seen as Christian European areas and for these reasons they provoked interest. Events in the Balkans were represented as issues between Christianity and Islam, between good and evil and between European and non-European. These kinds of dichotomies struck a cord in the moral and religious environment of Britain in the 1870s.

Travel and non-travel literature was influential in creating dominant images of the Ottoman Empire. From 1875-8 the public were bombarded with a constant barrage of negative ideas about the Turk and the Ottoman Empire from a wide range of writers amongst which were well known figures. Many writings were produced in response to the crisis in the Balkans 1875-8 by people involved in one capacity or another in the movement of agitation against the Ottoman Empire which developed in 1876 to end support for the Ottoman Empire.¹³ The climax of this agitation was the protest meeting convened at St. James' Hall in London in December 1876 attended by many well known public figures. This meeting gained publicity by virtue of the participants amongst which was the former Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone, who became a figurehead for the moral crusade against the Turk which developed.¹⁴

The contribution of public figures to the contemporary debate about the future of Ottoman rule in Europe was also undoubtedly important in shaping the overall public perception. At the same time their views reflected ideas about non-European societies that were becoming common currency in British society.¹⁵ Negative ideas about the Turk thus had a receptive audience in a society that saw itself as morally, economically and culturally superior

¹³ See: Shannon (1963) for an interpretation of the Bulgarian Atrocities Agitation movement.

¹⁴ See: Shannon (1963); Wirthwein (1935).

¹⁵ For attitudes towards the non-European world see: Hyam (1979); Kiernan (1988).

to non-European societies. The picture of the Ottoman Balkans in general lacked variety. Most writings were a variation on the theme of the inferior nature of the Turks and Ottoman society. The survey of literature undertaken for this study showed that there was no one text that was central in image making. Rather, it was the cumulative effect of a mass of literature echoing similar themes about the Ottoman Empire that helped to produce general images. The sheer quantity of writings produced at the time of the Eastern crisis helped to implant certain images of the Ottoman Empire in the public mind. Image making was thus a question of quantity as well as quality.

The ultimate importance of British perceptions of the Ottoman Balkans was the effect it had on changing attitudes in general about the Ottoman Empire. The promulgation and perpetuation of negative ideas about Ottoman rule affected British relations with the Ottoman Empire. Negative views coincided with and contributed to the gradual erosion of a policy of support for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, indicated by the Congress of Berlin of 1878, in which Ottoman rule came to an end in many areas of former rule. Ideas were expressed in the context of a changing balance of power in Europe caused by competing European empires. In this new context of European imperialism there was little respect for societies that were not part of the European world order. The development of a negative image of Ottoman rule in the Balkans at a time when the foundations of traditional diplomacy were changing was thus significant.

Anatolia

Intellectual interest in Anatolia was less than for the Balkans and this is reflected in the smaller quantity of writings about the area. Anatolia did not spawn the interest of colonised areas such as India, nor even the historical interest of Greece, or Egypt. There was a small yet consistent specialised interest in particular areas of Anatolia and at times of crisis such as the Armenian question of 1894-6 the Empire became a topic of wider public interest. In general, however the area was not a major preoccupation in Britain and the scale of interest was always smaller than for the Balkans. The capital Istanbul and Western Anatolia attracted greater interest for historical and archaeological reasons, whereas Central Anatolia was not an area of great concern except to a minority of scholars in search of the ancient civilisations of Asia Minor. The focus of many writers was more on the past history of Anatolia than the present which affected the way that the

Empire was perceived. The area was subject to comparison with an imagined picture of former greatness and like the Balkans was measured against Western standards of development. Most writers it appears drew on generalised notions of Oriental societies to construct an overall picture of decadence and decay in Anatolia.

Anatolia was the focus of minority specialised interest. Amongst specialised interests the geographer W. M. Ramsay and the Antiquarian D. G. Hogarth, both of whom were well known and recognised scholars were important.¹⁶ They were influential in shaping ideas about Anatolia and their views are emphasised in this study. In addition to their writings were those of other travellers such as F. Burnaby and H. C. Barkley. The latter unlike Ramsay and Hogarth were relatively unknown as writers or figures in British society. However because of the smaller amount of literature about Anatolia their writings had a disproportionate influence on ideas about the area. Both accounts, but especially that of Burnaby were well known judging by republication, reviewing in the major periodicals and cross referencing in other writings.¹⁷

A picture of Anatolia developed partly as a result of crisis and European involvement in the area as it had done in 1875-8 for the Balkans. In 1894-6 as a result of disturbances in the eastern provinces of Anatolia inhabited by Armenians British diplomatic attention was drawn to the area. Disturbances quickly took on the dimensions of a crisis that threatened to create difficulties for the powers, similar to the Eastern crisis 1875-8. As in 1875-8 this crisis produced a spate of writings from many of the same figures that had been involved at that time. Similar themes about the nature of the Turk and Ottoman rule were reiterated in periodicals, books and pamphlets. The scale of publication about the Armenian question was much less as it was for Anatolia in general, but was still significant in perpetuating negative ideas. After 1878 ideas about Ottoman rule in Anatolia and the nature of the populations there appeared as vindications of well established truths. This was because by this time the image of Ottoman decadence and misgovernment had become fixed ideas. In the period after 1878 there was little belief in the capacity of Oriental societies (which is how the Ottoman Empire was viewed) to change and adapt themselves. Perceptions of Anatolia therefore reflected the success of an imperial mind set in which the imperial vision had become dominant.

¹⁶ Hogarth (1896, 1910); Ramsay (1890a,b, 1898, 1902).

¹⁷ Barkley (1876, 1877); Burnaby (1888 6th ed.), 2 Vols.

Structure and Content of Chapters

The chapters that constitute this study are structured around the most widely reiterated and dominant themes that emerged in contemporary sources. These sources showed that British perceptions were underpinned by a preconceived notion of the 'East'. Implicit and very often explicit in writings is the idea of a dynamic between two worlds, that of the 'East' represented by the Ottoman Empire, and that of the 'West' represented by Britain. Within the parameters of this dominating theme are related sub-themes about progress, race, decline which also form part of the total picture of Ottoman society. The idea of East and West and other dichotomies of progress and stagnation, Christianity and Islam, civilised and uncivilised run throughout late Victorian conceptualisations and were present in views of the Balkans and Anatolia alike. These dominant themes have formed the structural framework of chapters. Each chapter: reconstructs the picture of the Ottoman Empire through the above mentioned sources, outlines and explains the ways in which the Empire was understood and the assumptions and premises on which perceptions were based and, finally brings out the significance of these ideas to show what they reveal about Anglo-Ottoman relations, and the importance of culture and ideas in relations between Britain and the Ottoman Empire in this period. Each chapter presents the picture of the Ottoman Empire that emerges, shows how this picture was constructed, and what the significance of these contemporary themes and ideas are.

The first chapter is introductory in nature and outlines the historical context for the thesis as a whole. It examines the position of the Ottoman Empire vis-a-vis the European states system, British interests in and policy towards the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, and an overview of crisis in the Balkans (1875-8) and Anatolia (1894-6) which formed a background to the development of ideas.

The succeeding three chapters deal with the Ottoman Balkans. Chapter two *The Sick Man of Europe: The Ottoman Balkans* reconstructs and analyses perceptions of the country, economy and society in this geographical area. It shows how a picture of decline, misgovernment and backwardness becomes the dominant representation of the Ottoman Balkans. In addition it examines British conceptualisations of the causes of backwardness of the area, most commonly seen as Ottoman rule, but also amongst a minority of writers attributed to European interference. Underlying both these negative and positive depictions of the Balkans and Ottoman rule is the idea of Europe and its opposite, the 'East' represented by the Ottoman Empire. This is the

dominant theme to emerge. This reconstruction shows that what was significant was the idea that this was a 'different' society, but one which was nonetheless part of Europe. The latter point was important for contemporaries. Contemporary discussion of Ottoman rule in the Balkans drew the conclusion that the cause of the 'sickness' lay in Ottoman rule itself. Significantly the framework of understanding and the language of description is that of race and religion. The parameters of discussion set the tone for a consideration of the population of the Balkans which are the subjects of the following two chapters.

Chapters three and four examine perceptions of the populations of the Balkans. Chapter Three *The Balkans. The Peoples I: The Turks* examines the development of the image of the Turk in the Balkans as non-European, unprogressive and fanatical. The discussion emphasises the importance of this image in terms of its contribution to the idea of the Turk as culturally, religiously and racially outside Europe. This politically significant image of the Turk as 'in' Europe, rather than part of Europe is itself important because of its contribution to the ending of Ottoman rule in the Balkans in 1878. This chapter thus suggests a link between ideas and the wider historical context.

Chapter four *The Balkans. The Peoples II: The Christians* examines perceptions of the Christian populations in the Balkans. This choice of subjects was determined by the sources themselves which conceptualise the Balkans as an area divided into distinct populations of Turks and Christians. This examination emphasises the importance of the mentally neat division into distinct populations. Late Victorian perceptions of Christians in the Balkans are divided between those that are pro-Christian and those that are antagonistic towards them. Both negative and positive positions are proportionally related to negative and positive conceptualisations of the Turk. Analysis of these perceptions shows the extent to which dichotomies of progress and unprogressiveness, Christianity and Islam, European and non-European informed the overall representation.

Taken together these three chapters about the Balkans indicate the ways in which ideas relate to the wider context of relations, in particular the ending of Ottoman rule in the area in 1878. Perceptions are also significant in that they illustrate the importance of the prevailing culture of imperialism in the way in which the Turk is demoted to the position of an Oriental like other peoples defined as non-Europeans. Progress, culture and Civilisation are represented as European Christian virtues. There is a clear notion of the necessary elements for a society to

progress and an equally clear notion of the reasons for lack of progress. This standard of progress is in part religiously and racially defined. The standard is a European one and progress is defined as material and political advancement an attribute which by this period is seen to consist in race, religion, and history. The conclusion drawn by contemporary writers is that the Turk does not conform to these standards.

The last three chapters consider British perceptions of Anatolia. Like the Balkans this area was important in the British and Western consciousness because of its believed historical and biblical importance to Europe. The fifth chapter *West Meets East: Perceptions of Anatolia and Istanbul* concentrates on general perceptions of society and economy and shows how an image of a society in decadence and decline is constructed. This picture is determined by preconceived ideas about what the area should be like which lead to the overall conclusion that this area can not progress because of inherent cultural, racial and religious factors. The theme of Western progress versus Eastern stagnation and incapacity to progress runs throughout Victorian perceptions of Anatolia. Perceptions of decline reinforce the notion that Anatolia is 'Oriental', and an area which can not reform except by the efforts of Christians in the Empire or by European influence and control. Like perceptions of the Balkans there is strong relationship between imperialist intent and the conceptualisation of the area as unprogressive and backward.

The sixth and seventh chapters explore perceptions of the populations of Ottoman Anatolia. Chapter six *Ottoman Anatolia. The Peoples I: The Turks* examines perceptions of the Turks in Anatolia in the period after 1878. This chapter emphasises the continuity of theme in the depiction of the Turk as an unprogressive Oriental incapable of change who is represented as a dying and decadent race. The significance of this image is two fold: in the way that the Turk is defined as an identifiable race, and also in the way that he is generalised as 'Oriental'.

The seventh and final chapter *Ottoman Anatolia. The Peoples II: The Armenians*, examines perceptions of the Armenians in Anatolia. The choice of this subject like that of the Christian populations of the Balkans lay in their general importance for writers in Britain. Armenians in one important representation are perceived as another example of an oppressed Christian race based on the assumption of the intolerance of the Ottoman Empire. In another representation they are seen as a race that is not oppressed, but one which benefits in important ways from the tolerance of the Ottoman Empire. These perceptions represent distinct interpretations of the Ottoman Empire, which illustrate the different ways that the realities of the

Ottoman Empire are perceived or mis-perceived. A comparison is made between perceptions which emerged in 1894-6 with those of 1875-8. This chapter shows how similar themes emerged in both of these periods which was partly the result of the continuity of personnel, but also the persistence of dominant themes and ideas. The importance of perceptions at a time of European imperialism and nationalism and in the general context of discussions about the future of the Ottoman Empire is stressed. As in other chapters the relationship between politics, events and ideas is emphasised.

The underlying theme of these chapters on Anatolia is that of a dynamic between East and West. Anatolia is represented as part of a generalised East by British writers and is conceptualised as an unprogressive, declining or stagnant society, whilst the West represented by Europe is progressive, rising and destined to be successful over this other world. As in perceptions of the Balkans these processes and defining characteristics of East and West are defined religiously, racially and culturally.

The conclusion focuses on the changed nature of British perceptions in this period in contrast to earlier in the century and reflects upon the significance of images in terms of what they reveal of the late Victorian cultural context but also for their impact on the history of the period and in later times.

Theoretical Approach: Orientalism and the Ottoman Empire.

The most striking feature of late nineteenth-century perceptions of the Ottoman Empire was a common eurocentric language throughout a wide range of contemporary sources. This sameness of description, ideas and stereotypes has helped to shape the theoretical parameters of the present study. The language of British writings constituted a discourse about the Ottoman Empire, premised on a preconceived 'Oriental' or non-European object. Within this discourse there were degrees of polarity but, overall there was a consistency in representation. An approach which took account of the shared language and discourse was used in which the cultural context of imperialism was considered as the chief determinant.¹⁸

The debate about Orientalism was useful in formulating an approach to the history of ideas about the Ottoman Empire. This debate addressed the question of Western representations

¹⁸ For discourse theory see: MacDonell (1991); Sheridan, Trans. (1972).

of the Islamic world and was suggestive for this study in that a similar range of questions could be asked of material about the Ottoman Empire.¹⁹ The Orientalist debate was underpinned by two main contentions: Firstly, writers such as Edward Said questioned the truth value of statements and representations about the Islamic world in Western writings. Rather than being truthful representations, he argued, ideas were more the product of the Western culture which had produced misrepresentations of Islamic societies and peoples. Secondly, critics of Orientalism made a link between ideas and policies. Said, who was one of the main contributors to this debate argued that preconceived ideas of an ethnocentric and eurocentric nature informed Western understandings and representations of the Islamic World which had influenced how that world was dealt with by the West.

Said showed that in Western accounts Islamic peoples and societies appeared as stereotypes. Portrayals of Islamic peoples were, Said argued, objects of the Western imagination rather than accurate representations which constituted in his words, a 'man made Orient', a discourse about the Orient which were convenient tools for control of these societies. In addition, Said argued that ideas about the Islamic world, many of which developed from the academic discipline of Oriental studies were wide in their impact on policies towards the Islamic world. Ideas, acted not only as a justification for, but also as a enabler of Western imperialism, by demeaning their subject and relegating non-Europeans to the level of mere colonial subjects to be ruled and controlled. The debate has been useful for this study in two ways: 1) in suggesting that representations of other societies form a discourse linked to particular historical and cultural contexts, and 2) in suggesting a link between ideas and the wider context of power and relations between states. British perceptions of the Ottoman Empire have been approached within these theoretical parameters.²⁰

In this study British perceptions are placed within the late nineteenth-century context of European domination of the Ottoman Empire and within the imperialist culture which emerges

¹⁹ See: Said (1978); Hourani (1992). Said's book *Orientalism* has become the classic account which questioned Western representations of the Islamic world. The main focus of this book is the development over time of British and French representations of the Arab Islamic East to the contemporary period.

²⁰ For critiques of Said's *Orientalism* see: Ahmad (1992); Al-Azmeh (1981); Gilson (1979); Hourani (1991); Little (1979).

in Britain. The constructed and representational nature of the picture of the Ottoman Empire in the late Victorian mind is conveyed by the term perception which suggests how information is refracted through this particular cultural context of late Victorian society to create an image or idea. The term perception suggests how information is filtered, partial and imperfect, forming a preconceived framework of ideas and understandings in which interpretation and subjectivity play an important part. In the context of the late nineteenth-century the filter of British perceptions was European, and in particular British imperialism and the influence that this exercised on British self perceptions as well as on perceptions of other societies. Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire are best understood by reference to the ideas and culture of Victorian society in which there were general notions of race and culture, and a new purely eurocentric concept of civilisation. Perceptions were culturally and historically bound and peculiar to the conditions of late Victorian society.

The Victorian cultural context is thus the key to understanding British ideas about the Ottoman Empire in this period. The picture of Ottoman society and peoples is influenced by new frames of reference in which eurocentric concepts of race and Civilisation form the intellectual framework through which Ottoman society and peoples are understood and represented. This imperial mind-set was effective on a wide range of different people writing about the Empire and was not only the mind set of 'Empire Men' i. e. those figures that were part of Imperial Administration or active supporters at home. The imperial voice and the culture of imperialism of which this was part imparted a set of ideas and values, ways of thinking about other societies that was influential in general.²¹ Pre-1876 ideas about the Ottoman Empire had produced two dominant images of the Ottoman Empire, the image of the 'East' and the image of the 'Sick man of Europe'. In the late nineteenth-century context of British and European imperialism these two images were transformed into the negative image of a declining Oriental society. In the period 1876-1908 imperialism formed the framework in which the rest of the world, especially the Ottoman Empire were understood.

The Intellectual Context of Late Victorian Britain

European industrialisation and imperialism accentuated differences with countries and states

²¹ For this culture of imperialism see: Hobsbawm (1989).

outside Europe. By the last decades of the nineteenth century perceptions of areas that were seen as lying outside the cultural/geographical entity of Europe had changed significantly.²² The very real differences that there were between the more developed parts of Europe and the non-European world reinforced the belief in Europe of a common civilisation. Before the reign of Abdülhamid, British perceptions expressed a mixture of veneration of tradition, respect for and the belief that the Ottoman Empire could reform and progress. The change from a positive image to the negative image of the period after 1876 was part of a general changing consciousness in Britain towards the non-European world that was parallel to imperial expansion and the development of a full blown culture of imperialism.²³

British perceptions in the period 1876-1908 emerged out of a new historical and intellectual context created by European industrial and imperial predominance. The Ottoman Empire was negatively compared to British and European development and a concept of Civilisation emerged which was wholly eurocentric in inspiration. As a result of this particular cultural context the Ottoman Empire and the Turks especially were negatively portrayed as Oriental and shared along with other non-Europeans an inferior position in British eyes. These notions were general throughout the wide range of literature examined. In brief, this imparted an attitude of superiority, voiced in racial, religious, cultural terms, in which the non-European world of Asia, Africa, and to some extent the Americas were inferior. It meant a narrowing of views, the ending of an eighteenth century mode of thought and also the ending of a mid-nineteenth century relativism about other societies. This lack of tolerance for other older forms of state organisation such as the Ottoman was evident in the way that the Empire, after the Congress of Berlin 1878 was increasingly represented as decadent, redundant and unable to live up to modern challenges. Perceptions also reflected long standing ideas and prejudices about the Ottoman Empire, Turks and Islam that were reworked in a new cultural context based on the notion of Western superiority in political, religious, cultural and economic terms.²⁴

²² For the idea of Europe and non-Europe see Barker (1988), 2 Volumes; Baudet (1965); Daniels (1960, 1966); Hay (1968); Hobsbawm (1989); Kiernan (1988).

²³ For the culture of imperialism see: Hobsbawm (1989).

²⁴ See: Kiernan (1988).

Within this discourse there were several variations of which a negative and positive view of the Ottoman Empire were the clearest. However, the historical conjuncture of European imperialism meant that in the period from the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 intellectual and well as political divisions become less distinct as British culture was affected by imperial expansion.²⁵ The change in perception and the influence of a eurocentric discourse can be seen most clearly at the beginning of this period during the Eastern crisis of 1875-8. At this time these two main perspectives on the Ottoman Empire were evident. The negative depiction was of the Ottoman Government as regressive in its effects on Balkan Christian populations and of the Turk as cruel, fanatical and unprogressive. The positive depiction, part of an older and more tolerant way of thinking produced an image of Ottoman rule in the Balkans as benevolent in its relations with its subjects, incapacitated by European, and especially by Russian interference. The negative vision was roughly consistent with a liberal perspective on state and society whilst the positive vision was linked to a conservative perspective.²⁶

Differing perspectives on the Ottoman Empire had been evident earlier in the nineteenth century, whereby a positive view of the Ottoman Empire had been associated with an anti-Russian stance and was generally found in conservative circles. Russia was regarded as the greatest threat to the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire and thus a threat to the British position in India. These considerations had influenced a positive perception of Ottoman society as well as forming the backbone of British policy towards the Ottoman Empire. The negative vision of the Ottoman Empire, most often associated with a liberal perspective on state and society was in part related to the older tradition of support for the subjects of the Empire such as the Greeks in the 1820s. This perspective disliked the Ottoman Empire as part of a conservative world order and supported nationalist movements in the Empire and elsewhere. Pre-1870 ideas about the Ottoman Empire had thus been linked to different visions of the international scene and Britain's position within it as well as to different ideas about the correct and acceptable forms of states. This link between ideas and the support of certain policies continues in the period under review but undergoes changes as a result of new historical circumstances arising out of

²⁵ See: Hyam (1979).

²⁶ For pre-1876 accounts representative of a period of greater tolerance see: Slade (1832, 1837); Uquhart (1832, 1833, 1839).

European imperialism.²⁷

The influence of imperialism was evident at the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8. The picture of the Ottoman Empire which emerged was not only the product of the liberal dislike of autocratic states, but also a product of a particular way of thinking about a preconceived non-European state. Ottoman rule was pictured as a non-European rule in European territory and its rulers were portrayed as Oriental (a negative designation), unprogressive and deleterious in their effect on subject populations. The Turks were defined as inferior in culture, religion and ability to progress in contrast to Balkan Christians. The Eastern crisis was represented as a racial and religious struggle between European and non-European and between Christian and Muslim. What was evident was a new mode of expressing an older form of antagonism. Even amongst the former supporters of the Ottoman Empire a discourse of race, progress and Civilisation and an erosion of belief in the ability of the Ottoman Empire to live up to these standards was apparent. Both perspectives produced an image of a non-European Oriental state. Perceptions both during and after the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 reflected the general influence of imperialism. Differences in view evident at that time become less distinct as Victorian culture itself underwent a metamorphosis into a full blown culture of imperialism. British perceptions of Anatolia in the period after 1878 were expressed within a framework of thought that was wholly eurocentric and dismissive of Ottoman society on the grounds of its Oriental nature. No longer was Ottoman society viewed as a civilisation in its own right to be admired. Rather, in the collective mind of late Victorian Britain it had become a declining Oriental state, whose rulers were unprogressive and unworthy of ruling. The implications of such views in the 'Age of Empire' were clear.²⁸

The culture of imperialism that formed the framework for the expression of British ideas about the Ottoman Empire was characterised by a particular way of thinking about the non-European world, that was comparative in nature and underpinned by a sense of superiority about British and European development in general. Sir Charles Eliot, British diplomat in Istanbul in the 1890s typified this way of thinking, he wrote that,

²⁷ See: Shannon (1963).

²⁸ Hobsbawm (1989).

"The last half century has witnessed a remarkable movement, the determination of Europe to impose its civilisation on uncivilised and half civilised nations all over the world...it is clearly one of the elementary impulses which shape the destinies of mankind"²⁹

The "remarkable movement" he referred to was British and European imperialism which rested on a culture of self confidence, on ideas about the superiority of Anglo-Saxon or European races who were seen as progressive, civilised and modern in contrast to the non-European world which was inferior (both racially and culturally), uncivilised and unprogressive.³⁰

European empires were based on the belief in the superiority of their rule over that of native rulers. All European states that built Empires in this period were imbued with a sense of the superiority of European civilisation. As E. W. Dicey apostle of empire writing in reference to the need for Britain to extend its interests in Egypt (written five years before the occupation in 1882) "for evil or good the burden of empire has been placed upon our shoulders...We too have our manifest destiny, which we have no choice save to follow". He also mentioned that should British power be extended over Egypt the wishes of Egyptians should not be taken into consideration as "It would be almost absurd if you were purchasing a flock of sheep to ask the grazier for an endorsement of the contract on the part of the flock"³¹. Egyptians like other non-Europeans were regarded as comparable to flocks of sheep. This mind-set reflected the late nineteenth-century culture of imperialism and whilst not all British adhered to the imperial vision exactly in these terms they were nonetheless affected by the belief in the inherent superiority of British and European Civilisation. Liberal critics of empire thus might prefer to ask the future subject if he wanted to be ruled, or in the case of Egypt after the fact had been accomplished, but even they did not depart from the notion of the essential superiority of British civilisation in comparison to what was seen as the despotism and unprogressiveness of the East.³²

²⁹ Eliot (1908), 3.

³⁰ For these ideas see Curtin (1971); Hyam (1979); Kiernan (1988); Tidrick (1990).

³¹ Dicey (1877), 685, 674.

³² See Stokes (1992), for the contribution of Utilitarians to ideas about the non-European world; Thornton (1965, 1985), on the imperial idea and its critics.

The key concepts of race, progress, Civilisation, (distinguished in this study from reference to particular civilisations by capitalization), Christianity (defined as a superior religion), and Oriental are widely used in this study to reflect their importance in the contemporary conceptualisation. These concepts form the main elements of a dominant eurocentric and comparative discourse. The Ottoman Empire was implicitly and explicitly compared to British development and various standards were applied, which most often resulted in negative comparison with the implication of European superiority in all aspects of state and society. They formed the main standards against which Ottoman society and development were measured and are thus emphasised.

Race and Progress

In the period 1876-1908 this new concept of Civilisation was based on the belief in racial, religious and cultural superiority. Added to a sense of Anglo Saxon superiority at home, when Victorians viewed other societies outside Europe, there was an attitude of the superiority of European culture. This could be a religious version that stressed the superiority of Christianity over other religions or a secular version stressing the superiority of European material civilisation.³³ The frequent use of the term race, or races reflects the influence of theories of race and evolution that had developed out of Darwinian thought from the 1860s. By the late nineteenth century the term race was used to differentiate peoples, with the greatest divide as that of European and non-European. This incorporated a theory of human development which divided people into different groups, differentiated by different mental, physical and linguistic features. Matthew Arnold, one of the leading intellectual figures of the last half of the nineteenth century, who was greatly influenced by the French scholar Renan, (the latter well known for his refutation of Islamic Civilisation) wrote that,

"Hellenism is of Indo-European growth. Hebraism is of Semitic stock, and we English, a nation of Indo-European stock, seem to belong naturally to the movement of Hellenism"³⁴

Arnold's reference to Indo-European was central to late Victorian perceptions of themselves

³³ Hobsbawm (1989).

³⁴ Arnold (1869), 69.

as belonging to a distinct racial group, which was classified as the superior race above all others. The study of languages like the study of other aspects of man was part of the attempt to scientifically classify man that was a major nineteenth-century preoccupation. As in the study of ethnography there was an absolute scale of value in the study of languages from the primitive to the advanced. Even theorists who were against the scientific racism of the 1860s and 1870s still adopted this stage approach to language and classified them according to notions of degenerate languages and active ones. Indo-European languages fell of course into the latter category. Languages and their characteristics became an emblem of civilised or uncivilised and were seen as central to culture.³⁵

The culture of imperialism was based on linguistic, but also on racial bases. Indo-European language of course implied Indo-European by race. From the 1860s discoveries in the human and natural sciences contributed to the development of racial theory applicable to the study of man as well as animals. Ideas about animal and human genesis stressed fundamental differences between peoples detectable by physique, language and by implication mental capacity and intelligence. These theories added a scientific basis to the definition of culture and Civilisation.³⁶ Reflecting the influence of Darwinian ideas racial difference was seen as part of an evolutionary process, which finally dealt a blow to old classifications (monogenesis and polygenesis) which had in different ways stressed the essential unity of mankind. As Charles Kingsley expressed it, "science" was proving "how the more favoured race...exterminates the less favoured, or at least expels it, and forces it, under penalty of death to adapt itself to new circumstances".³⁷ According to Darwin's interpreters in the social and human sciences, Darwin had proved that races were not equal. There was an implicit denial of claims to any kind of universality of peoples. The visible progress of societies was taken as confirmation of this process by which some races progressed and others declined.³⁸

³⁵ For ideas of race see: Bolt (1976); Burrows (1963); Lorimer (1971); Steen (1980); Stocking (1968).

³⁶ For language and race see Bernal (1988), I; Bolt (1976); Burrows (1963). For contemporaries see Knox (1862, 2nd edition); Prichard (1826, 2nd edition, 1855 4th edition); Tylor (1871, 1881).

³⁷ Kingsley (1880), 324. For Kingsley's ideas see: Brinton (1954), 115-30.

³⁸ Darwin (1872, 1873). For the influence of Darwin see: Burrows (1963); Haller (1971).

The influence of new racial classifications from the 1860s dealt a final blow to eighteenth century relativism which had lingered throughout the century stressing the equality and perfectibility of mankind. It was part of a general process that was taking place in the European consciousness vis a vis the non-European world. It was as one writer has described it a "hardening of racial attitudes", caused in Britain partly by the shock of the Indian mutiny (1857) and the Jamaica Revolt (1865), which were taken as proof that non-European races could not adapt themselves to an 'improving' environment as had once been believed. Racial theory added scientific credence to the belief in fundamental hereditary differences between races.³⁹

These findings in the scholarly study of man had a much wider influence on general ideas and from their inception had been popularised. By the late nineteenth century these methods and ideas were common currency amongst writers and commentators with ethnographical and other interests in peoples outside Europe. On the level of popular ideas there was a whole literature to draw on about non-European races and an attempt to scientifically explain differences according to biological, racial and religious features. These ideas became linked to notions of British (and European) superiority in all aspects of society, culture and religion and came together in Imperialist thought which was conquering and administering peoples in India, Asia and Africa.⁴⁰

The effect of this thinking extended beyond advocates of empire and affected social and political thought in general. The widespread use of the term progress to denote characteristic features of different societies and innate ability to be modern and adaptable was related to changing ideas about the capacities of different races. Different political philosophies, such as liberalism and conservatism defined progress differently but in this period were affected by this generalised racial schema. For example, liberalism as a political philosophy was based on veneration for constitutions, the extension of the franchise, industrial development and the nation state. However the criteria for the development of these features in any given society

³⁹ For the changed nature of racial thought after the American Civil War see: Hyam (1976), 72-80; Lorimer (1979)

⁴⁰ For imperialist ideology see: Baskin (1971); Cesaire (1972). For contemporaries see: Blyden (1889, 2nd edition); Brookes (1885); Bryce (1902, 1915); Cromer (1908), 2 Volumes; Cumming (1864); Dilke (1868); Seeley (1890).

also became imbued with notions of race. Progress in a political, cultural or social sense was associated with ideas about racial capacity, genius and the innate ability of certain races to progress. Progress was interpreted as a feature peculiar to European races rather than other non-European races. The groundwork for the late nineteenth century assertion of these ideas were earlier thinkers and writers such as the Utilitarians from whom the notion of 'Eastern' Governments and their essentially unprogressive features was derived.⁴¹ Even Marx and Engels adhered to these notions of difference and the fundamentally different nature of Eastern societies and governments.⁴² It was these older ideas in conjunction with the newer theories of difference on a racial and linguistic basis that contributed to the late Victorian synthesis of culture, progress and race. This synthesis was evident in changed perceptions of the Ottoman Empire.⁴³

Civilisation

The term Civilisation like the term race represented a value judgement. It was used conceptually to mean a certain stage of human development, denoted in turn by the concepts of civilised and uncivilised and equated with European and non-European respectively. A new and purely eurocentric concept of Civilisation underpinned perceptions in the late nineteenth century in contrast to earlier periods. This is either explicitly stated or implicit in the language of description and way that the Turks are classified. According to the early nineteenth-century 'scale of civilisation' "the Persians, the Arabians and even the Turks possessed an order of intellectual faculties rather higher than the nations situated beyond them towards the East" and were "rather less deeply involved in the absurdities and weaknesses of a rude state of society; and had in fact attained a stage of civilisation in some little degree higher". So wrote James Mill father of the influential J. S. Mill, both important figures in the history of British empire in India and nineteenth-century thought in general.⁴⁴ The Turks considered a Turanian race of

⁴¹ See Bentham (1843); Mill (1817); Mill (1947); Senior (1859). For the impact of Utilitarian thought see Stokes (1988).

⁴² Marx and Engels (1897). For an examination of their views see Ahmad (1992); Turner (1978).

⁴³ On the level of popular culture see Hobsbawm (1989); Mackenzie (1988).

⁴⁴ Mill (1817), I, 625. For the influence of Mill and the Utilitarians see: Stokes (1988).

Central Asian origin were classified somewhere between the Chinese and Egyptians. They could not be considered as savages as they had achieved an organised state of society and literate culture, but nor could they be considered 'civilised' like European races.⁴⁵

By the 1870s the synthesis of ideas about language, culture, environment, physical characteristics and customs from all the human sciences served the purpose of confusing distinctions between race, language and culture. Race and culture became synonymous terms and the entire categorisation of non-European peoples suffered by comparison to more superior European examples. Increasing contacts as a result of European expansion became the areas for confirming theories of language and race. Anthropologists used the material provided by travellers to give an empirical basis to their theories, which were also confirmed by travellers and adhered to by politicians and other commentators at home.⁴⁶ From the 1860s racial theory had come to influence Victorian culture significantly as reflected in the writings of a wide range of social theorists, historians, and other writers on topical subjects of race and Empire. Attitudes in general became more stridently xenophobic as peoples were placed into preconceived categories according to race, language and other pseudo-scientific categories. In general non-Europeans were regarded as inferior and unprogressive by comparison to the progressive Indo-European races.⁴⁷

The change in thinking can be seen particularly after 1876. Thinking racially deeply affected views of the Turks and was particularly evident in perceptions of the Balkan provinces, but also in views of Anatolia, where a dichotomy was placed between European and Oriental races, with accompanying characteristics of progressiveness and unprogressiveness respectively. The Turks from having being considered as one of the more civilised of the Asiatic races came to be seen as one of the semi-civilised or uncivilised Oriental races. The

⁴⁵ For racial theory see: Bolt (1971); Burrows (1963); Stocking (1968).

⁴⁶ See Asad (1975); Burke in Dudley and Novak eds (1972); Burrows (1963); Hyam (1979). In the field of history, historians were concerned to trace the origins of the English and develop a pure racial Anglo-Saxon genealogy. See Burrows (1983) and Freeman (1877, a, b, 1880), who was also one of the chief writers on the Ottoman Empire in the 1870s; Macdougall (1982), on racial myth in English history.

⁴⁷ For perceptions of societies other than Ottoman see: Bearce (1961), for India; for China; Curtin (1968), for Africa; Gail (1951), for Persia; Kiernan (1988), general survey of non-European world; Roberts (1991), for China; Tidrick (1981), for Arabia; Yokoyama (1987), for Japan.

history of the Balkans and Anatolia thus came to be interpreted as the growth and spread of the Western spirit over that of a declining Eastern one.⁴⁸

Christianity

The late nineteenth-century concept of Civilisation was based on the notion of the essential superiority of European civilisation which consisted not only in race but also in religion. This was a particularly important dimension of perceptions of the Ottoman Empire which represented for the British not only the East, but also the Islamic East, the former enemy of Christendom.⁴⁹ Despite the challenges of science Victorian society was still a strongly Christian society and culture. In the nineteenth century this religiosity and evangelistic fervour was directed both inwards to the reconversion of British society (deemed at various periods to be losing its spirituality, noted by declining church attendance and the advance of scientific method), and outwards to the non-Christian world. India especially was the focus of British missionary enterprises. In the case of the Muslim world missionary effort was directed towards Eastern Christians as missionary societies realised the futility of their efforts to convert Muslims and were actively prevented in their activities by the Ottoman state. Although blocked in their attempts to convert Muslims it did not prevent them from continual exhortation of the virtues of Christianity over Islam and other religions.⁵⁰

In writings of the 1870s and later the Christian perspective on the Ottoman Empire reflecting this missionary and evangelistic zeal became one of the most influential and dominating. All the old images of Islam as fanatical, the prophet Muhammad as a false prophet, the sexually licentious nature of the Muslim and his creed were revived in a new crusading moment. The Ottoman Empire was seen as the chief representative of all that was believed to be negative about Islam. More importantly this new religiosity joined with the

⁴⁸ See especially the influential geographer W. M. Ramsay (1897, 1903).

⁴⁹ For ideas about the Islamic East see: Ahmad (1978); Almond (1989); Bennet (1991); Daniels (1960); Djait (1985), Kabbani (1986). For contemporaries see: Disraeli (1847), Lane (1836); Warburton (1844).

⁵⁰ For religion and missionary enterprises, evangelism and Victorian society see: Bradley (1976); Chadwick (1970); Elliot-Binns (1936); Harrison (1979); Hyam (1979); Shannon (1963); Young (1960).

general belief in the superiority of European civilisation. Apostles of this militant religion saw this union of religion and Civilisation as fundamental. In this vision Civilisation was not only European, but Christian.

According to the Reverend Malcolm MacColl, one of the most virulent anti-Turks of the period, who wrote extensively about the Ottoman Empire and Islam, the question of Islam and Christianity was not only a question of religion but also one of Civilisation with which Islam was said to be incompatible. Islam, he wrote combining both the old Christian polemic with nineteenth-century ideas of progress "is not on the way to Christianity, it is Christianity truncated, disfigured and tattooed with a heterogenous mixture of Pagan and Talmudic fable and superstition" and "the nation or tribe that adopts it passes under a blight which arrests its development, and makes it...incapable of progress."⁵¹

Writings about the Ottoman Empire after 1876 reflected a growing religious intolerance in which Christianity was seen along with European civilisation as the superior and most true religion and culture. Whilst it was acceptable for non-Christians to live under Christian rule it became intolerable that Christians should live under Muslim rule. Ottoman Christians were not only Christians in this definition but were one of the 'progressive' races, sometimes considered as Europeans by race, but fundamentally part of Civilisation unlike the Turk who was non-European, Oriental and uncivilised. British writings had a strong religious dimension and were motivated by an interest in the Christian minorities of the Ottoman Empire.⁵²

In many ways this was one of the best indicators of the place of the Ottoman Empire in Western and British thought. If the Crusader image had in general receded in the nineteenth century then it was replaced by what was presented (sometimes in prophetic terms) as the final vindication of the Crusades, the possibility that the Ottomans would withdraw from European territory. More than this, Islam was seen to be in retreat to an expanding Christian Civilisation that was spreading throughout the world. MacColl expressing a general Christian feeling of vindication wrote that,

"As a spiritual force, in so far as it ever was one, Islam is not advancing but retrograding. The

⁵¹ MacColl (1888), 548, 537.

⁵² For contemporary perceptions of the religious dimensions of views of the Ottoman Empire see: Harrison (1876); Thompson (1886), I. See bibliography also for writings of MacColl, Denton.

Mussulman world contains no longer a single centre from which radiates any intellectual light or any sign of material progress. There is not one Mussulman state in the world...which in fact does not exist solely by the sufferance of Christendom."⁵³

Views about the superiority of Christianity and progress came together in a general negative representation of the Ottoman Empire. The secular version of this was that the East was retreating in the face of a superior European civilisation, whose progress was almost mystical in conception. The advance of Civilisation was a moral as well as physically visible movement, and was represented as the natural and inevitable flow of history. Islam was depicted as unprogressive, incompatible with science and redundant.⁵⁴

Oriental

Related to the above concepts of race, progress and Civilisation was the notion of the Ottoman Empire as an Oriental state and of the Turks (and occasionally other populations of the Empire) as Orientals generalised within a comparative framework with Europe. Throughout the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire for most writers represented the 'essential East', the land of the Thousand and One Nights Tales or the lands of the Bible. The nineteenth century produced a distinguished line of 'Eastern' travellers whose work was popularised and widely read forming the intellectual baggage of the Victorian traveller and reader. Amongst the most influential and widely read were: R. Curzon's *Monasteries of the Levant*, B. Disraeli's *Tancred*, E. Fitzgerald's translations of the *Thousand and One Nights*, A. W. Kinglake's *Eothen*, Lamartine's *Voyage en Orient*, E. W. Lane's *Modern Egyptians* and translations of the *Thousand and one Nights*, E. Warburton's *The Cross and the Crescent* and W. M. Thompson's *The Land and the Book*. In addition to these writings were older texts such as Lady Mary Wortley Montague's *Embassy Letters* of the early eighteenth century, which were republished throughout the nineteenth century. The archaeologist and later British Ambassador at Istanbul in the 1870s A. H. Layard, on his expedition to discover Nineveh in the 1840s typically went to the Ottoman Empire armed with his copy of the *Thousand and One*

⁵³ MacColl (1888), 557.

⁵⁴ For the nineteenth-century debate about Islam and Science see: Djait (1985); Hourani (1962, 1974, 1991).

Nights and many of the scenes he saw and depicted confirmed to him this vision of the essential East.⁵⁵

These writings prepared the generation of travellers (both mental and real) in the late nineteenth century for 'Eastern travel'. They helped to establish both a literary and a mental canon through which later writers would convey their ideas about the East. In these texts the vision of the East was as a place of wonder, sexual licentiousness, violence, a place to experience the exotic, the different. It was the 'other' world, the non-Europe. It was the place where the Victorian traveller could escape from the conventions of his own society and be a hero in a way that was less possible at home.⁵⁶ Artists, archaeologists and travellers to the Ottoman Empire throughout the century contributed to this idea of the East. Their writings were full of Oriental scenes and people and pictures of a society that had not changed for centuries. Scenes were reminiscent of the bible or brought to mind the Ancient world, such as the 1865 description of C. T. Newton, who described the scene of 'Turkish wrestling'. He wrote "We entered a large garden, where we beheld a scene which transported me suddenly into the ancient world. I thought I was looking on the funeral games of Patroclus or Hector".⁵⁷ Both in visual and literary works the idea was promoted of the stationary nature of the East as a place that had stopped in time. The influential *Eothen* by Alexander Kinglake which was first published in 1844 and continuously republished throughout the rest of the nineteenth century presented a picture of Oriental or 'Turkish travelling'. The picture although premised on the belief in the superiority of the Western traveller was not negative in its depictions as such. Rather it had the tone of a bemused Westerner who saw himself as superior to the people around him. *Eothen* presented a picture of another world, different in all respects to the civilised Europe that he left behind.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ See bibliography for editions of these writings and for studies of these writers see Ahmad (1978); Kabbani (1986).

⁵⁶ For references to Layard's works see bibliography. For a discussion of nineteenth-century ideas of the East see: Ahmad (1978); Kabbani (1986).

⁵⁷ Newton (1865), II, 71. See also Wilkie (1848, 1850), whose paintings depicted a world of biblical authenticity.

⁵⁸ *Eothen* (1844), see bibliography for other editions. For a study of Kinglake see; De Gaury (1972). See also his contemporaries, Thackeray (1846); Warburton (1844).

Writings such as *Eothen* provided usable stereotypes about Eastern peoples and Eastern societies, that were applied to the Ottoman Empire. These ideas were notable for their in built notions of: the difference of the 'East' derived from a comparative method with European societies, the idea that these peoples and places were a view of the past (especially the past as depicted in the *Thousand and One Nights Tales*), ideas about how Eastern people thought, ate, behaved, lived.⁵⁹ Interpretations were fully incorporated into these representations that claimed to be 'true' depictions of their surroundings. The question of truth in fact mattered little because the East could always be as the Western traveller wanted it to be or believed it was. There was in general a tremendous confidence in the depiction of Eastern peoples by Europeans.⁶⁰

This genre of writing about the Islamic East did several things: On the one hand it prepared the late nineteenth-century reader or prospective traveller for what he would find with a ready interpretation of 'Oriental', but it was also a picture from a previous period. The reliance on older texts meant that the picture could either be confirmed or negated on contact simply because the picture of an 'unchanged East' was not accurate. Many changes had taken place in the Ottoman Empire over the course of the nineteenth century and when writers did not see what they expected they then produced explanations of why image did not meet reality. They expected the East to be like the descriptions they had read. They expected the Ottoman Empire to be Oriental and different, of curiosity value and authentic. Few writers were able to break out of this mode of thought and even fewer genuinely transcended their own culture. The norm was the prejudiced traveller carrying preconceptions and the culture of England and empire with him. Even when conditions in the East negated what the traveller had imagined, a new 'Orientalist' synthesis resulted which reinforced the idea of Oriental and also difference generally perceived as inferior to Europe. Perceptions both reflected and reinforced a sense of political and cultural superiority.⁶¹

The picture of decline and stagnation and the vision of the essential East produced

⁵⁹ For the influence and importance of the 'Thousand and One Nights Tales see: Ahmad (1978).

⁶⁰ For ideas about the East see: Ahmad (1978); Daniels (1960, 1966); Djait (1985); Kabbani (1986).

⁶¹ For the critique of Orientalism see: Said (1978).

by pre-1876 writings was significant in several ways for later views: perceptions continued to prepare later generations for encounters with the real East by building up a picture of Oriental travel, where Oriental things could be seen (but which becomes a negative disappointment in later years, in the belief that the authentic East is lost). At the same time they also contributed to the idea of difference and inferiority although this was an inferiority that could be tolerated unlike in later periods. The late nineteenth-century reader and traveller was also prepared for the idea that the Ottoman Empire was declining by the picture of stagnation produced in their accounts. The difference between these views and those of the late nineteenth century was that Ottoman society was generally tolerated, partly because these ideas were based on the idea that the Empire was changing and could be changed by European style reforms.⁶²

Nineteenth-century views in general were premised on the notion of the different nature of Ottoman society and represented varying degrees of accuracy, inaccuracy and cultural understanding or misunderstanding. Ottoman society in general was not understood by the great majority of writers. Few had the language skills to appreciate it in more than a superficial way and even fewer visited all parts of the Empire. Their interpretations of Ottoman society, many of which were bequeathed to later generations, were misconceived constructions often based on older texts, which as one writer has pointed out, "an Ottoman gentleman reading Clarendon's History of the Rebellion would be as similarly misled if he closed that work supposing nothing much had happened since in England".⁶³

The period after 1876 in general is typified by the loss of a formerly expressed cultural relativism except amongst a small number of commentators. Overall opinion makers and their corresponding public audience were little concerned to discover the relative merits of other cultures. There was a narrowing of vision rather than a widening, which ironically coincided with an extension of European power. Non-European societies came to be considered as "inferior, undesirable, feeble and backward, even infantile...fit subjects for conquest, or at least for conversion to the values of the only real civilisation".⁶⁴ By the 1870s Civilisation had

⁶² For the changed perspective see: Kedourie (1987), 8-28..

⁶³ Cunningham (1992), 76. See also Von Hammer (1827-35), 10 volumes, who did have the language skills.

⁶⁴ Hobsbawm (1989), 12.

come to mean European civilisation only, rather than one of many others as it had meant at earlier periods and indicated that Europe was the home of culture, progress and history. The material domination of Europe was thus supported by the belief that the changes that had made Europe different lay in the fact of it being Civilisation itself.⁶⁵

In the intellectual context of imperialism the Ottoman Empire was negatively perceived as a weak and declining Oriental power, which was economically backward, its political system was considered to be outdated, unprogressive and despotic, its peoples considered inferior. To the British of this period the Ottoman Empire was considered an anachronism. From having once been an object of support and tolerance in the period before 1876 it became an object of contempt, mockery or extreme intolerance. The Ottoman Empire according to this vision had reached a point of decline from which it was unable to recover and which was both inevitable and desirable. Older visions that venerated Ottoman traditions of government and which were more approving of Ottoman rule continued to be echoed but after the 1870s were eventually superseded by less tolerant ideas. Positive conceptualisations were replaced by a vision that saw Ottoman society as inferior, backward and incapable of living up to the times.⁶⁶

From Tolerance to Intolerance

This change in perceptions and policy towards the Ottoman Empire which can be seen during the period covered by this study represented a passage from tolerance to intolerance on the level of thought, premised on the belief in the racial and religious superiority of Europe. Although eurocentrism had been present in British and European thought for a long time it took on a new significance in the 'Age of Empire' characterising the last three decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The change was from seeing the Ottoman Empire as a power that however dislikeable it was (and not all commentators found it dislikeable before the 1870s) to seeing it simply as another part of the non-European, Oriental world, as a declining and irrelevant power which could not change, could not progress and had little or no future as an independent state. Not all commentators after 1876 saw the Empire or the

⁶⁵ See Hyam (1979), for outline of eighteenth century sensibility and the changing idea of Civilisation. For contemporary ideas see: Freeman (1877, a, b).

⁶⁶ For older positive views see: Slade (1839); Urquhart (1832, 1839). For later views reflecting the idea of the irrelevance of the Ottoman Empire see Campbell (1876); Eliot (1900, 1908).

Turks as dislikeable, but few retained any faith in the Empire's ability to change and survive.

According to Herbert Spencer, social theorist and inheritor of Darwinian ideas, the laws of evolution had as demonstrated by the progress of Britain produced the most perfect development from the 'militant' stage of society to 'industrial society'. The latter was a society that was freed from the coercion of nature in which the individual could express his individuality in conformity with 'equity and reason'.⁶⁷ Spencer brought together all that was fundamental to Victorian thought a veneration for scientific positivistic method, the idea of progress, a cultural pride in Victorian achievement and the overall deterministic framework of explanation and a veneration of rationality. According to this definition what could be more opposite than an Eastern society which was ruled by tradition, by religion and was inherently unprogressive on account of race. Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire confirmed to the late Victorian writer precisely this difference between societies.

The overwhelming theme in late Victorian ideas about the Ottoman Empire was that it was Oriental which in the context of imperialism became a purely negative designation. After the 1870s there was little belief in capacity to change, as progress was defined as a particular European virtue which could not be replicated in the East (at least not by the efforts of Easterners). This represented the general narrowing of views referred to previously and was particularly clear in perceptions of the Ottoman Empire which was already considered different, subject to different influences and Oriental.⁶⁸ The old empires of China, Persia and the Ottoman Empire were seen as relics of the past that were incompatible with the present and incapable of reaching modernity because of the way that their societies, economies, and politics were ordered. Late nineteenth-century commentators were not convinced of the ability of empires such as the Ottoman to change, and they little believed in the desire or ability of Orientals to do this.

In addition to overtly imperialist or racist thought in Victorian culture there were certain other shared assumptions which Victorians acceded to consciously or unconsciously. The model of the liberal constitutional nation state, for example was considered the norm of

⁶⁷ See bibliography for works of Spencer. It is mainly in his *Principles of Sociology* (1877), that the idea of militant and industrial societies can be found. For the thought of Spencer see: Brinton (1954), 226-39; Burrows (1963).

⁶⁸ See: Hyam (1979).

political development. In a society such as late Victorian England that was predominantly urban and industrial it became less and less possible to conceive of other ways of organising society. Critics of industrialism of which there were an increasing number and also supporters spoke within a language created by reality of their industrial and imperial position. There was thus little sympathy for multi racial empires and support of empires was for the new 'modern' ones like the British rather than the old empires.⁶⁹

At the close of the Crimean war in 1856 the Ottoman Empire had been included in the concert of powers not because it was European or had even achieved by reform a degree of Europeaness, rather it was included out of necessity and in the belief pledged by treaty that it could transform itself. All of which was underpinned by the belief in one Civilisation, that of Europe alone.⁷⁰ Under the influence of changing notions of race, progress and the idea of the superiority of European civilisation which became coextensive with the idea of civilised the Ottoman Empire could not be tolerated, indeed it was not seen as a civilisation at all. Perceptions of the Ottomans thus changed from that of the 'uncivilised' but nonetheless 'civilisable' to the 'uncivilisable' and unrepentant Oriental. This was the fundamental difference between views before and after the reign of AbdulHamid.

By the later nineteenth century views were refracted through this new and exclusive concept of Civilisation. It was less the fact that the Ottomans had become worse or less civilised, which were of course purely evaluative ideas, but that British perceptions of themselves and others had changed. This is not to suggest that the Ottoman Empire had not changed, but rather that British perceptions of that change were misconceived in the first place. The Ottoman Empire was not the blank sheet on which the Utilitarian plan of improvement and progress had been or could simply have been written, although there was the belief that this was the case and it had in fact formed the basis of British policy throughout the nineteenth century. The implications of British views were not however fully appreciated by themselves. The Ottoman Empire was a complex society to comprehend and most commentators did not succeed. Rather British perceptions revealed a combination of mis-

⁶⁹ See: Hobsbawm (1989). See also Gong (1984), for the ways in which a standard of Civilisation in International relations, that was likewise exclusive in its definition was applied to the Ottoman Empire.

⁷⁰ See: Gong (1984).

perception, half accurate perception, total lack of comprehension or sheer prejudice. The Ottoman Empire was always what the viewer wanted it to be, the East, the modernising East, the sick East, and ideas in this sense completely accord with the dictum that this was a 'man-made' East.⁷¹ Study shows how the picture of the Ottoman Empire as a declining Oriental society was constructed and how perceptions revealed the interplay between different levels of reality (Ottoman conditions), previous ideas (about the East and Turk, 'Orientalism') and between the new culture of imperialism which characterised the period 1876-1908. The thesis stresses this change in view as the result of the general impact of imperialism. It shows the effect to be a common image of the Ottoman Empire as a non-European state whereby both liberal and conservative perspectives, although still occasionally divided on the level of state policy were joined by a common language of description. Universally the sub-text of writings is that the Ottoman Empire is an anachronism when measured against the progress of Britain as a modern state and Empire.

British ideas about the Ottoman Empire represent a complex tableau of: older ideas about the Turk and the East, new concepts of racial theorising, information taken from travel, contemporary understandings of events around them always refracted through the parameters of late Victorian culture. Perceptions in the main were subjective, coloured by political and religious prejudice and contained varying degrees of accuracy and inaccuracy in their depiction of Ottoman society and peoples. Overall British perceptions can be considered as a complex mixture of accuracy and inaccuracy, often straightforward misperception, lack of comprehension and sometimes deliberate distortion. It is these dimensions of British views which are the main focus of the present study.

Note on Nineteenth-Century Sources

A thesis of this kind which reconstructs a picture of a society from a wide range of contemporary sources faces various questions in the selection and interpretation of material. The main questions that this thesis has sought to answer are: 1) what was the dominant image of Ottoman society and populations in late Victorian society 2) what were the chief determinants of this image. In answering these questions many avenues of research and data collection were pursued and a

⁷¹ Said (1978).

systematic and comprehensive range of questions were asked as part of a thorough analysis of source material.

As the bibliography of this thesis reflects there was a wealth of literature about the Ottoman Empire. An extensive search through nineteenth-century articles and books about the Ottoman Empire using the main reference sources and catalogues was undertaken and a comprehensive bibliography of writings about the Balkans and Anatolia established.⁷² Careful reading of this literature revealed common ideas and themes which were widely reiterated throughout these sources. There was a striking lack of difference in ideas about the Ottoman Empire and even in the case of negative and positive conceptualisations (which as mentioned previously breakdown in the 1870s) there was a common language used to describe the Empire and its people.

The above discussion of theoretical approach has shown that the particular cultural framework of late Victorian Britain formed the chief determinant of perceptions. The cultural context influenced the choice of subjects as well as the language used to describe the Empire and its peoples. This conclusion about the key determinants of images was reached by a careful classification of themes according to the frequency by which they occurred throughout a wide variety of different writings, as well as the conditions of production which included, timing of publication, authorship, publicity achieved (where this has been possible to establish). In the course of research it became clear that there were dominant ways in which the Empire was represented. It thus became possible to classify themes according to their importance in creating a collective and dominant image.⁷³

Writers

Unlike other areas of the world the Ottoman Empire was not an object of sustained and continuous interest on the part of any one group in British society except at periods of crisis and

⁷² The main reference guides and bibliographies available have been widely used: The voluminous British Library, Bodleian pre-1920, and the Library of Congress catalogues were an indispensable source as were the London Catalogue of books published contemporaneously. Texts were cross referenced in these guides to check on the number of editions of each book. It was rarely the case that references in other guides could not be found in the British Library Catalogues, Bodleian Library's pre-nineteenth-century and Library of Congress catalogues.

⁷³ For studies of Victorian reading habits and tastes see: Altick (1983); Cruse (1930, 1935).

European involvement in the affairs of the Empire. In comparison to for example, India and other areas of British colonial authority the Ottoman Empire was a minority intellectual interest and writings about it were sporadic and uneven. The literature that is given prominence in this thesis is that produced at times when the Ottoman Empire emerged into public light as this coincides with the periods of the greatest production of literature. The bibliography reflects that the production of writings is closely linked to diplomatic crises, most notably the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 and the Armenian Question of 1894-6. It was at these times of adversity for the Ottoman Empire that a negative image was shaped. The Empire gained both publicity but more importantly notoriety.⁷⁴

People who wrote about the Ottoman Empire represented different political, social and religious positions in British society amongst which were: political figures involved in contemporary debates about the Ottoman Empire. These constituted a broad cross section of British political, social and religious life from politicians involved in the framing of policies such as Gladstone, figures who were part of imperial administration in parts of the British Empire (Campbell) and ex-diplomats such as Canning. Other persons were religious figures interested in the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire (Denton, MacColl), scholars representing a wide range of disciplines from Oriental studies (Lane-Poole) to English History (Freeman) and the Social Sciences, literary figures, social and political commentators and writers (Gallenga, Harrison), a lesser group of people interested in the economic resources of the Empire (Farley). In addition there were general travellers (Barkley, Burnaby), specialist travellers, antiquarians, archaeologists and historical geographers (Ramsay, Hogarth). The Ottoman Empire provoked a general interest as an Oriental society for those interested in discovering the real East, but even here the Balkans and Anatolia had a low priority in comparison to the Holy Land, Egypt, and increasingly Arabia (except perhaps en route to these areas).⁷⁵

⁷⁴ The dates of writings about the Ottoman Empire as reflected in the bibliography shows that it was at times of crisis that writings were produced, most notably 1875-8, 1894-6. The majority of writings in the period under review occur at these times and also dictate the areas of interest, namely the Balkans 1875-8 and Anatolia in 1894-6.

⁷⁵ See: Barkley (1876, 1877a, b, 1891); Burnaby (1877 6th ed, 1898); Campbell (1854, 1876, 1877a, b, c, 1878); Denton (1876, 1877a, b, c); Farley (1858, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1866, 1876, 1878); Freeman (1855, 1876a, b, c, 1877a, b, c, 18881, 1882, 1885); Gallenga (1877); Gladstone (1876a, b, c, 1877a, b, c, 1878a,b, 1879a, b, 1896); Harrison (1876, 1890, 1894 a,

Out of this complex of general and specific interests emerged ideas about the Ottoman Empire. Perceptions in general were strongly affected by political, economic, cultural and/or religious bias. Sometimes there was a deliberate attempt to portray the Empire in a negative or positive light and views were often subjective and biased. Ideas about the Ottoman Empire reflected the unconscious use of notions and assumptions about non-Europeans and the nature of Islam and drew on reservoir of older ideas about the Turk that were reinterpreted and given a new significance as a result of the changed historical context of the late Victorian period.

The ideas expressed in the writings of the above groups were instrumental in shaping ideas about the Ottoman Empire and have been selected as representative. Despite the large number of writings, the most influential writers came from a relatively homogenous group in British society. The chief opinion makers were figures who held positions of power and authority. In most cases there was a clear correlation between the political and social position of the writer and his ability to influence the popular perception. In certain instances writers have been cited who have no apparent position in British society. There were particular reasons for this. It was the case that for an area such as Anatolia, which was not a subject of widespread interest, apparently insignificant figures were able to establish reputations as knowledgeable raconteurs of conditions there.⁷⁶ The fact that they were amongst a small group of writers on Anatolia helped to ensure the success of their writings. Their popularity can be attested by contemporary interest expressed in periodicals and reviews, by cross referencing and mention in other works or by republication. Often there is no direct reference to the works of other writers and ideas and themes are simply echoed in other texts. With the exception of these writers, however, the majority of those cited in this study occupied some position of influence, as politicians, political commentators, specialists (with links to the establishment), or religious figures and well known travellers. The latter group promoted ideas and images about Ottoman society which reflected and reproduced generalised notions of race, of Civilisation, and of progress and other eurocentric concepts that had currency in their own society. The views of well

b); Hogarth (1896, 1902); Lane-Poole (1878, 1888, 1891, 1899, 1908); MacColl (1877a, b, 1884, 1888, 1895a, b, c, 1896a, b); Ramsay (1890a, b, 1891, 1896, 1897, 1909, 1916a, b).

⁷⁶ Such as Barkley (1876, 1877); Burnaby (1886). In a small number of cases writers are mentioned because of what they reveal of contemporary thinking in general, such as Bettany (1883) mentioned in chapter 6 as typical of a popular ethnocentric perspective.

known writers mirror those of writers of lesser stature. Ideas were repetitious reflecting the influence of the dominant culture of imperialism which was all pervasive in its influence of writers who might themselves represent in their private and public capacities different political, religious and social philosophies.⁷⁷ What these writers were doing was creating a body of opinion that was greatly similar in nature and which constituted a discourse about the Ottoman Empire.

The elite of British social and political life were the main contributors to periodicals and the main writers of books and pamphlets. They formed along with editors and publishers part of the political and religious Establishment of Victorian society.⁷⁸ It was from these positions of power that writers were able to influence the popular perception. In the case of periodical literature, in addition to the importance of the author it was also the standing of the particular periodical in Britain that helped to determine the influential nature of ideas. These quarterly and fortnightly periodicals in turn gained their reputation and widespread circulation from these public figures who were their main contributors.⁷⁹ In many cases the public standing of a writer was directly related to the influential nature of his book or article about the Ottoman Empire, but there were also some exceptions where the author was not a figure of major standing but whose writings became well known.⁸⁰ In the case of perceptions of the Ottoman Empire opinion makers, figures of standing in British society were also in the main the chief image makers and

⁷⁷ The dates of the majority of contemporary writings in the bibliography reflects that it was at times of crisis, most notably the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 and to a lesser, but nevertheless important extent the Armenian question of 1894-6 that books and articles were produced.

⁷⁸ Figures such as the publisher John Murray, or the one time editor of the Fortnightly Review, John Morley also the biographer of Gladstone were well known figures in political and social circles.

⁷⁹ The most influential periodicals judging by their figures of circulation were Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, the Contemporary Review, The Edinburgh Review, The Fortnightly Review, Fraser's Magazine, Longman's Magazine, Macmillan's Magazine, The Nineteenth Century, The Quarterly Review. Their circulation figures ranged roughly from 10,000-20,000 per issue in this period. See: Houghton (1966-89).

⁸⁰ For example the writer H.C. Barkley a resident engineer in the Balkans in the 1870s and a traveller in Anatolia in the 1890s. His books *Between the Danube and the Black Sea* (1876 1st ed, 1877 2nd ed); *Bulgaria Before the War* (1877) and *A Ride Through Asia Minor* (1891) were well known, discussed, reviewed and republished. Also the writer F. Burnaby whose *On Horseback through Asia Minor* was in its sixth edition by 1877.

it was their ideas which made an impact on contemporary ideas about the Ottoman Empire. Their views on topics of contemporary discussion and interest such as the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 or the Armenian Question of 1894-6 attracted attention and were effective on a wider public. Some writers stood out by virtue of the many writings they produced about the Ottoman Empire or their own particular degree of interest in the Empire. These factors have also influenced the choice of texts used to represent the main ideas about the Ottoman Empire.⁸¹

At certain times, most notably, the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 and the Armenian question of 1894-6 various and often diverse interests come together and functioned as pressure groups attempting to exert an influence on British policies towards the Ottoman Empire. Most of these groupings were ephemeral but nonetheless vocal and influential in promoting negative images of Ottoman society. During the Eastern crisis of 1875-8, for example leading political, religious and social figures came together in a movement of protest against Ottoman rule in Europe. This movement which never achieved an organisational form as such was short lived but yet successful in tarring the image of the Ottomans and making difficult (at least in the short-term) a policy of support for the Ottoman Empire. In 1876 agitation was orchestrated throughout the country by a small group of committed anti-Turks leading to the famous meeting at St. James' Hall in London addressed by an illustrious list of politicians and other well known public figures. This event convened under the title of Eastern Question Association meeting was not the product of a formal organisation as such. The term 'Association' applied to the temporary meeting of minds only rather than the beginnings of a society, or organisation. With the beginnings of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, this 'Association' of people had more or less broken up. The lack of a formal organisational structure and continuation in a later period should not suggest that this meeting was unimportant. It provided a focus for opposition and out of this opposition arose much writing which made a significant contribution to negative ideas about the Ottoman Empire. The conveners, most of whom were well known political and religious figures remained over the next decades consistent in their opposition to the Ottoman Empire and re-emerged at a later period in 1894-6 to take up the cause of Armenians.⁸²

⁸¹ Such as the writings of J. W. Farley, E. A. Freeman, M. MacColl. See bibliography for their writings.

⁸² Well known examples were J. Bryce, M. MacColl, W. T. Stead who figured in this later period.

Likewise during the Armenian Question of 1894-6 there was a spate of publications about the Ottoman Empire, much of which came from figures that had been involved in the agitation of 1875-8. Unlike that time however there was no organisational initiative or important pressure group such as in 1876.⁸³ A few prominent figures, members of the Anglo-Armenian Committee, (a small group of supporters of Armenian independence) were vocal at the time such as F. Stevenson, and also the missionary, T. Trowbridge. The Armenian Question also provoked other well known figures to write about the Ottoman Empire, such as G. Washburn, President of Robert College, Istanbul, known in British political and religious circles. Protest was however sporadic, but nonetheless effective its adding to the reservoir of negative ideas about the Ottoman Empire. As during the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 it was as much the quantity as well as the quality of views which influenced whether ideas were effective. In this later period it was also a question of repetition of themes about the nature of the Turk and the position of Christians in the Ottoman Empire which were already familiar. Negative ideas of the 1890s were not new, they were a confirmation of ideas that had developed two decades earlier.

Writings

There were many complex issues involved in the use of nineteenth-century writings, especially when trying to establish which texts were influential. In selecting which writings were important in the production of images about the Ottoman Empire different criteria were used. The main issue in analysis of sources in this period was the ways in which these writings produced and contributed to a body of opinion that came from different sources but which differed little in terms of language and mode of expression to create a collective and dominant image of the Ottoman Empire and a common discourse. To answer this the following questions were asked:

- 1) given the large body of writing about the Ottoman Empire in this period, from which source

⁸³ British missionary interest in the Balkans and Anatolia was small in comparison to other parts of the Empire, and was well obstructed by the Ottoman authorities except amongst the Armenians, where it was American and not British missionaries who took the lead in Protestant proselytisation. Research into the question of a British missionary presence for these areas has shown few writings produced as a direct consequence of missionary activity that can be said to have directly contributed to the image of the Ottoman Empire. The main reason is that these areas did not form the main thrust of missionary enterprise in the Ottoman Empire which was directed elsewhere in Ottoman territories.

did ideas come, and the related question 2) whether there were any texts that stood out as 'key' texts in the creation of dominant images. These questions involved a rigorous and comprehensive search through nineteenth-century sources and a systematic analysis.

Establishing with accuracy the publication history of any nineteenth-century text in order to trace its degree of influence was a difficult, hazardous and very often unfruitful process. The tests of republication, reviewing and cross referencing where these could be traced in addition to the tracing of common themes and ideas were considered to be the most accurate and verifiable methods that could be applied. The most important and comprehensive reference guides were used to quantify and check numbers of editions and reprints of books. Information about the quantity of books produced in any one print run or indeed the number of print runs was in the vast majority of cases not available. There was no adequate and accurate method to establish information about print runs that could be used with universal applicability for all texts and the main reason for this was lack of availability of data. In general such information was not recorded or preserved at the time and is therefore not comprehensively available as a research source.⁸⁴

Nineteenth-century books provided a few clues about their own publishing history. For example, which edition they were. By looking at what information books themselves contained it was often possible to establish (by cross checking in reference guides) whether texts were re-editions, but it was less possible to establish whether books were re-printings. New editions sometimes contained new prefaces or changes in the body of the text. However, this was very often not the case. Unlike modern publication practises which govern the re-edition of a text involving rewriting and noticeable changes and/or new additions to previous text, in the case

⁸⁴ Research in the Bodleian Library of Oxford and the British Library of London have confirmed the lack of availability of material relating to print runs. In addition consultation with specialists, including archivists and librarians in these institutions, publishers of former nineteenth-century publishing houses, John Murrays, A. C. Black and Cassell in particular, and antique book specialists have confirmed that comprehensive and reliable information about print runs is not available as such information was not and has not been systematically or widely preserved. The archives of these few remaining publishing houses generally contain copies of books only rather than information about how many copies were produced at any one time nor how many times a book was reprinted. Nor did these publishers have correspondence relevant to the question of print runs. The view of archivists was that such information could not be reliably and comprehensively established.

of nineteenth-century books this was not the case.⁸⁵ A nineteenth-century re-edition often simply involved a change of cover to a book without any substantial change in content. This is closer to the present notion of a new print run than it is to modern rules for new editions. Furthermore, almost universally there were no clues contained in the nineteenth-century texts used in this study that stated the number of copies of books produced at any one print run or re-edition. Even in the case of books known to have gone into many editions they rarely provided information about how many copies there were in the total run. There was therefore a general lack of information by which a reliable picture could be built. Yet it is still known that certain texts such as the work of the Orientalist E. W. Lane or nineteenth-century translations of the *Thousand and One Nights* to cite well known examples were hugely popular, widely read and influential. Many editions of these can be found in libraries and many editions were recorded in reference sources. However, even in the case of these there was little systematic recording of numbers of editions and discrepancies in reference guides were apparent. Some editions were omitted in reference sources, whilst mentioned in others. Experience of these discrepancies suggested the need to apply a variety of criteria in addition to what information could be gained from a book itself as a means of measuring its influence.⁸⁶

Reference guides and catalogues do not in general record the quantity of books published at any one time or the number of re-printings. It was rare to find such information in catalogues, even catalogues as comprehensive as those of the British Library, nor as a general rule are figures recorded in books themselves. In the case of a few selected texts catalogues recorded editions which exceeded the standard figure of 1,000, but these were the exception. In one case, that of Gladstone's pamphlet on the Bulgarian Horrors published in 1876 an edition was found in the Bodleian pre-1920 catalogue that claimed itself as the 54,000th copy which confirms its known popularity.⁸⁷ No mention is made of other numbers which reflected the general inadequacy of information about print runs and quantities of publication. Such information only

⁸⁵ For a history of publishing see: Mumbo (1974); Prate (1936).

⁸⁶ For information about the work of Lane and other translations of the *Thousand and One Nights* see: Ahmad (1974).

⁸⁷ See Gladstone (a) 54,000th edition mentioned in the Bodleian Library pre-1920 Catalogue, xliii, 252. This pamphlet came out in at least three editions in 1876.

provided part of the story of the influence of a book or article. In the case of this article by Gladstone for example, its popularity was in part the result of the wide publication gained. It was also the result of his authorship which itself promoted greater publication. The ideas contained in his article reflect common themes that can be found in other literature and there is much to suggest that this article made the impact it did mainly because of its author, as well as audience receptivity. The popularity of certain writings and the ideas contained within them can also be established by reference made to them in other writings as well as by the celebrity of the writer. The popularity of a book could, for example be confirmed by contemporary comment. In the vast majority of cases publication on such a scale as Gladstone's's pamphlet does not appear to have occurred. The figure of around 1000 copies in each print run for the standard text has been accepted as general for the purposes of this study. The complex process of the transmission of ideas has been established by use of various criteria of which scale of publication was only one variable.⁸⁸

This excursion into the history of nineteenth-century publishing history although interesting was not entirely fruitful in its results. However it added to the present research and raised some interesting questions. Conclusions about which texts were important in their contribution to images of the Ottoman Empire have been reached by use of these various methods in combination with the method of checking editions, by the extent to which ideas

⁸⁸ Enquiries with specialist Antique book dealers formed another avenue of research. Use was made of various Antiquarian books shops and their resources, both catalogues and discussion with specialists. Amongst these were the London bookshops: Al Saqi, Arthur Probian, Fine Books Oriental, London (where the specialist knowledge of the proprietor J. Somers was invaluable), Al Norr Bookshop and in Oxford: Blackwells Rare Books and Thorntons. Many of them use the cost of editions in the collectors market as a guide to how popular or influential a book was. Cheapness of editions is often one of the best guides to popularity, as dearness is one of the best guides to rarity and small numbers printed. The enquiries of the author cautioned against definite conclusions. There are also other factors to consider which might make a book scarce and expensive now which are not a reflection of nineteenth-century book market conditions. Present day collector's prices are not a precise measure of either cost or quantity at the time and say nothing of exact amounts published beyond the standard and widely accepted figure for most books of 1,000 copies. Most books about the Ottoman Empire tend to be expensive and scarce now which does not suggest that they were printed in large numbers. Books such as Creasy's *History of the Ottoman Turks* which was re-published in a new edition in 1877 and was one of the few well known histories of the Ottoman Empire is relatively expensive according to present conditions. The conclusions drawn from this could be many, as pointed out in this case by the antique specialist, J. Somers of Fine Books Oriental, London.

contained in books are widely repeated and used and also by the importance of the writer as an opinion maker. In general the influence of writings has been assessed according to direct or indirect reference in other texts and the repetition of common motifs and ideas in other writings, the number of editions that were published and contemporary interest shown by reviews and general discussion in journals and periodicals. In most case the transmission of ideas can be detected by the repetition of common themes.

Many factors were considered in piecing together ideas about the Ottoman Empire in this period. According to the above criteria the conclusions that were drawn were that with the exception of Gladstone's pamphlet of 1876 there was no one book that was more influential than others or solely responsible for ideas about the Ottoman Empire. Rather it was the constant repetition of themes which helped to create certain ideas and writers drew upon these generally held notions and assumptions in their accounts. There were no key texts as such about the Ottoman Empire and no one text that can be said to be the text that defined the image of the Empire as a whole. Rather it was the quantity of literature and the strength of an imperialist discourse in general that helped to shape the image and create a body of opinion that was widely used and influential in fixing ideas about the Ottoman Empire.

Another line of research was prompted by the view of one modern author that older texts were influential throughout the nineteenth century, including this later period.⁸⁹ The fairly consistent republication of older texts such as those of A. W. Kinglake, Lady Mary Wortley Montague and O. G. de Busbecq throughout the nineteenth century suggested that they were influential. However, in terms of direction reference in the texts used in this thesis assessment showed that this was not the case. Their writings were rarely mentioned in other texts examined and there was also little direct influence on ways of describing the Ottoman Empire in the period covered by this study. Such factors as re-publication do not therefore necessarily explain whether certain texts were or how they were influential. Late nineteenth-century writings produced images which were different in character, tone and ideas expressed and which reflect a changed cultural context. Texts such as these mentioned above exerted an influence in often unexpected ways. This is especially the case with pre-nineteenth-century texts such as those of de Busbecq and Montague. In the late nineteenth-century their ideas (if they occur at all) formed a standard

⁸⁹ Cunningham (1992).

of comparison against which the present picture of decline of the Empire was measured. The ideas contained in these texts are thus used selectively and subjectively. When the ideas of these writers were mentioned it is in the capacity of a comparison between past and present which reinforced the idea of the present poor state of the Ottoman Empire.⁹⁰

Such factors make clear the complexity of the question of ideas and their influence. Points such as these about the indirect transmission of ideas warned this author against reliance on any one method as final. Rather a sensitive and knowledgeable appraisal of ideas and texts about the Ottoman Empire which took account of the many factors that contributed to the creation of dominant images was necessary. Such an approach has underpinned the analysis of sources. The results of this research showed that ideas came from diverse sources and were influenced sometimes by older ideas about the Turk, Islam, Eastern Christianity, from new interpretations of the Ottoman Empire, or information from the Ottoman Empire refracted through late Victorian culture and frames of reference, which were ultimately the most important. It is these factors which go to make up complexity of ideas about the Ottoman Empire.

The overall aim of this study has been to illustrate the importance of ideas in understanding relations between the Ottoman Empire and Europe using the example of ideas in Britain as one of the states most directly involved in Ottoman affairs. This examination has shown how enduring images, many of which are still present in twentieth century literature were constructions based upon very particular nineteenth century conditions which served a variety of purposes of which many were often political and ideological in intention. The study shows the complexity involved in understandings of other societies in which images develop based upon many different factors of past and present ideas, assumptions and realities. In these ways this study has made a contribution to several bodies of study and historical debate. It contributes to the study of ideas about Turkey, the Balkans and the Middle East as part of the debate about how these societies have been understood and represented in the West and the possible relationship between ideas and policies towards these societies. It makes a contribution to the study of diplomatic relations and the Eastern Question by exploring this important cultural dimension, and it sheds light on many of the ideas that have come to influence modern historiography and the appreciation of Ottoman history. By examining what was written and thought about the

⁹⁰ See bibliography for the different editions of these writings.

Ottoman Empire, its government, society, institutions and peoples in this period it adds to a knowledge and understanding of East/West relations in all their many dimensions and continues the process begun by others in the field of Ottoman history of questioning assumptions and truths that have developed about the Ottoman Empire. In general it shows the complexity involved in understandings of other societies and the importance of considering ideas as part of a wider process of inter-state relations.

Chapter 1 Relations and Ideas: the Historical Context.

Throughout the nineteenth century relations between the Ottoman Empire and Britain were influenced by the material context of a strong European states system. This altered perceptions of the Ottoman Empire from those that had been the product of more equal relations in previous centuries.¹ From the late eighteenth century the Ottoman Empire was perceived in Britain and Europe as a diplomatic problem requiring European intervention in order to solve issues arising from its weakness. Issues relating to the Ottoman Empire were known variously as the 'Eastern Question', the 'Eastern problem', 'Eastern crisis/es', which formed a complex series of problems involving Ottoman rulers, subjects and European powers.²

From the Ottoman side the question was one of how to restore the former power of the Empire and offset European intervention and political disintegration and clearly the Ottomans did not perceive themselves as the 'Eastern problem'. This lack of congruence between views from Europe and views from the Ottoman Empire illustrates the different nature of the question as perceived from each side. This thesis contends that in order for there to be an Eastern question, conceptually there needed to be an 'East' which was measured against the idea of a 'West'. The question of perceptions of the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth century conformed to an analysis in which views were seen to be governed by a series of pre-conceptions of which the idea of the 'East' was as central as the idea of the West.³

The historical context of European imperialism in the late nineteenth century formed the background to the development of perceptions which were eurocentric in nature and which represented a break from a previous views which had expressed greater tolerance. The thesis subject is this relationship between material power and ideas and relations between Britain and

¹ For older texts and examinations of them see: De Busbecq (1633); Montague (1763); Rycart (1668); Tournefort (1717); Shaw and Heywood (1972); Vaughan (1954).

² For the Eastern question See: Anderson (1983); Brown (1984); Marriot (1917).

³ See Lewis (1964) which discusses the origins of this term Middle East and its significance and Said (1978), which explores Western ideas of the East, considered a 'man made' Western construction representing relationships of power over the East.

the Ottoman Empire on these different levels of politics, economics and culture. This chapter outlines the historical context which formed the background to the ideas and themes that are the subjects of later chapters. It looks at the position of the Ottoman Empire as a weak power in a European dominated system and at Britain's relationship with the Empire from a position of superior power. This discussion includes an overview of the main events of the period namely, the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 and the Armenian question of 1894-6.

1.1 The Ottoman Empire in the Nineteenth Century

In the nineteenth century European industrialisation and imperialism transformed the relationship between Europe and the rest of the world.⁴ A new world division of labour resulted in which countries in Asia and Africa came to function as unequal partners in a European dominated system. Non-European states were incorporated into the world economy in various positions of dependency, as producers of raw materials and markets for the manufactured goods of Europe.⁵ Until the 1870s Britain was dominant in this system. After this time other European states began to challenge Britain's position and entered into a competitive struggle for the division of the non-European world into zones of influence and control.⁶

In the period covered by this thesis European states dominated the economies and politics of societies in Asia, Africa and the Americas by formal and informal methods of control. The few remaining sovereign states of China, the Ottoman Empire and Persia although uncolonised were under the influence or control of European powers.⁷ No area was unaffected by European material dominance and none less so than the Ottoman Empire which since the eighteenth

⁴ For the classical account of the development of a world system see: Wallerstein (1974) and also; Anderson (1972); Habbakuk, Mathias and Postan eds. (1978); Cipolla (1973-5); Kemp (1985).

⁵ For general accounts see: Wallerstein (1974) and also; Hobsbawm (1989); Landes (1969); Robinson and Gallagher (1954); Wolf (1982). For frameworks of understanding the Ottoman Empire in the world economy see: Owen (1981); Pamuk (1987); Wallerstein in Okyar and Inalcik eds (1980).

⁶ For these developments see: Fieldhouse (1982); Kemp (1985).

⁷ For the economics and diplomacy of imperialism see: Feis (1930); Fieldhouse (1982); Headrick (1981); Langer (1950, 1956 2nd editions); Owen and Sutcliffe (1972); Robinson and Gallagher (1954, 1965).

century had established an ever closer economic and diplomatic relationship with European states.⁸

The nineteenth century was a period of weakness for the Ottoman Empire in contrast to earlier periods of its history. At its heights in the seventeenth century the Ottoman Empire consisted of a huge expanse of territory in Europe, Asia and Africa which extended from the borders with the Hapsburg Empire in Europe, including present day Rumania, Yugoslavia, Albania, Macedonia, Greece, Bulgaria to the Ukraine, the Crimea and in the former territories of the Byzantine Empire in Anatolia. In the Near and Middle East it encompassed present day Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, the Yemen, Egypt, to Tunisia, Libya, and Algeria in North Africa.⁹ These religiously and ethnically diverse territories were under the rule of the Ottoman Sultan who was also the Caliph. The language of the dynasty and ruling elite was Ottoman Turkish which served as the official language of the administration. To be Ottoman and part of the ruling administration required adherence to Islam, dynastic allegiance to the House of Osman and to the high traditions of Islamic culture. Although there were many changes in the bureaucracy in the nineteenth century these basic dynastic/religious features remained.¹⁰

Despite the Ottoman Islamic character of the Empire, the population was composed of many religious and ethnic groups amongst which were Greeks, Armenians, Arabs, Kurds and various Slavic peoples. Until the divisive effects of nationalism were felt in the nineteenth century the Ottomans had incorporated these different religions and races. The official religion of the Empire was Islam, although according to the Qu'ranic notion of *Dhimmi*, non-Islamic monotheistic peoples were tolerated and providing they did not make war were free to practice their faith within the boundaries prescribed by their status.¹¹

The main non-Muslim areas of the Empire were in the Balkans, but throughout Anatolia

⁸ For the effects of this relationship on the Ottoman Empire see: Blaisdell (1929); Lewis (1964, 1979); Owen (1981); Pamuk (1987); Kasaba (1988).

⁹ For histories of the Ottoman Empire see: Inalcik (1973); Vuchinich (1965); Jelavich (1983).

¹⁰ For the traditional basis of the Empire see: Itkowitz (1972), and for nineteenth-century change see: Findley (1980).

¹¹ For the question of *Dhimmi* see: Braude and Lewis (1982), I, 1-37, which provides a general overview of the theoretical and practical position of Christians. See also Inalcik (1973a).

and the Arabic speaking provinces Christian communities such as Greek and Armenian Christians, Syriac Christians and the Maronites of the Lebanon could be found.¹² Despite these religious and ethnic differences populations were often mixed especially in the Balkans, but also in Anatolia. Communities although living separately with little in common with each other did not always form neat ethnic communities and even less so 'nations'. Communities lived separately, but the usual situation was one of mutual disinterest rather than enmity.¹³

The history of this old and previously self sufficient empire and civilisation in the nineteenth century was determined to a large extent by its relationship to a materially and militarily ascendant Europe. European power and influence dictated that rulers in formally sovereign areas such as the Ottoman Empire formulate policies and responses to meet this challenge on many different levels of cultural influence, economic challenge and political domination. The problems of change that the Empire experienced in the nineteenth century resulted from this unequal relationship.¹⁴ The dynamics of nineteenth-century Ottoman history were a mixture of internal and external influences on its development.¹⁵ In response to military, economic and political weakness Ottoman rulers of the nineteenth century initiated reforms. Over the century these encompassed major reforms in the economy, the civil and military administration and education which transformed Ottoman society making it significantly different to previous centuries. Many of the reforms undertaken to strengthen the Ottoman state incorporated ideas from Europe and the cultural, political and economic isolation of previous

¹² For population see: article by Karpas (1985); McCarthy (1892, 1983).

¹³ Braude and Lewis (1982), 2 Vols; Hasluck (1929), 2 Vols which explore the mixed nature of populations and the syncretism of faiths. See also Karpas (1973), on Ottoman population and nineteenth-century change.

¹⁴ See: Karal (1954) for general overview; Lewis (1953-4, 1979), for the cultural impact; Essay by Naff in Naff and Owen (1977), 88-107, for the changing diplomatic relations in the eighteenth century; Pamuk (1987), for the position of the Ottoman Empire in the world economy; Polk and Chambers, eds (1968); Berkes (1964); Karpas (1972) for general transformation.

¹⁵ See: Gibb and Bowen (1950-7), 2 Vols for the classical account; Lewis (1973), who stresses more the impact of Europe on Ottoman development, and, Berkes (1964), who stresses more the internal dynamics of change, especially Ottoman reform and Wallerstein and Kasaba (1981); Wallerstein in Okyar and Inalcik, eds. (1980).

centuries was ended.¹⁶

The success or failure of nineteenth-century reforms reflected the weak position that the Ottoman Empire occupied in this European dominated system. There were many obstacles to the success of reform both internally from conservative opposition and externally from European interference and involvement in Ottoman affairs. The Ottoman economy was in a weak position vis-a-vis European states which had a multiplicity of interests throughout the Empire. By the late nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire had become a virtual dependency of these states. European power was strengthened by the Capitulations and extra-territoriality which guaranteed low tariffs and privileges that were often subject to abuse by Ottoman Christian subjects as well as European states.¹⁷ The Ottoman economy as a whole was largely agricultural and weak in the face of unitary states and economies such as Britain with strong manufacturing sectors. The extent to which the Ottoman Empire could be successful given all its other problems of size, the difference in conditions between parts of the Empire and the lack of a single economy, in addition to European domination in certain areas of the Empire weakened its ability to respond effectively.¹⁸ Despite important regional centres of commercial activity in the Western parts of the Empire and the Levant, the Ottoman economy was not in a strong position and became progressively weaker over the course of the nineteenth century. The pattern of Ottoman development differed from colonised areas because of the political independence of its rulers, but European economic power was nevertheless central in determining an unequal and dependent development.¹⁹

In addition to economic weakness was political weakness. Intermittently throughout the nineteenth century the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was threatened by internal disturbances and rebellion and by European political intervention. European interference was a major problem for Ottoman rulers because the Empire as a whole was much weaker than in previous centuries.

¹⁶ For Ottoman reform see Berkes (1964); Davison (1963); Findley (1980); Inalcik (1973b); Karpas (1972); Lewis (1973).

¹⁷ For economic changes see Kasaba (1988); Pamuk (1987), Owen (1980). For the capitulations, their practice and effect see Bullard (1960); Platt (1971); Sonyel (1991); Sousa (1933).

¹⁸ Blaisdell (1929); Kasaba (1988); Owen (1981); Pamuk (1987).

¹⁹ Issawi (1982, 1986); Pamuk (1987); Puryear (1935)

Before the nineteenth century relations with Europe had been antagonistic but the Ottoman Empire had been strong in meeting this challenge. This situation was radically changed from the late seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century when the Empire began to lose wars and territory. In the eighteenth century the Ottoman Empire suffered significant losses of territory to Russia (1776) and to France (1798). The period of modern relations with Europe which collectively came to form the Eastern question of the nineteenth century were characterised by these relations of unequal power between a weakening Ottoman state and an expansionist Europe.²⁰

In addition to problems created by European interference in Ottoman affairs was the threat to the Empire caused by internal challenges. The weakness of the Ottoman Government to defend its own territory against internal threats was demonstrated during the Greek war of Independence (1821-31) and even more so by Egyptian crises of the 1832-3. The Greek War had resulted in the creation of an independent Greek state guaranteed by European powers and had also been the occasion for the rise of Muhammad Ali as an independent force in Egypt. Muhammad Ali posed a major provincial challenge to the central Ottoman authorities and it was only with the support of Britain and other European states that the central Government was able to withstand this challenge. Both the Greek and Egyptian crises revealed fundamental Ottoman military and political weakness. In the first case the Ottoman Empire in the face of European demands had been unable to prevent the loss of territory and in the second the Empire was incapable of dealing effectively with a major internal challenge. From the time of the Egyptian crisis the pattern of European diplomacy in which support was offered to the Empire to maintain its integrity by some of the states of Europe, and by Britain in particular took shape.

European involvement in Ottoman affairs characterised the nineteenth century. Throughout the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire had been considered by the states of Europe as a problem. Some states most notably Britain and Austria for reasons of state interest and European stability had posed themselves as the supporters of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. At the same time other states, such as France at various times (during the Egyptian crisis, for example) and Russia (almost continuously) had sought to exploit the weakness of the Ottoman Empire for their own territorial and economic aims. Even in the case of support from

²⁰ For the Eastern Question see: Anderson (1968).

powers such as Britain that posed themselves as champions of Ottoman integrity this was often a mixed blessing because it infringed Ottoman sovereignty. By the late nineteenth century the relationship between Europe and the Ottoman Empire had come to represent a loss of power by Ottoman statesmen.

By the beginning of Abdühamid's reign in 1876, the results of Ottoman reform and the obstacles that the Empire faced to full success in achieving a stronger and more effective economic and administrative system were clear. Rather than a strong state, what had resulted from over fifty years of European style reforms was a mixed system part Ottoman and part European, that was in fact much weaker in the face of external and internal pressures than had been anticipated by Ottoman reformers.²¹ The Ottoman Empire was pressurised to change by European pressure from its self proclaimed friends and also by its enemies. The choices appeared to be an ever increasing acceptance of European ideas of organisation in an Empire that was radically different and often reluctant to change its system according to European plan. That Europeanisation was not the only solution to the Empire's problems was clear to many Ottoman statesmen. In the analysis of the Empire's problems after 1876 it was the critics of Europe that gained the upperhand. The reign of Abdülhamid was characterised by resistance to European pressures and demands.²²

It was clear that by the late nineteenth century Ottoman internal problems had become more intertwined with the excessive degree of European involvement on many different levels of economics and diplomacy. The question of sovereignty had thus become a real and pressing issue for Ottoman rulers. As mentioned previously, until the 1870s Ottoman integrity had been maintained with European support. After this time European interference and nationalism amongst Ottoman subjects, often supported by European states combined with financial and economic weakness meant that these internal and external threats placed an intolerable strain on the Empire. The history of the Empire after 1876 was one of progressive territorial disintegration.²³

²¹ See: Berkes (1964); Davison (1963, 1992); Lewis (1961); Shaw and Shaw (1977), 118-9. See also articles by Karpas and Shaw in Polk and Chambers eds. (1968), 69-89, 29-39.

²² For reaction and reform see: Lewis (1961); Mardin (1962).

²³ See: Hourani (1991); Shaw and Shaw (1977), II.

The 'illiberalism' of Abdülhamid

From the point of view of Ottoman statesmen this period 1876-1908 was a critical stage in Ottoman history. When Sultan AbdülHamid II came to power in 1876 the Ottoman Empire faced insurrection and European interference in the Balkans which threatened the existence of Ottoman power in the area. Internally financial disorganisation (later bankruptcy) and a rapid succession of political changes in 1876 created uncertainty about the future economic and political arrangement of the Ottoman state. The reign was not auspicious from the beginning. In the following year, 1877 the Ottoman Empire was defeated in war with Russia and in 1878 was obliged to accept the Treaty of Berlin, which removed Ottoman control from many areas in South East Europe replacing it with European control or independent Balkan states.²⁴ The 1880s saw further territorial losses with the British occupation of Egypt in 1882. In the 1890s two main crises occurred: These were the Armenian massacres (1894-6 and 1896-7) and war with Greece in 1897 both of which lead to European arbitration. Financially also the Ottoman Empire had fallen under European control with the establishment of the Ottoman public debt Administration in 1881.²⁵ These were some of the problems that faced Abdulhamid as ruler of the Ottoman Empire. The old problems of territorial integrity and independence had now become critical issues. Abdülhamid's independence of action was under threat from several quarters which has lead one writer to characterise his independence as a 'polite fiction'.²⁶ Nevertheless, despite these problems the Ottoman Empire was at peace for most of the period except in 1877 and 1897 and military, administrative and economic reform continued with the aim of strengthening the empire.²⁷

The reign of Abdülhamid has generally been presented as one of the worst periods of

²⁴ For the Congress of Berlin see: Hurewitz (1975); Medlicott (1939).

²⁵ For the Ottoman Public Debt Administration see: Blaisdell (1929); Owen (1981). For the Armenian question see: Sonyel (1991).

²⁶ See: Earle (1923)

²⁷ For reforms 1876-1908 see: Shaw and Shaw (1977), I, 221-251.

illiberalism and oppressiveness in Ottoman history. In more recent times the reign has been reassessed from a previously purely negative depiction which focused on the pan-Islamic, anti-Western nature of his reign. The position of the Empire is better understood if assessed in the context of European expansion, in which the Ottoman Empire was subject to interference, destabilisation and European imperialist ambitions and also often great intolerance. Abdülhamid although criticised in both Turkish and Western sources as responsible for the problems of the Empire, is better seen as a representative figure of certain developments taking place in the Islamic world and as an initiator of policies in his own right.²⁸ The actions of the Sultan and Ottoman statesmen to prevent territorial disintegration in this period are often unfairly criticised in what from the Ottoman side were legitimate attempts by a sovereign state to resist infringements on Ottoman rights to rule territories that were an integral part of the Ottoman domain.

The nature of the system which developed under Abdülhamid was in part a reaction to the threats posed by internal separatist movements, European imperialism as well as the contradictions created by the Tanzimat period of reforms (1839-76), which had neither accepted nor entirely rejected a system based on Islam. The 'anti-Western' nature of the reign can also be placed in the context of the widespread appeal of a policy of resistance at a time when Europe was colonising vast areas in Asia and Africa. The idea that the reforming process stopped in the reign of Abdulhamid also has to be reassessed. Reforms continued in education, in the military establishment and also in the economy. The background for understanding the reign is the nature of the Eastern question at the time as a relationship of power between a weak Ottoman state and a strong Europe.²⁹

Yet, despite the need to reassess his reign there is no doubt that the character of the reign was different in many ways to previous periods. The Tanzimat period had resulted in the centralisation of power in the Ottoman state as a means of making the power of the Government more effective throughout its vast and dispersed territories. However this had not been a centralisation around the Sultanate so much as around other parts of the administration, in

²⁸ For older views see: Haslip (1958); Pears (1917); Wittlin (1940). For a survey of Turkish writings about the reign see Koloğlu (1987) and Yasamee (1984).

²⁹ See: Berkes (1974); Yasamee (1984).

particular the Grand Vizierate. What distinguishes the reign of Abdülhamid from that of his predecessors was the centralisation of power in the Sultanate, effectively in his hands and the development of a system of personalised control that bordered at times upon the extreme. The trend away from the more secular aspects of the Tanzimat reforms towards an emphasis on the Islamic character of the Empire also distinguished this reign from others. The regime was thus both internally oppressive and externally resistant to the demands of European powers.

The Sultan and the people who surrounded him appeared intransigent and there was a general perception of Abdülhamid as a ruler who played the European powers off against each other.³⁰ From the standpoint of the Ottoman Government and as a general assessment of the limits of Ottoman independence this intransigence can also be interpreted as a skilful form of diplomacy whereby Abdülhamid maximised diplomatic opportunities created by a situation of antagonistic and competing European imperialisms. The cultivation of the link between the Ottoman Empire and Germany from the 1890s can be interpreted in this way. In contrast to old allies like Britain and France, Germany appeared territorially disinterested and useful in the support that it offered. The Ottoman Empire was thus weak in the face of European military and material power, but less weak in its ability to exploit European jealousies and competition for territory.

Relations between Europe and the Ottoman Empire were in essence struggles for power and paramountcy over the territories that comprised the Ottoman domain. The Eastern question was a struggle for political and economic supremacy over areas that were strategically crucial to control of the Mediterranean and Black Seas and areas attractive for their economic resources.³¹ By the late nineteenth century the Empire was hedged in by European powers who were selfishly pursuing their own aims and the problem of survival for the Ottoman state became more acute. By the reign of Abdülhamid problems had become almost impossible of solution without a major restructuring of the Ottoman state and the end of destabilising European influence. The 'illiberalism' of Abdülhamid is best considered against this background.

³⁰ See: Pears (1917) for this critical view.

³¹ For dimensions of the Eastern Question see: Anderson (1983); Brown (1984); Gillard (1977).

1.2 Britain and the Ottoman Empire

British interest in supporting the Ottoman Empire developed from the late eighteenth century as a result of Ottoman defeats in wars to Russia and France which had revealed the real military weakness of the Ottoman Empire. Until the 1830s British interest was not consistent and developed slowly in proportion to French and Russian involvement in the area developing into a policy of support during the first Egyptian crisis of 1832-3. After this time Britain became one of the chief supporters of the Ottoman Empire.

British policy in the nineteenth century can be characterised as the change between a relationship traditionally based on fear and mistrust to one of self interest. The Ottoman Empire was regarded as an essential element in the European balance of power and a block to Russian expansion in particular.³² The Greek War of Independence (1821-31) and the Egyptian crisis of (1832-3) had underlined the incapacity of the empire to resist internal and external threats.³³ Concern for Indian defence and the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe were the main reasoning behind the nineteenth century policy of British support for the Ottoman Empire. British policy developed largely out of fear of French and Russian intentions in the area.³⁴

This policy of support was most closely associated with the long serving Foreign and Prime Minister Lord Palmerston and the forceful Ambassador Stratford Canning. It was based on the following assumptions: Firstly that the Ottoman Empire because of its strategic position was fundamental to the preservation of routes to India. Secondly, the policy presupposed that the greatest threat to Ottoman independence was the ambitions of other powers especially Russia and also France. Thirdly, that in order to achieve stability of the area against both external and internal provincial threats to Ottoman integrity internal administrative and military reform were essential. The fourth plank of policy which was to promote commerce and economic change reflected the industrial position of Britain as the 'workshop of the world' and was believed to be the essential panacea for the strength of any state.³⁵

³² For British policy see: Clayton (1971); Ingram (1981).

³³ For the beginnings of the Eastern question see Anderson (1958, 1983); Ingram (1979).

³⁴ See Hoskins (1966), on the Indian dimensions of British policy.

³⁵ For British policy and interests see Bailey (1942); Kedourie (1987); Temperley (1964). For Palmerston see: Rodkey (1929); Webster (1951); For Stratford Canning see: Cunningham

These interests, commercial, strategic and political came together in the Convention of London of 1841 signed by Britain, Russia, Austria and France. This convention guaranteed Ottoman rights to close the Straits to the passage of foreign warships and remained as one of the main planks of European public law until 1871. The Convention of 1841 prevented Russian dominance in the Ottoman Empire, by closing off free access to the Mediterranean by the Straits. The link between European peace by the preservation of Ottoman integrity was thus made. The provisions of this Treaty were later confirmed by the Treaty of Paris (1856) which ended the Crimean war fought by the Britain, France, Austria and the Ottoman Empire against Russia. The Treaty of Paris confirmed the inclusion of the Ottoman Empire in the Concert of European powers. The position of the Ottoman Empire as part of the concert remained until 1878 when the policy of support for integrity was reversed by the ending of Ottoman power in many areas in the Balkans.

Part of British policy towards the Ottoman Empire was the encouragement of reform as a means of strengthening the Ottoman state. British interest in promoting stability and protecting the integrity of the Ottoman Empire by the advancement of British military and diplomatic support was part of a wider policy of encouraging internal administrative, economic and provincial reform. The promotion of Free trade which was a central feature of mid-Victorian policy towards other states, also figured in British policy making. This policy was promoted in the 1830s with the twin aims of destroying the power of Muhammad Ali in Egypt based in part on a system of state monopolies, but also on promoting British commercial interests in the Ottoman Empire. Political concerns generally overrode commercial ones, but the Empire became important as a supplier of raw materials for Britain's expanding economy. The commercial treaties of 1838-40 exposed the Ottoman Empire to the full impact of British, and in later periods other European industrial economies and were the real beginnings of the economic and political tutelage of the Ottoman Empire.³⁶

British policy in general was underpinned by the belief that the Ottoman Empire was a

(1992a); Lane-Poole (1888).

³⁶ For British interests in commerce and reform and the treaties of 1838-40 see: Anderson (1964); Bailey (1942); Koymen (1967); Kurmus in Bacque-Grammont and Dumont eds (1983); Pamuk (1987). For the Treaty of London and Paris see Hurewitz (1975); Temperley (1932, 1964).

viable state that could be supported, strengthened and reformed. There was also the assumption that this should be under British 'influence' rather than that of any other power. The aim outlined in 1842 was to "impart stability to the Sultan's Government by promoting judicious and well considered reforms".³⁷ British interest in the process of reform in the Ottoman Empire was self interested in that its aim was to promote stability and secure British interests under British patronage, rather than that of another power. Britain favoured administrative and economic reform with the aim of making the Ottoman Empire strong enough to resist internal and external challenges, but not strong enough to be threatening in and of itself. What the British desired was a weak power, but a stable empire.³⁸

British encouragement and pressure for reform in the Ottoman Empire was based on the belief in internal weakness and evidence of provincial disorder which revealed the need to encourage efficient and effective government. It implied in other words a major re-structuring of the Ottoman state and the incorporation of much that was European in the process of administrative and economic reform. Ambassador Canning who was strongly antipathetic to the empire on religious grounds and had long expressed the belief in the inherent rottenness of the Ottoman state outlined the British perspective in 1826,

"knowledge must flow into this country from Christendom, the Ottoman Government must renounce a large portion of its fanatical prejudice...and be content to receive the elements of political instruction from one or more of the Christian powers."³⁹

According to Canning the weakness of the Empire resulted from internal factors of which the lack of equality between subjects was not only objectionable on religious grounds, but was also a perennial source of discontent and instability. British policy also sought to encourage reform to improve the position of Christians in the Empire. The influence of these ideas can be seen in the two major reforming decrees of 1839 and 1856 and also in the Constitution of 1876-7 which amongst other things promised the equality of all Ottoman subjects in the protection of life,

³⁷ Aberdeen to Canning quoted in Lane-Poole (1888), II, 79.

³⁸ For British and reform in the Ottoman Empire see: Bailey (1942); Cunningham (1992); Kedourie (1987); Temperley (1932).

³⁹ Canning in Lane-Poole (1888), I, 425-6.

property and justice.⁴⁰

British encouragement and pressure for European style reform in the Ottoman Empire whilst at the same time promoting the idea and policy of stability were contradictory aims which ultimately worked against each other. Not only did the process of reform contribute to instability, but it also has to be seen in the context of European interests and involvement which were serious obstacles to reform. As Kedourie points out "What destroyed it [the Ottoman Empire] in the end was the pressure of European ambitions, and perhaps still more of European example." Ottoman reform did as much to weaken as to strengthen the Ottoman state and this was evident in the period 1876-1908.⁴¹

Support for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire remained consistent until the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 when in a new context of European imperialism the foundations of this policy were undermined. The maintenance of old policies of support for states such as the Ottoman Empire were revised in the light of European expansion in Asia and Africa. The first real signs of a change of British attitude and policy were evident during the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 and especially in the decisions of the Congress of Berlin of 1878. The Congress of Berlin represented amongst other things a resolution by Europe of a crisis in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire in the interests of European peace. It was an explicit agreement amongst the states of Europe that the problems of the Ottoman Empire should not destabilise relations between themselves. It also represented one of the most significant incursions into the former policy of support for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The results of the Eastern crisis as signalled by the Treaty of Berlin were a massive loss of Ottoman power in Europe and the taking of territories by European states. This was a departure from the previous policy of supporting the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire. This trend continued throughout the period 1876-1908.

⁴⁰ See Davison (1963), for Ottoman reform 1856-76; Devereux (1963), for the Ottoman Constitution; Temperley (1932-4), for British policy towards constitutionalism.

⁴¹ Kedourie (1987), 14.

The Eastern Crisis 1875-8.

The Ottoman Empire was both religiously and ethnically diverse and comprised many ethnic and religious groups amongst which were Greeks, Armenians, Arabs, Kurds and various Slavic peoples. The position of Christian subjects of the Sultan became one of the most important questions between the Ottoman Empire and Europe in the late nineteenth century and forms the background to events in 1875-8. The crisis in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire arose out of the pressures created by uneven economic change, destabilising European interference and the dilemmas of a multi-ethnic state at a time of nation state development.⁴²

In the nineteenth century the peaceful co-existence of races in the Ottoman began to change under the impact of nationalist ideas whose origin lay in the French revolution of 1789. The first experience of nationalism in the Ottoman Empire was during the Greek war of Independence (1821-31) which led to the establishment of an independent Greek state. This was one of the first major territorial setbacks for the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century. During the next forty years the Empire suffered other significant territorial challenges from Muhammad Ali in Egypt, from Ali Pasha of Janina in Albania, and from the hostile intentions of Russia leading to the Crimean War in 1854 and from disturbances in Crete, Syria, Lebanon in the 1860s. Provincial tensions broke out again in 1875 in the Balkans. These tensions were multi-causal and led to European intervention. In general events 1875-8 showed the degree to which events in the Ottoman Empire were linked to European interests.

The Balkans which became the scene of crisis in 1875 referred to the area comprising the Balkan peninsular, the area surrounded by the Black, Aegean, Ionian and Adriatic seas, which was given geographical unity by the main river systems of the Danube and its tributaries. The area included present day Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Greece, Rumania and Yugoslavia. From the fifteenth century until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries constituted the main European provinces of the Ottoman empire.⁴³ The weak political and economic position of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century in relation to the European states system had become critical by the 1870s despite the reforms of the Tanzimat period and these developments were

⁴² See: Jelavich (1983), II, for discussion of these factors.

⁴³ For histories of the Ottoman Balkans see Coles (1968); Jelavich (1983); Inalcik (1973); Jelavich and Jelavich (1963); Stavrianos (1958, 1963).

felt in the Balkans.⁴⁴ Christian subjects in these provinces had never been persecuted as such and in many ways had benefitted from the Ottoman Empire's new relationship with Europe both economically and politically. However the deteriorating financial situation over the twenty year period after the Crimean War (1854-6) eventually became burdensome on the area and erupted in 1875-6 into uprisings which although initially economic in nature took on political dimensions with 'nationalist' features in some areas.⁴⁵

The Balkans as an area of European state interest meant that these initially local problems quickly developed into a crisis of European dimensions and became a question concerning the future political arrangement of the area.⁴⁶ As mentioned above, Ottoman integrity from the 1830s to the 1870s had largely been the result of European support most notably that of Britain, France and Austria. Although the Empire was believed to be weak there was a general agreement amongst these states that territorial integrity represented the best guarantee of European peace. Throughout this period Russia was antagonistic towards the Ottoman Empire, yet unable to advance any territorial claims because of the support of other European powers. These interests revealed themselves in the crisis which developed in the Balkans in 1875.

In 1875 disturbances broke out in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire beginning in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and spreading in the course of the following year to Bulgaria and neighbouring areas. Initially the crisis was localised, but as the Ottoman authorities in the area were unable to contain these disturbances they escalated and took on the dimensions of a European crisis involving the major European powers of Russia, Austria, France and Britain. In addition, the crisis involved the neighbouring states of Serbia and Montenegro who sought to exploit Ottoman difficulties for their own territorial gain. The interests of Russia were determined by the desire to expand its influence and gain a foothold in the Balkans. These aims formed part of a long standing Russian objective to gain access to the Mediterranean through the

⁴⁴ For the weakness of the Ottoman Empire in the International economy see: Blaisdell (1929); Kasaba (1988); Pamuk (1987).

⁴⁵ For the position of Christians in the Ottoman Empire see: Braude and Lewis (1982), 1-34, 141-169, 261-285. For the effects of the Tanzimat reforms in the Balkans see: Inalcik (1970). For anti-Ottoman movements see Jelavich (1983), 171-234, 329-366.

⁴⁶ For a general history of the Eastern Question see Anderson (1966). For the Eastern Question of 1875-8 and the interests of the powers see: Millman (1979); Stojanovic (1939).

Straits and domination or control of the Ottoman capital, Istanbul. Britain, Austria, France on the other hand initially tried to localise the crisis and their diplomacy revolved around trying to gain a solution based on a reduced form of Ottoman control and reforms in the provinces. Their interests lay in stability and the prevention of Russia control in the Balkans. This was especially the case for Britain which was concerned about the threat to India posed by the extension of Russian power in the Balkans, Constantinople and thereby the Mediterranean.

Throughout 1876 the crisis in the Balkans deepened. The two main European initiatives to resolve the crisis, the Andrassy note and the Berlin memorandum failed to resolve the conflict which by this time had taken on the character of a nationalist rebellion.⁴⁷ Serbia and Montenegro with Russia support declared war against the Ottoman authorities and the crisis deepened. In May 1876 Ottoman irregulars ferociously put down an uprising in Bulgaria. This inflamed not only Balkan Christian and Russian opinion, but also public opinion in some of the countries that had been the main supporters of the Ottoman Empire, such as Britain. In Britain a campaign of agitation was conducted from the August -December 1876 in an attempt to change the policy of the Disraeli Government away from one of support for the Ottoman Government.

It became increasingly clear that there were two possibilities to resolve the crisis: by diplomacy or by war. Initially the first choice of diplomacy was attempted. In December 1876 a conference was convened in Istanbul, attended by Ottoman and European states' representatives to bring a solution. From the Ottoman side there was deep suspicion about the intentions of European powers which resulted in an Ottoman initiative to forestall further European intervention. Before the Conference began the Ottomans announced a Constitution which allowed for representation of Christian and Muslim interests. This was a sign to the powers that the Ottoman Government was not willing to allow European states to force a solution on the Empire. Russia which had been on a war footing for some months was not prepared to accept this solution. Neither Russian, nor Balkan opinion would accept a solution based on the continuation of Ottoman power in the area.

In 1877 Russia declared war on the Ottomans and within months had imposed a punitive treaty on the Empire, the treaty of San Stefano. This in outline created a series of states, notably a large state of Bulgaria free from Ottoman authority. This treaty appeared to other powers, most

⁴⁷ See: Anderson (1968).

notably Britain and Austria as a sign of Russian expansionist aims. By 1877 agitation in Britain against the Ottoman Empire was transformed into Russophobia as the Disraeli government regained the initiative and returned to a pro-Ottoman policy. The British government made series of military gestures and manoeuvrings (sending of fleet to Besika Bay and stationing of Indian troops in Malta) to make clear its intention to Russia that it would defend Ottoman integrity against further losses. This was interpreted in Russia as a sign of future military support for the Ottoman Government. The threat of war between Russia and Britain induced the German Chancellor Bismarck to intervene to preserve the status quo of Europe, essential for the acceptance of the newly created German state. Under his chairmanship the Congress of Berlin was convened and the Treaty of San Stefano was revised and the crisis in the Balkans brought to an end.

The Treaty of Berlin which resulted from this Congress represented the power of Europe to dictate to the Ottomans, who were the real losers by this Treaty. At Berlin Russia gained Kars and Batum in the East of the Ottoman Empire in return for ceding its more far reaching aims in Europe, Austria-Hungary gained a semi-protectorate over Bosnia, Herzegovina, France gained greater commercial freedoms in the Levant. Bulgaria and parts of Rumelia gained independence, the rest remaining under Ottoman control. The Ottomans gained little and lost a lot, both territorially and politically. Britain in addition to its gain of Cyprus and a protectorate of Anatolia had for the time secured its strategic aim of preventing Russia control in the Balkans and thus future control of the Black Sea and Mediterranean. The diplomats at the Congress felt satisfied more or less that the Eastern Question that had plagued European relations for over a century had reached some point of decision.⁴⁸

The crisis of 1875-8 showed the deeply involved nature of European interests in the Ottoman Empire and the degree to which it was an area of great power rivalry. It also illustrated the weakness of the Ottoman Empire vis-a-vis European powers who had largely dictated the terms of the treaty. European powers had almost completely ignored Ottoman solutions, such the announcement of the Ottoman Constitution in December 1876.⁴⁹ Balkan wishes were respected in part, but what really determined the settlement was the interests of Europe, especially their

⁴⁸ Anderson (1983); Hurewtiz (1975), II; Medlicott (1938).

⁴⁹ For the Constitution see: Devereux (1963); Millman (1979).

interest in a balance of power in Europe by the prevention of a crisis in the Balkans that would upset this balance. Yet the policy that resulted in 1878 was different to the past balance of power policy. It represented a change of policy on the part of those powers who had supported Ottoman integrity throughout the nineteenth century, such as Britain. This was a new period of diplomacy, the diplomacy of imperialism.

The Eastern crisis of 1875-8 in addition to what it revealed of the degree of European interest and involvement in Ottoman affairs also revealed the weakness of the Ottoman state on general to resist internal as well as external pressures. As a multi-racial state in an age of nationalism the Ottoman Empire was in a weak position. Given European support of nationalist movements in the Ottoman Empire it was threatened not only from within but also from without. Ottoman solutions to the problem of separatist sentiment in the Empire by the promotion of Ottomanism, which was an attempt to create loyalty to an Ottoman identity faced many obstacles. Ottomanism was never able to succeed in its aims of creating a common identity amongst subjects of the Empire. Territorial disintegration thus became a permanent feature of late Ottoman history and eventually engulfed the Empire during the First World War.

Anatolia and the Diplomacy of Imperialism

Anatolia, like the Balkans was subject to the interests of the powers and suffered from its relationship to an expanding Europe. Anatolia, Asia Minor or Anadolu as it was called by the Ottomans from the mid-nineteenth-century referred to the peninsula stretching from the Aegean Sea in the West to the Caucasus in the East forming the western portion of the land mass of the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁰ This huge expanse of territory comprising over 700,000 square miles was differentiated between the Western and North Eastern coastal regions that were centres of commerce and ports linked to international trade and the central plateau lands which were ranged by mountains in the north and south (roughly equivalent to present day Central and Eastern Anatolia) in which local and inter-regional trade played a more important role. The latter was the poorest area of the country, a trend that was accentuated in the nineteenth century.⁵¹

⁵⁰ For the meaning and use of the Greek Mikras Asya, British Asia Minor and Turkish Anadolu (British Anatolia) see Augustinos (1992), 11. Unless quoting from a contemporary source the term Anatolia will be used to refer to this area.

⁵¹ Augustinos (1992); Owen (1981), 100-21; Pamuk (1987)

Contrary to most nineteenth-century perceptions Anatolia had not remained unchanged. As in other areas of the Empire the determinants of the history of Anatolia in the nineteenth century were its relationship to Europe and the particular way that integration into the International economy worked with and against the local patterns of trade and manufacture to affect the lives and conditions of the population in significant ways. The general trend had been to accentuate development in Western Anatolia and the Northern coastal areas bordering Russia whilst the central and eastern parts of the Empire remained undeveloped by comparison. Contact with Europe was therefore a mixed blessing, leading to positive developments in some areas of Anatolia and negative ones in others.⁵²

Anatolia, like the Balkans was also affected by the political interests of the powers. The Congress of Berlin of 1878 in which the powers agreed to the dismemberment of the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire was indicative of late nineteenth-century imperialist diplomacy.⁵³ It marked the beginnings of the new type of diplomacy in which the states of Europe were engaged in an aggressive struggle for land and power in Asia and Africa. In this situation of competing imperialism Anatolia which encompassed four seas with boundless land and resources was deemed a worthy prize for a successful power.⁵⁴ The Congress of Berlin had shown that the Ottoman domain was an entity whose division could be arrived at without general war. Britain had also been part of this process of dismemberment as shown by the acquisition of Cyprus in 1878 and the occupation of Egypt in 1882 which marked a departure from the old policy of support and a shift in interest to other areas further East and South. Anatolia like other areas had become an arena of great power rivalry in which the powers jealousy watched the movements of each other as they vied for power at Istanbul and economic control in selected areas of the Empire. This imperialistic interest made perceptions of the Ottoman Empire particularly significant.

The Ottoman Empire had become an area that were it not for mutual jealousy amongst

⁵² Augustinos (1992); Owen (1981), 57-99 and Quartaert (1983) for the effects of this relationship in Anatolia.

⁵³ Langer (1951).

⁵⁴ See Unbiased view (1878). For European economic rivalry see Blaisdell (1929); Feis (1930), and for colonial empires, Fieldhouse (1974).

the powers was capable of being part of a 'scramble' for territory as other areas in Asia and Africa had experienced. Yet given the geographical position of Anatolia and because it was an area of interest by different and competing states there was still no generally accepted solution about division of the territorial spoils. Colonialism by any one power was not acceptable or realistic and was not actively advanced by any power in this period. It was the jealousy of European states that prevented division. However, even without formal colonialism Anatolia was dominated economically in this period by informal economic methods.⁵⁵ Late nineteenth-century Anglo-Ottoman relations were determined by this changing international context in which European states were involved in a struggle for control of territory in Asia and Africa. These new international conditions caused old policies such as the traditional policy of support for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire to be revised. This can be seen most clearly in British policy after the Congress of Berlin.

Throughout the nineteenth century Britain had a variety of diplomatic and commercial interests in the Ottoman Empire and had posed itself as the Empire's chief supporter. Although this policy of support continued ostensibly until the First World War, it was slowly compromised. This change could be seen at the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8. In the face of these serious disturbances and the very real weakness of the Ottoman Empire in meeting these challenges Britain acquiesced in territorial changes which in an earlier period would not have been countenanced. The treaty of Berlin of 1878 removed Ottoman rule in many areas in the Balkans. Although it was not the solution that was initially desired by the British Government of the day it nonetheless signified a change in thinking about the former policy of support for the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire. The British acquisition of Cyprus in 1878, as a means of gaining a foothold of power in the Mediterranean and the occupation of Egypt in 1882 signified the beginnings of the end for the old policy of support. Support for the integrity of Anatolia and the rest of the Empire continued to be stated but as a policy were not actively promoted. This lack of active support signified a new relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Britain. From the Ottoman side this increasingly became one of hostility and suspicion of

⁵⁵ For British policy see: Bullard (1963); Hayes (1975); Hoskins (1966); Lee (1934). For the Eastern question in this period see: Anderson (1983); Medlicott (1938). For European 'imperialist' diplomacy see: Langer (1951, 1955). For Salisbury's proposals for partition see Kedourie (1987), 20-6.

British intentions.⁵⁶ From the British side there was less interest in supporting the integrity of the Ottoman Empire as diplomatic interest shifted away from Anatolia towards Egypt.

Britain's policy followed the course of events and the diplomatic conditions of the period. After 1878 it was clear that Britain was no longer the sole monopoliser of empire. Rather it faced a situation of competing European empires making a bid for power in Asia and Africa. The territories of the Ottoman Empire were not considered sacrosanct by other European powers and Britain was thus forced to respond to these dynamics of expansion. Britain maintained the pretence that stability of the Ottoman Empire was an overriding concern but like other powers, such as Austria did little to promote it after the Congress of Berlin. Rather, Britain seemed more content to watch Ottoman power diminish, reacting only when this process of disintegration was likely to significantly affect the status quo amongst the powers, or threaten European peace.⁵⁷ Other powers such as Russia and Austria were content for Ottoman territories to fall within their domains. Another factor that influenced a change in British thinking about the Ottoman Empire was the diminution of the old fear of the Russian threat to India. From the 1890s this threat was replaced by fear of German military and naval expansion. Relations with Russia ceased to be antagonistic as they had been in the past and the period after 1880 is characterised by agreement about the division of territories in various parts of the non-European world. Stability was still considered essential but this was now stability for a world of Empires and not just states.

Like the Balkans Anatolia was subject to internal disturbances and external interference. The population of Anatolia numbering about 10 million in 1850 increasing to 12 million by 1900 was mixed and consisted of various ethnic groupings such as Turkish (both settled and nomadic), Circassian, Tartar, Kurdish, Greek and Armenian plus new migrant populations from the Balkans, Caucasus and the Crimea. The non-Muslim population constituted about 20% of the

⁵⁶ For British policy during and after the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 see: Jelavich (1973); Millman (1979); Wirthwein (1935). For the Congress of Berlin see: Medlicott (1938). For the Cyprus convention see: Lee (1934).

⁵⁷ For the diplomacy of the period and economic interests of the powers see: Feis (1930); Langer (1951, 1955); Medlicott (1956). For aspects of British foreign policy post-1878 see: Grenville (1957-8, 1964); Jefferson (1960-1); Jelavich (1970); Robinson and Gallagher (1961).

population composed mainly of Greeks and Armenians.⁵⁸ Despite the predominance of Christian communities in some areas of the Empire especially the port towns of the West such as Izmir (Smyrna), Anatolia as a whole was still predominantly Muslim in character. The structure of power in the localities, law and administration were Muslim, although as historical studies have shown, both amongst the Armenian and Greek communities, Christians could be found in substantial numbers in the administration and in the economic life of Anatolia.⁵⁹

Communities of different Christian faiths lived under the *millet* structure.⁶⁰ Until the nineteenth century the function and meaning of the *millet* were religious in nature and designated a particular religious community. Under this structure communities conducted their own civil and religious affairs under the control of their own religious head. They were generally left alone by the state and liable to taxation only, and not in a situation of persecution as foreign commentators liked to believe. By the late nineteenth century the term *millet* had come to be applied to Muslims as well and had taken on the meaning 'nation', in addition to its traditional religious designation. In Europe 'millet' was generally understood as 'nation', which was a point of great significance.⁶¹

Anatolia like the Balkans was affected by the spread of nationalist ideas, especially amongst the Armenian population. The mixed and complex structure of Ottoman society made the passage from *millet* to nation an uneven and complicated process. The phenomenon can not be considered as either inevitable, or straightforward as it has been presented in many accounts. Nationalism often had very human causes and was the result partly of nationalist elements but also had European support. The Ottoman Government attempted to halt this process by a mixture of oppression and conciliation. It promoted Ottomanism and later Islamism, which were attempts to prevent the disintegrating effects of nationalism amongst both Christian and Muslim peoples. Ultimately these attempts failed but the conversion of the multi-racial Ottoman Empire

⁵⁸ For population figures and estimates see: Augustinos (1992). See also McCarthy (1983) and Karpát (1978, 85).

⁵⁹ Augustinos (1992); Braude and Lewis (1982), I, Salt (1992).

⁶⁰ See essays by Braude and Karpát in Braude and Lewis (1982), I.

⁶¹ For the changing functions and meanings of millets see essays by Davison and Issawi in Braude and Lewis (1982), I; Kushner (1977).

into nation states was a long drawn out and complicated process.⁶² As an area of mutual jealousy but also general consensus that events in the Ottoman Empire should not disturb European peace from the Congress of Berlin onwards these considerations of stability determined European reactions to crises in the Empire, such as the crisis in the Eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire 1894-6, generally known as the Armenian question. The position of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire has been one of the most controversial issues in scholarship largely because of events in 1915.⁶³ Armenians like other Christians in the Empire were subject to some restrictions on account of their faith, but like other communities it was often the distinction between ruling and subject classes in the Ottoman Empire that determined the place of the particular group in Ottoman society. Thus, wealthy elements amongst the Armenians, such as the bankers and merchants of Istanbul, had a distinctly higher status than their poorer counterparts in the vilayets of Eastern Anatolia inhabited by a mixed population of Armenian, Kurdish and Turkish peoples.⁶⁴

In this region where Armenians constituted approximately one fifth of the population, in addition to the poor state of the region, (a factor causing as much misery for the Muslim peasants), and what was often an extortionate taxation, Armenians also suffered injustices from Kurdish tribes, whom the Ottoman Government itself struggled to control. Armenians although regarded as second class citizens in many ways and unable to bear arms, were free from conscription, a factor that weighed heavily on the Muslim population. In addition they had the possibility of European protection (by the capitulations or by Treaty, Clause 61 of the Treaty of Berlin), and in the 1890s especially they had the protection and support of American Missionaries. Contrary to the picture that was presented in many nineteenth-century accounts their position was not one of perpetual persecution.⁶⁵

⁶² For Greece see: Clogg (ed) (1973); For Armenian nationalism see Salt (1992); Sonyel (1987); General developments: Karpas (1973); Kushner (1978); Lewis (1979); Mardin (1962).

⁶³ See Craver (1975); Dyer (1976); Hovannisian (1985); Walker (1980).

⁶⁴ See Braude and Lewis (1982), 171-184; Krikorian (1963-4); Salt (1992), 22-7; McCarthy (1983), 47-88.

⁶⁵ For the Treaty of Berlin see Hurewitz (1975), For the persecution view see: MacColl (1895) and critique of persecution thesis Salt (1992); 20-8.

In 1894 the attention of European states was directed once more to the Ottoman Empire as a result of disturbances in the Eastern *vilayets* of the Anatolia. These were areas which had Armenian populations and nationalist elements amongst were able partly through their own terrorist activities but also as a result of the sponsorship of American missionary societies were able to attract the attention of the powers. The Eastern crisis of 1875-8 had helped to direct attention towards the Ottoman Empire and in particular the Christians of the Balkan provinces. Concern for the Armenians in contrast was a small and minority interest at the time of the Congress of Berlin, but grew over the next two decades partly, as a result of American missionary societies and the publicity that they helped to create in Britain and America. The failure of the powers especially Britain to respond to Armenian redress for grievances since the Congress of Berlin whilst at the same time giving them the belief that they had European support, encouraged Armenian nationalist societies in their activities in the early 1890s.⁶⁶

In response to Armenian activities in 1894-5 there were attacks on Armenians in the eastern vilayets populated by Armenians. These attacks were mainly from Kurds, who had been organised into the *Hamidiye* cavalry by the Ottoman Government, in part to control them as a disruptive element. The following year witnessed continuing disturbances in Anatolia and the capital, which culminated in the seizure of the Imperial Ottoman bank by Armenian Revolutionary groups, and the presentation of demands to European Embassies. These demands would have effectively undermined Ottoman authority and were consequently rejected by the Sultan Abdülhamid. Like in 1875-6 in the Balkans, reports of these outbreaks reached European Governments, and there was a demand by some sections of their populations for intervention to help the Armenians. The scale of disturbances was not comparable to those in Bulgaria in 1876 but the European powers could not ignore the crisis. Their policy did however tend to be one of confusing inaction.

The policies of the powers reflected the desire to prevent events in the Ottoman Empire from disturbing the imperial status quo in the area. Russia and Britain had reached a *modus vivendi* (which became better defined by the end of the century) about their respective spheres of interest in the East. As a result the old hostility that had characterised much of the century was

⁶⁶ For the activities of Armenian nationalist societies see: Shaw and Shaw (1987), II. For British policy see Douglas (1976). For details of the activities of the American missions and the rising and its effects see (Salt (1992); Sonyel (1987).

lessened. The British Government under Rosebery (1894-5), followed by the Government of Salisbury (1896-1902) regarded the Armenian question as a thorny diplomatic issue likely to disturb the course of improved relations with Russia. After the failure to obtain a pledge of joint action by the Powers the British Government was unwilling to intervene alone on behalf of the Armenians.⁶⁷

Unlike at the time of the Eastern crisis where the Anglo-Russian dimension of the problem had predominated the diplomatic context had changed by the 1890s. The previous decade had witnessed a series of agreements amongst the powers about their respective spheres of interest in Africa and Asia. Imperial interest thus dictated the response of the powers to Armenian demands. The context was one of large competing blocks of power, of Empires and the prospect of small states such as the one proposed by Armenian nationalists was not considered seriously. The idea of the Armenians as an oppressed nation did not have the same impact on diplomacy as did ideas expressed twenty years earlier in relation to the Eastern crisis. British diplomatic imperatives had changed, Russia was no longer the chief enemy (and was itself hostile to Armenian national claims). Britain was concerned at the expansion of German interests in the Ottoman Empire and wanted peace and stability. Armenians were thus victims of Great Power diplomacy and imperial thinking dictated the course of diplomacy.⁶⁸

The Ottoman Empire by the 1870s had changed in important ways after almost a century of reform and intense engagement with Europe. It was a power that was much weakened in comparison to former centuries and it was on the defensive. The question of how the Ottoman Empire was understood and represented was therefore partly a question of the relationship between power and culture and the ways in which ideas about another society informed and influenced the way that states behave towards one another from different positions of power.⁶⁹ As a process of interaction on many different levels economic, cultural and political the Eastern Question was therefore in the last resort

"a confrontation of civilisations and their respective cultural systems...at the heart of this clash

⁶⁷ See Salt (1992), 71-94, 125-135.

⁶⁸ For British see Kedourie (1987), 9-28; Salt (1992), Sonyel (1987)

⁶⁹ See Said (1978).

were the standards of civilisation by which these different civilisations identified themselves and regulated their International relations."⁷⁰

Late nineteenth-century ideas about the Ottoman Empire were refracted through a culture produced by British and European material ascendancy, which became a full blown culture of imperialism in which the non-European world suffered by comparison to Europe.⁷¹ Ideas about Ottoman society and peoples which form the subjects of this study were produced within a eurocentric context symptomatic of the new conditions of European imperialism in this period.

⁷⁰ Gong (1986).

⁷¹ For the general narrowing of the British vision of the non-European world see: Hobsbawm (1987).

Chapter 2 The Sick Man Of Europe: The Ottoman Balkans

II.1 Introduction

The crisis of 1875-8 in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire showed the extent of European involvement in Ottoman affairs and the weakness of the Ottoman Empire vis-a-vis European powers who had largely dictated the terms of the Treaty of Berlin.¹ The crisis was also significant for what it revealed about British views of the Ottoman Empire. Previous crises in Greece, Egypt, the Crimea and Lebanon and Syria although important for the strong negative and positive images of the Ottomans that they had produced had been voiced in a period when the idea of the continuing existence of the Ottoman Empire could be imagined and was indeed supported in Britain.² In this later period synonymous with European expansion and imperialism there was a decline in belief regarding the ability of the Ottoman Empire to change. In this European dominated world the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 therefore took on a new significance.

Ideas about the Ottoman Empire that resulted from this time were the product of a new historical juncture in which older ideas were either rejected or confirmed in a new cultural context created by imperialism.³ It was this conjuncture of ideas and material power that made the crisis significant in new ways. The Eastern crisis was the occasion for the development of images of society and peoples in the Ottoman Balkans which reflected an intellectual climate in Britain in which eurocentric notions of race, civilisation (equated with European) formed the framework of understanding.⁴ The excessively negative image of the Ottoman Empire which developed from the Eastern crisis and the gradual weakening of the older positive and supportive view pointed to a new historical moment in Anglo-Ottoman relations. Ideas about the Ottoman

¹ For the Treaty of Berlin see: Medlicott (1935). The Powers had almost completely ignored Ottoman solutions to resolve the crisis, especially the announcement of the Constitution in December 1876. For the Constitution see: Devereux (1963); Millman (1979).

² See: Anderson (1983) for an overview of the whole period; Bourne (1956-7); Robson (1960) for the Cretan crisis; Temperley (1964) for British policy towards Muhammad Ali.

³ For changing British attitudes to the Ottoman Empire see Hyam (1976), 243-263.

⁴ See Hobsbawm (1989b); Hyam (1976), 70-134.

Empire were expressed in a way that suggested that the long standing issue of the rule of the Turk in Europe had reached a conclusion. Perceptions also represented an assertion of 'Europeaness' in all its dimensions, whether this was religiously, racially, politically, economically or culturally defined. It was the crisis which brought to light, rather than caused these ideas, which in their full blown development of images of the Ottoman Empire reflected much more than mere reactions to crisis in the Balkans.⁵

Perceptions of the Ottoman Balkans were about the creation and/or perpetuation of images and ideas about Ottoman Balkan society; about the subjects and rulers of the Empire and about the Government. In the period 1875-8 Ottoman rule in the Balkans became a general object of criticism. The notion of mis-government based on the belief in the oppressive and regressive effect of Ottoman Government was the dominant idea to emerge from this crisis. This idea which ran against the older policy of support for the Ottoman Government became significant both during and after the crisis of 1875-8. The perpetuation of the idea of a weak and decadent rule in the Balkans played a role along with concrete economic and political factors in making a weakened empire into a weaker empire and eventually into a disintegrating empire. The examination of perceptions of the Balkans in this chapter and the two succeeding chapters about the peoples of the Balkans explore together how from the time of the Eastern crisis these changing perceptions help to create a new climate of thinking about the Ottoman Empire which both reflect and contribute to changes in the Anglo-Ottoman relationship.⁶

⁵ See Shannon (1963) who regards the anti-Turkish Agitation movement as an expression of an older humanitarianism against a newly developing imperial consensus. Although the intention of the Agitation movement was in part humanitarian it also reflected the influence of changing notions of European and non-European. Christian, humanitarian and liberal views were as much part of the 'culture of imperialism' that was developing in the 1870s and shared many of the same notions of race, culture and civilisation as their 'imperialist' counterparts. For a critique of the Shannon thesis see: Millman (1979), 240-4.

⁶ For the question of Ottoman decline and the effects of Ottoman rule in the Balkans see: Shaw, Stoianovich, Jelavich (1962).

II. 2 The 'Backwardness' of the Ottoman Balkans: The Development of an Image.

British views of the Ottoman Balkans were not monolithic. There were varieties of thought within a general intellectual context determined by the particular economic, political and religious/cultural history of Britain. Perceptions of the Balkans were varied and different within the limits imposed by late Victorian culture. British writers in general wrote and thought within a context that was determined by the particular nature of nineteenth century industrialisation and imperialism both of which had radically altered the political, economic and cultural life of Britain.⁷ Ideas about race, modernity, progress and religion and certain generally expressed ideas about the correct and acceptable forms of state and society were the product of a common British experience. These determining frames of reference and thought were evident in perceptions of Ottoman Balkan society and history.

Ideas about the Balkans came to light during the crisis of 1875-8 when attention was focused on the area as a result of insurrection there and the involvement of European powers.⁸ At this time there was a proliferation of writings on the Balkans which became a popular subject of comment and writing. Many although not all of these writings were from travellers or short term official and unofficial visitors to the Balkans who visited to report on conditions there during the crisis of these years. The writers whose work has been selected were prominent figures in the debate about the future of the Balkan provinces. They were influential on the general view of the British public and were generally non-academic, non-specialist accounts amongst which travellers respected for their 'first hand' experience were especially important.⁹ A collective image was formed of conditions in the Ottoman Balkans which was reinforced by the quantity of literature that was produced. There was a lack of variety in accounts and ideas were self confirming and repetitive which acted to reinforce common images.

The tone of much of the literature produced at this time was morally earnest and

⁷ See Hobsbawm (1975, 1986, 1987); Kiernan (1988).

⁸ For the crisis see Anderson (1983); Langer (1950b); Millman (1979); Withwein (1935).

⁹ Both for information about the Balkans in general and for the Eastern crisis in particular knowledge was heavily dependent both on accounts of travellers and residents in addition to Press correspondents. See Millman (1979); 121-164. On the nature of Victorian reading see: Altick (1963); Cruse (1930, 1935). On Victorian travel narratives in the Near East see: Assad (1964); Gournay (1988); Jelavich (1955); Rogers (1971).

indignant at what it saw in the Balkans. It represented what one writer has called the 'high moral conscience' of the Victorian period. This was the voice of middle class England expressing a sense of moral and religious outrage fighting what it saw as backwardness and illiberalism in all states and societies.¹⁰ Other less moralistic accounts likewise expressed a sense of superiority towards the scenes and the people that they depicted and varying degrees of tolerance for Ottoman rule. Overall British writers saw the Ottoman Balkans as a country in decay, retrogression and decline and the landscape, the peoples, the economy were provided evidence of this.

When travellers visited the Balkans in 1875-6 their first impressions were that the Balkans were foreign, unknown and unexplored. In part this was accurate in that intellectual interest in the Ottoman Balkans had not in the past excited the imagination of travellers in the way that Greece had in an earlier period.¹¹ Nonetheless there were some works that were still considered as authorities on the area such as the works of Von Hammer and Ubicini which had provided extensive outlines of the resources, populations and potentialities of these areas. In a lighter and more popular style Kinglake's *Eothen* had provided a sketch of the peoples and area. He had conveyed the image of the Ottoman Balkans as another world, the East which began at the border between Serbia and the Ottoman Empire signified by a head on a spike which symbolised the ending of European civilisation. Kinglake's picture was not negative as such but it still served to confirm the superiority of the British reader.¹²

In addition to these writings there was another genre of Balkan travel literature which began to appear from the 1860s, typical of which was the travels of Irby and Mackenzie. This literature was strongly Christian in tone and intention and the Balkans, especially the Slavic areas were represented as areas of lost and oppressed Christian races of Europe who were 'still' under the cruel rule of the Turk. Much of the writing of the 1870s belonged to this genre although the lighter paradigm of Kinglake was also apparent in some of the literature produced during the

¹⁰ Bradley (1976); Chadwick (1970); Shannon (1963). See also footnote 9.

¹¹ For Phil-Hellenism and general views of Greece see: Angelomatis-Tsougarakis (1990); Dakin (1955); St. Clair (1972); Woodhouse (1971).

¹² For the many editions of Kinglake's *Eothen* first published in 1844 see the bibliography. Von Hammer (1827-35), 10 Volumes; Ubicini (1856). See De Gaury (1972), for biography of Kinglake.

Eastern crisis. Increasingly however even this genre of travel writing took on a more stridently imperialist and negative tone.¹³

Writers who had visited the area were influential as raconteurs about conditions in the Ottoman Balkans during the crisis. It was through their writings that conditions as they interpreted and presented them were made known to a wider audience. Significantly however British visitors to the Balkans in the 1870s went with a series of assumptions about what the area would be like. When expectations were not met, writers speculated on causes and the favourite cause for conditions in the area was Ottoman rule. In the case of writings about the Balkans as with Greece earlier there were preconceptions about a society which were different to the scenes that they saw on contact. In the case of some writers this was the belief that they would find conditions to be similar to those of Western Europe. Other writers went with the belief that this area would be different and that it was 'Eastern'. In the case of both there was a pre-conceived idea about the Balkans which influenced the travellers' view when they recorded their perceptions. Pre-conceptions falsified by contact became the common representation of backwardness and decline.¹⁴

The most common preconception was that the Balkans would be comparable to Europe. As the pro-Slavic traveller and Archaeologist A. J. Evans expressed what was the typical reaction of many,

"travellers who have seen the Turkish provinces of Syria, Armenia and Egypt when they enter Bosnia are at once surprised at finding the familiar sights of Asia and Africa reproduced in a province of European Turkey."¹⁵

¹³ Irby and Mackenzie (1866). Their writings were republished in the 1870s and referred to by anti-Turkish writers. The second edition of 1877 was prefaced by Gladstone. See also Denton (1876) who mentions the work that they did in making known the plight of Balkan Christians.

¹⁴ See Angelomatis-Tsougarakis (1990) for pre-conceptions about Greece and Cunningham (1992), 72-107 for preconceptions about the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁵ Evans (1877), 89. A. J. Evans was a well known writer and his books were extensively reviewed in the National Press. See for example Quarterly Review (1877), LXVI. A. J. Evans was also a relative of the anti-Turk E. A. Freeman and was well known as a pro-slavic writer and archaeologist.

He represented it as a country where image and reality became confused. Very often conditions were pictured evocatively from afar, which writers then typically described as disappointing on contact. Evans, for example spoke romantically of the sights and sounds reminiscent of classical images and surroundings that were like a "primeval forest". He evoked the landscape with mosques on the horizon which, he stated, gave the scene a beauty. At the same time such information reminded the visitor that this was an area ruled by Muslims.¹⁶

In general the reality of conditions disappointed travellers' ideas. Expectations of conditions comparable to Western Europe led to the image of 'Turkish' towns and the typical things that the traveller could expect to see. Writers provided the sense of typicality about towns by comments such as, 'like all Oriental towns' which led to the idea that towns everywhere were neglected and in all areas under Turkish rule there was the "same picture of decay seen everywhere there is a trace of Turkish 'mismanagement'".¹⁷ To many writers this was coupled together with the common perception of the "signs of slow decline of one race and the equally slow but persistent progress of the other [i.e. the Christian populations]".¹⁸ Towns were depicted as picturesque from afar such as Rutschuk which appeared "clean and prosperous" but inside it was a 'typical' Turkish town which was unkempt, dirty and smelly giving the impression that it has always been like that.¹⁹ Rather than the well ordered and planned European town, towns in the Balkans were said to be ill planned and lacking infrastructure. As one writer commented, towns were full of "decrepit and deformed dogs" and more "badly built, worse designed, pretentious looking buildings" could not have been found.²⁰ Turkish towns were also represented

¹⁶ Evans (1877), 227-8. See Jelavich (1955), Vol. 33, 396-413 for the significance of this.

¹⁷ Millet (1878), 490. F. Millet was a painter traveller and one time Correspondent for the Daily News which had an important role in reporting events in Bulgaria in 1876. For the role of the press see Wirthwein (1939).

¹⁸ Millet (1878), 490. See also Chapter VI. 2. b for perceptions of the rise of the Christians.

¹⁹ Barkley (1877), 5. The writings of H.C. Barkley, who was an engineer in the Balkans in the 1870s were well known and referred to in other writings. See: MacColl (1877); Ramsay (1897); Strangford (1877). His views are representative of a genre of impressionistic travel writing that emerged out of the Eastern crisis in which subjective commentary was interspersed with details of people and places.

²⁰ Barkley (1877), 5-7. In common with many writers Barkley expects greatness in many areas and is disappointed at not finding it. At Kustendje he expected a "grand Oriental town" but all

as mysterious and in decay. Some travellers claimed that they could not understand how people made a living and also why people didn't die of disease through overcrowding in towns. As the writer Barkley negatively expressed it the "great majority [of people] just loaf about all day".²¹ Writers pictured a country in which the towns consisted of dirty and narrow streets, but which were scenes which could still evoke romantic images through their imaginative recreation of scenery and landscape for the reader. The appearance of the town Foinica although clearly affected by Western Europe was for one writer "hard to transform such into the busy streets of a great city the silence of the woods seemed too inveterate to be ever broken by the crash of a steam hammer". The place appeared fixed in time and to represent something different from Western Europe. It had a calm and a picturesqueness which this writer could not imagine could be disturbed.²²

The Balkans were represented as difficult terrain where life was hard for the inhabitants and the traveller. The area was said to have few comforts and the traveller required an interpreter and porters to carry his belongings and had to wade through a river of bureaucracy that could be an obstacle to travel.²³ Some writers such as the pro-Turkish writer A. Borthwick were less negative about the conditions of travel in the Balkans which he compared favourably to travel in Greece. Borthwick who was trying to promote a positive image of Ottoman rule in the Balkans noted that war correspondents were free to travel and met with hospitality.²⁴ Borthwick's view was however a minority view. The general perception was of difficult conditions accompanied usually by the explanation that this was the result of Ottoman Government. Barkley, who was himself a resident recommended staying with residents or consuls to mitigate difficulties.

but all he could see was a "small collection of wretched mud huts", and horses which were "the most underbred, misshapen, runty little beasts in Europe".

²¹ Barkley (1877), 54.

²² Evans (1877), 227-8

²³ See Barkley (1876, 1877).

²⁴ Borthwick (1878), 3. Borthwick was a war correspondent for the Daily Telegraph and a contributor to the debate that raged in 1876 in the press and periodicals about what the policy of the British Government should be towards the Ottoman Empire. He was representative of an older strand of thought about the Ottoman Empire which was underpinned by negativity towards Russia and its intentions in the Balkans.

According to him there was not only a linguistic difficulty but also "the manners of the people are so utterly strange", with the result that the traveller "fears to trust anyone", and was easy prey for some "wily Levantine".²⁵ The impression produced by his account was of a world that was different in every way.

There was a common image of the Balkans as lawless, especially for the Christian who it was said suffered many injustices. Accounts were full of stories of robbers, murders and revenge with the added explanation that robbery of a Christian was a "tolerated crime", whereas if Christians were robbers it was because of oppression by the *zaptiehs* (local police). The guard houses were almost as bad as the robbers and conditions for Christian merchants were said to be dangerous. In some accounts it seemed as if a worse society could not exist.²⁶ Travellers related the different customs of the Balkans. Barkley, for example said that there was a problem in asking for the time and "watches and clocks are very little used by the Turks as time is of no value." According to him, the call of the Imam or use of the sun was "enough for their needs". The impression conveyed by his account was of a primitive and backward society.²⁷ Such images were widespread.

Many travel accounts were subjective and impressionistic. Writers constructed a picture of a world that was not only different but also inferior. Balkan society was presented as cut off from Europe culturally and religiously despite its geographical position. This difference was generally portrayed negatively. Both the country and the population especially the Turk were "unintelligible to us Europeans" and Turks "are full of the vices of the Eastern savage, which are not yet qualified by great virtues." wrote Barkley.²⁸ It was clear from the accounts of travellers that this was a society as seen by the outsider, the foreigner, even by those writers such as Barkley who were residents. Travellers visited the area armed with all kinds of assumptions and ideas and these were reflected in the pictures that they produced and the interpretations that they placed on aspects of Balkan life and society. Travel in the Balkans also contributed to the idea

²⁵ Barkley (1877), 1-3.

²⁶ See: Denton (1876); Farley (1876); MacColl (1877, 88).

²⁷ Barkley (1877), 180-181.

²⁸ Barkley (1877), 179.

that this was a backward area, economically as well as culturally.

Ottoman Balkan society was represented by the traveller as an example of a primitive society. Barkley commented on the conditions such as the 'horrible' use of tents in Turkey which were "miles behind a cowshed in England".²⁹ Travellers often visited Ottoman territories by passage through Serbia and compared these areas. Serbia was favourably compared to areas of Ottoman rule. As one writer said of a trip from Sarajevo to Kumanovo, to compare a Serb town to a Turkish one was to compare an "English hamlet to an Albanian", with the implication of the superiority of the former.³⁰ This comparison was similar to the idea expressed in *Eothen* that civilisation ended at the borders of the Ottoman Empire. The presumption was that travellers would enter another world, leaving civilisation behind, yet accounts expressed surprise on conditions in that 'other' world which was considered to be European.³¹

Economically the Balkans were represented as backward, cut off from and different from Europe. There was a lack of a good infrastructure and roads which hindered trade. Agriculture was described as 'primitive'. As one writer stated it the Balkans were a country in which "manufactures languish, where science is extinguished, where agriculture decays, where the human race itself melts away and perishes under the eye of the observer".³² Often writers differentiated between areas. Bulgaria was generally pictured more positively than other areas. It was called an area rich in resources and seen as a productive area with a good climate and good soil and a "frugal population...it is so capable of producing in abundance"³³ On the other hand impressions of Bosnia and Herzegovina were generally negative. Herzegovina was seen as the most backward part and the most 'misgoverned' area of all and one of the favourite causes assigned to this was the influence of Islam through native Muslim rulers.³⁴ This picture of decay

²⁹ Barkley (1876), 71.

³⁰ Minchin (1886), 36.

³¹ See Kinglake (1877 edition).

³² Ashcroft (1876), 21, who attributes this quotation to Burke. This quotation also interestingly appears in Denton (1876), 59, and is attributed to the Governor of Queensland.

³³ Barkley (1877), viii.

³⁴ See especially Edwards (1876); Evans (1877).

was however interspersed with scenes of development and potential. One writer pointed to the existence of manufacturing establishments in Herzegovina and a ready market in the existing population and as such stated

"The Grabova knives are as famous in the east as the Sheffield steel is in the West, and deserve their reputation; for although to the civilised eye a little uncouth in shape, they are perfectly adapted to the wants of customers and are strong and durable."³⁵

The negative side of this for the writer was what he called 'Eastern' rather than Western rules applied in the market. People accordingly lacked a commercial morality and were as Barkley expressed it, "so proficient in the art of cheating".³⁶ Most accounts contained such inbuilt notions of difference and inferiority.

A visit to the Balkans generally produced a picture of decay and deforestation. Writers noted how wood had to be imported and mines were pictured as in decay. The country was poor and not populous as one writer stated it, "There is a great want of green grass to which we are accustomed in England". This writer qualified this impression by mentioning that in Bulgaria a far stretching cultivation could be seen and as the traveller moved further towards Constantinople amidst the desolation could be seen Greek enclaves and a "charming cultivation".³⁷ Apart from positive descriptions of a few selected areas the general perception was of an area "turned" from a "garden to a wilderness". Writers either hinted at the causes of this backwardness or stated it directly as a result of Ottoman rule.³⁸ The overall picture constructed by travellers was of a backward and primitive society. In addition to economic decline and backwardness writers noted that areas were depopulated. The Ottoman Empire in earlier nineteenth-century accounts had been represented as depopulated. This was generally interpreted as evidence of decline of the country as a whole.³⁹ Observers expected populous areas and when they did not find this

³⁵ Millet (1878), 498.

³⁶ Barkley (1877), 163.

³⁷ Campbell (1876), 1-2.

³⁸ Cowen (1876), 10.

³⁹ See Cunningham (1992), 79-83, who argues that especially in the North Western parts of the empire there was the expectation of large populations. See also: Denton (1876), 29, 59;

interpreted it as a sign of backwardness.⁴⁰

The reader of literature about the Ottoman Balkans from the mid-1870s was thus presented with a picture and series of ideas about the nature of Ottoman Balkan society and economy. He would have the impression of a society that was in decline based on the idea that the area had seen better times. The picture reinforced an idea of inferiority to Western Europe. Explanations of this difference were often incorporated into the overall representation. It was not a picture that would endear the prospective traveller. The Ottoman Balkans appeared neither hospitable, nor easy, nor interesting. The Balkans were of greater interest as a way to view the primitive or of interest to the traveller desirous of following in the footsteps of Kinglake.⁴¹

Writings produced during the Eastern crisis contributed to an image of backwardness. The tone of writings was moral and regretful at what it saw in lands that were part of the European continent. Writers whatever their perspective and political persuasion contributed to the notion of a society in decline which in comparison to Europe was backward. Underlying this picture was the expectation of and assumption that societies should be developing in the way that Britain was. This was a strongly held belief especially because the geographically the Balkans lay in Europe. As a result of past British support for Ottoman reform there was an expectation that the area would be more developed. These preconceptions when faced with a different reality lead to interpretations which were self reinforcing. Explanations for the lack of development were sought in the history, politics, racial or cultural history of the Balkans. Balkan backwardness according to this way of thinking was the result of the particular nature and history of the Ottoman Balkans. To most commentators this meant simply Ottoman Muslim rule or 'mis-rule. As one writer expressed it

"doubtless there is a great future for Turkey...but not till the Turk himself has retired to the other side of the Bosphorous and relapsed into barbarism from which he has never really emerged or

Farley (1876).

⁴⁰ For population studies of the Ottoman Empire see Karpas (1985), McCarthy (1982)

⁴¹ Of which Barkley's travels are an example, similar in nature and tone to Kinglake. See Barkley (1876, 1877). For discussion of the preconceptions and expectations of travellers in the Balkans see: Anderson (1968); Jelavich (1955).

ever will."⁴²

The following section explores the various perceptions of Ottoman Government that developed from the crisis of 1875-8. It reconstructs the image of Ottoman rule which predominated in this period and shows how the older positive view of the Ottoman Empire was replaced by an overwhelmingly negative image.

II.3 Ottoman 'Mis-government: The Cause of Balkan Backwardness.

The notion of mis-government was based on the idea that Ottoman rule was weak, corrupt, oppressive, primitive and barbaric over lands and populations that had the potential to progress and develop but which were prevented from doing so by Ottoman rule. Ottoman rule was singled out as the chief factor in Balkan decline. The Balkans in one typical conceptualisation were once "the most fertile areas" but which had become a "wilderness".⁴³

As writers elaborated on the faults of Ottoman Government a negative picture of Ottoman rule was constructed. Variation in image occurred only on the issue of which aspect of Ottoman rule was considered the main cause. Some writers defined mis-government as weakness and inability to maintain law. Lawlessness was regarded as a central feature of Ottoman Government. As Barkley stated it, the European expects the law to protect him but "finds that it is only used to extract money from his pocket." The administration of law was feeble and the administrators were "venal" and "idle".⁴⁴ The influential politician and many time Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone presented a variation on the idea of "Turkish law" in the Balkans, writing that the Turkish judge "will hang, draw and quarter or behead or impale or anything else you like".⁴⁵

Mis-government was also used to mean Muslim oppression of Christians.⁴⁶ Ottoman society was represented either as lawless or based on evil laws. Writers spoke of the lack of protection by law for Christians and the arbitrary abuse of power. They spoke of a lack of speed

⁴² Barkley (1876), 187.

⁴³ Farley (1876), 130.

⁴⁴ Barkley (1877), 153-4. See also Barkley (1876), 301 and (1877), 181.

⁴⁵ Gladstone (1876a), 108.

⁴⁶ See also Arnold (1876), MacColl (1877a, b).

protection by law for Christians and the arbitrary abuse of power. They spoke of a lack of speed in the provision of justice except in exceptional circumstances as officials could not and would not, "their nature is opposed" especially if the crime was against a Christian. According to some writers, especially those who were churchmen, the non-acceptance of Christian evidence in Muslim courts of law confirmed the iniquitous nature of Ottoman Government. Their main objection was the Islamic character of the system.⁴⁷ Ottoman rule was presented as arbitrary and was said to have its logic only in corruption, cruelty and venality. As one writer invoking the eighteenth century writer Montague represented it, the Ottoman Government is an "arbitrary Government in its clearest, strongest light where it is hard to judge whether the Prince, people or Ministers are most miserable".⁴⁸ Perceptions expressed an unconcealed dislike and even hatred of the Ottoman Empire on the grounds of religion. Writers presented extensive accounts of the mistreatment of Christians and the supposed impossibility of good government of Christians by Muslims. In many accounts a more 'evil' government could not have existed. These writers overlooked any examples of equality between Christians and Muslims. The Ottoman system of government did not measure up to any desirable system that they could imagine and it was unacceptable that Christians should live under Muslim rule. This was a view shared by religious and non-religious figures alike.⁴⁹

Writers in this vein fixed themselves upon the Muslim character of Ottoman rule in the Balkans and constructed an image of an immoral, all embracing and all controlling Islamic regime. Many of the writers that contributed to this image were Churchmen such as the Reverends Denton, MacColl, Allon but there were also many non-Churchmen such as the prominent politician Gladstone. These writers approached the question of the Muslim nature of the Ottoman state from a strongly Christian perspective. It seemed intolerable to them that Muslims should rule Christians in a way that it was not intolerable that Christians should rule Muslims, for example in India and after 1882 in Egypt. This was partly because of the

⁴⁷ See also Gallenga (1877), I; MacColl (1877a), which gives long descriptions of the nature of Muslim law and the inequalities of Christians before this law.

⁴⁸ Bulgarian struggle (1877), 83.

⁴⁹ For issues surrounding the complexity of the position of Christians in the Ottoman Empire see: Braude and Lewis (1982), I.

conviction that Christianity was superior in all senses, both in doctrine and practice.⁵⁰ A strong dichotomy was posited between Islam and Christianity. Islamic law was represented as false law which was inherently tainted by vice. Christianity on the other hand was represented as moral and capable of distinguishing between good and evil. There was a fixation on the believed sexual decadence of Islam as writers produced accounts of harem slavery, the licentiousness of Turks and Muslims in general and the alleged sexual crimes of the Turks in the Balkans. The latter were perceived as the product of Islam which did not hold female honour high. Islam was represented as a false religion and therefore so was a state that was based on those principles.⁵¹

Perceptions also expressed elements of an older antipathy towards the Ottoman Muslim presence in Europe. These ideas re-emerged during the crisis in the Balkans in a way which often like a religious crusade. The passion and outcry caused by events in Bulgaria in May 1876 were moral and humanitarian in part. Perceptions expressed a deep sense of morality that had been evident at other times in Victorian history against perceived injustice. They also expressed other things and this is well conveyed by the extreme vitriol against Islam and against the Ottomans. The Ottoman Turks emerged as detestable objects as Gladstone expressed it they were "the anti-human specimen of inhumanity".⁵²

The question of perceptions was about dichotomies as much as anything else, about the goodness of 'us' and representatives of 'us' and the badness of 'them' and their representatives. These dichotomies were Christianity and Islam or good and evil. The Eastern crisis was represented as a question of Turks or Christians who constituted in this thinking distinct

⁵⁰ For the notion of Christianity as a superior religion see Newsome (1961); Shannon (1963); Warren in Symondson (1970), 57-70. For contemporaries see Campbell (1876); MacColl (1888), Vol. 53, 537-59. Some writers pointed out cases of Christian oppression of Muslims during the Eastern crisis but in the anti-Turk climate of 1875-6 it was little influential. See: Campbell (1876); Strangford (1877).

⁵¹ See Denton (1876); MacColl (1876) and the writings of the Orientalist Muir (see bibliography for refs.). For general attitudes to Islam in the nineteenth century see Almond (1989); Bennet (1992).

⁵² Gladstone (1876); Shannon (1963). For contemporary perceptions of the 'crusading' nature of the agitation against Ottoman rule in the Balkans see: Harrison (1876); Thompson (1886), I. See also Jelavich (1955).

populations in the Balkans.⁵³ Perceptions were strongly moralistic in tone and combined a mixture of religious and racial commentary which built up a picture of a Government that was insupportable according to every standard of 'European Civilisation'. This representation was often negative in the extreme. Few Governments in the nineteenth century were condemned in such strong terms. The nature and purposes of Ottoman Government were perceived as evil and the practices and personnel of government worse. The effects of the Government on the people and the country were represented as negative and there was nothing that could justify the existence of such a Government amongst those who held these views.⁵⁴ In this negative vision, Ottoman rule was not defined as government but rather as misgovernment. The main cause of this misgovernment was considered to be Islam which influenced the character of the personnel of government. The latter were represented as not only incapable but also evil. The general view of the important Eastern question meeting in 1876 convened to protest against Ottoman rule in the Balkans was that the cause of insurrection in 1875-6 was "Turkish misgovernment" and the only worse government was the "temporal Government of the Pope".⁵⁵

According to this strongly Christian perspective the collective image of the Turks and Ottoman Turkish history was that: the Turks had established themselves in Europe by violence and they "persecute and ruin the native populations, cause them to groan under taxation and forced labour," they "play with their lives and their honour, profess an eternal hatred of their faith and of our institutions," and "outrage humanity by their laws, menace the general peace by their weakness and incapacity," and "scandalise the worldly , their vices crush industry in the most fertile parts of Europe and sequester from civilisation twelve million of human beings". The effect of Ottoman misgovernment had been one of violence and ruin alone.⁵⁶ Ottoman rule was represented as a rule of force. The only way that the Turk could keep the state together was by

⁵³ Farley book was entitled *Turks and Christians*. See Farley (1876) and other writers used similar terms to describe these 'different' populations.

⁵⁴ See especially the views of participants of the Eastern Question Association meeting in 1876, *Proceedings* (1876).

⁵⁵ *Proceedings* (1876), 5. See also Baker (1877); MacColl (1877a, b), on the religious nature of Ottoman Government.

⁵⁶ Farley (1876), 122.

force. He misgoverned and ruined the land and was incapable of maintaining law and order in territories under his rule. Justice served only to provide money for corrupt people. Ottoman government did not fulfill a European standard of justice. Comparativism was ever present in representations of the Ottoman Empire.

On all accounts the Ottoman state was a "rotten body politic". It was seen to lack patriotism and was a selfish rule. Writers spoke of the lack of provincial government. Government was that of wealthy pashas and "utter confusion" as they were moved around from post to post. They had no civic sense as each governor attempted to undo the work of predecessors. Amongst Ottoman officialdom, said one writer there was "neither patriotism nor honour he goes in for plunder", which was like a disease of political life, providing no good example for others to follow. Ottoman Government was represented as a system of bribery and intrigue "in plain language the place is sold" as each position was considered to have its price and then the population was taxed heavily to get this back.⁵⁷ On the one hand the Ottoman Government was represented as weak and on the other as too centralised. These were not contrary perceptions as the Government was seen as weak in the ability to govern, but centralised in the ability to misgovern and oppress. Local officials from the central government were considered to have too much power and the central power and the collection of taxation was seen as an abuse. Officials were said to possess no power to enforce law which made them weak, but they did have the power to oppress. Lawlessness was thus perceived as a symptom of weakness by British commentators.⁵⁸

Amongst a wide range of writers the general perception of the personnel of government was negative. James Bryce, Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford and one of the conveners of the Eastern Question Association meeting of 1876 expressed a common perception when he stated that

"The Turkish population knows little or nothing of what its rulers are doing; but of that knot of greedy, corrupt, unscrupulous men in whose hands lies the government of those magnificent

⁵⁷ Farley (1876), 38-9. On Ottoman taxation in general see: Shaw (1975).

⁵⁸ For perceptions of weakness and proposed solutions see: Blennerhassett (1877); Canning (1877), I, II; Pears (1880);

territories that stretch from the Julian Alps to the shores of the Persian Gulf."⁵⁹

The nature of the personnel in the Government was used as evidence of the rottenness of the Ottoman state and one of the main reasons for misgovernment. It was believed that little could be expected from a Government composed of such people. Great antipathy and even hatred was evident in British writings.

According to these writers the Ottoman Government was composed of corrupt pashas who cheated, who were dishonest and whose only purpose in government was to fleece the people and fill their own pockets. Writers described how on the local level how a corrupt rule of zaptiehs (local police) and pashas kept the people in a "foul and shocking degradation".⁶⁰ Varna for example was

"governed by a pasha or rather tormented by one, for the Turks are let alone and do just as they like, whilst the whole of the Government staff is employed in squeezing money from the Giaour; a little for the Padisah and a lot for themselves."⁶¹

Ottoman officials were said to be the product of a false education (often described as the Frenchified Pasha). Ottoman rule as one writer stated it was that of a "bad bureaucracy" worst of all Governments, "under the most superficial varnish of French polish and Civilisation", or a product of no education at all.⁶² As Ashcroft stated "The intellectual condition of their upper classes is lamentable, while very few of the lower classes can read" and "Men lounge, lie, and smoke instead of cultivating the arts of industry, hence 'lazy as a Turk' becomes a proverb".⁶³ The

⁵⁹ Bryce in Proceedings (1876), 39-40. For the Eastern Question Association see: Shannon (1963). Bryce was a well known figure and key writer both in the 1870s and after. He supported strongly a policy of the expulsion of the Turks from Europe and was vocal in his opposition to Government policy. He continued in later years as an active supporter of Balkan independence.

⁶⁰ MacColl (1877a). See also Barkley (1876).

⁶¹ Barkley (1877), 9.

⁶² Campbell (1877), 19. The system is not meritocratic but one in which offices sold and bought with the result that the Administration is a "corrupt succession of locusts" sucking "the life blood of the provinces".

⁶³ Ashcroft (1876), 19, 18, 19.

Government was represented as full of self seekers who plundered for themselves rather than to advance the interests of the Government. There was also a general perception of a decline in standards of the Ottoman bureaucracy.⁶⁴

Writers differed in the degree to which they considered the faults of Ottoman Government as inherent or a decline from better conditions in former times. Some writers would not accept that at any time Ottoman Government had been good, because the assumption was that Christians could never be treated well in a Muslim state. Other writers spoke of a difference between the past and present personnel and perceived a decline. However even the latter view was determined by the idea of good government only in so far as Ottoman Muslim government could be good given the nature of the Turk as an Oriental and the nature of his religion. The Times journalist A. Gallenga who was resident in Istanbul in 1875-6 and who was one of the most vociferous opponents of Ottoman rule brought together these ideas when he spoke of the Osmanlis of the "old School" who were characterised by "martial bravery, the high honour and truth", who had less "legislative knowledge or judicial discernment" but were "upright and generous instincts", qualified by his comment that, as much as "ignorance and prejudice will allow them".⁶⁵ These 'Old Turks' he wrote had been replaced by Government officials "low born, grasping and utterly unprincipled bureaucracy", of which there were too many of them, "jobbing and robbing" and "fitness is never considered". According to Gallenga it was more a case of "the best man is he who bribes highest" and now, "The country is in the hands of men without education, as proud and jealous as they are, ignorant, covetous, and incapable, with an uncertain career and scanty patriotism" and "it is under such guidance that Turkey has to make and keep her place among civilised nations".⁶⁶

Representations of the personnel of Government led to a condemnation of the social system that was believed to have produced these officials. Writers spoke of licentiousness and

⁶⁴ Campbell (1876), 99-105.

⁶⁵ Gallenga (1877), I, 175-6.

⁶⁶ Gallenga (1877), I, 176-7. See also Campbell. For the nature Of Ottoman bureaucracy see Findley (1980). So vociferous was Gallenga in his opposition to Ottoman rule that he was expelled as a journalist from the capital in 1876.

sexuality inherent in Ottoman society and Islam.⁶⁷ Perceptions of the Balkans often lead to a complete condemnation of the Turks as a people and of Ottoman society as a whole. According to this negative representation the 'education' of the Ottoman was conducted in an atmosphere of intrigue, want of morality and licentiousness in the Harem. The education of an Osmanli did not fit them for "governing purposes". Turks were spoilt by their mothers and brought up in the "unwholesome atmosphere of the harem, in the charge of an affectionate but untaught mother, secluded from social intercourse, shut up with slaves" and "spoilt from the beginning". Their only example was "idleness, caprice and self indulgence" and Gallenga added their teacher was a "Mohammedan ignoratio" and the koran the beginning and end of all knowledge.⁶⁸ Perceptions often contained such generalisations about Islam.

'Old Turks' wrote the colonial administrator Sir George Campbell used to use well known and tried methods of reform within their own framework which he called "Oriental modes of administration", which had "more often regard to the restraints of their own religion and laws". Old Turks resigned themselves to the facts of their own decline unlike the new Turks, who were worsened by the belief that they were more clever than their predecessors and as Campbell expressed it, "Their knowledge of European languages and ways have lead them to think that they are just as good as any and perhaps better" and they have declined in this sense because "they are pretty free from religious and social trammels" and reform in their own way. The image was of these officials, the 'New Turks' jealously clinging onto power and who perpetuated a bureaucratic system of abuse.⁶⁹

Perceptions of the personnel of the Government in part brought together ideas about religion and race as determinants of the nature of Ottoman officialdom. They expressed resentment based both on the belief that these people were oppressive of the subject populations, but also resentment towards rulers who were less willing to listen to Britain and Europe in contrast to rulers in the past. Writers bemoaned what they saw as the passing away of the amenable 'Ottoman gentleman'. These perceptions revealed dislike at changes that had occurred

⁶⁷ See Ahmad (1978); Daniels (1966); Kabbani (1986).

⁶⁸ Gallenga (1878), 177-8.

⁶⁹ Campbell (1876), 105. Campbell was a good example of an imperialist view as an administrator in India himself.

in the Ottoman Empire, which were paradoxically in part sponsored and encouraged by Britain. The British wanted the Ottoman Empire to adopt European reforms and European style forms of state organisation. They also wanted an Ottoman Empire that was weak, friendly and suppliant to the wishes of its European supporters and these aims proved contradictory. British writers disliked the product that had been created, or at least how they perceived the final product. They disliked the educated official and were contemptuous of what they saw as false adaptation most often called 'Frenchified'. There was particular dislike for 'Frenchified' pashas, who presumably would have been less dislikeable if they had been 'Anglicised'. The virulent anti-Turk Malcolm MacColl described the Ottoman Constitution of 1876-7 as "an amusing imitation of a French model, with here and there a bit of plagiarism from England".⁷⁰

This dislike of rulers in 'Eastern' societies was a common element in views of non-European societies in general in the last decades of the nineteenth century. It expressed the basic paradox of views, in that most states that had undertaken reform did so in order to strengthen their states less for Europe's sake than for their own against European power and influence. In the case of the Ottoman Empire this was the case, with the secondary motive of gaining British and European support. During the Eastern crisis it was abundantly apparent to Ottoman rulers that the existence of the empire in Europe was at stake and there was an attempt to prevent this process of disintegration. Both the ruler Abdülamid and the reformers who surrounded him at the time of the crisis wanted to solve the question in their own way. The proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution in 1876 which confirmed the previous *Islahat Fermani* of 1856 in its promises of equal rights for all citizens was an attempt to offset European interference. It expressed a defiance that became more common from this time in Ottoman ruling circles, which was particularly resented in Europe. It was these changed circumstances that form part of the background to ideas about the Ottoman Empire. The rulers of the 1870s were disliked in contrast to old rulers who were seen as more accommodating.⁷¹ This system of government was most

⁷⁰ MacColl (1877a), 107. See also Arnold (1876) and Campbell (1876). For bureaucratic changes see: Findley (1980). For British policy towards constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire see: Temperley (1932-4). For the Ottoman Constitution see: Devereux (1964) and Findley in Braude and Lewis (1982), I, 339-68.

⁷¹ For changing attitudes towards the non-European world partly as a result of reactions against European domination see Hyam (1976), 71-102. For the Ottoman defence of reform and the Constitution see: Midhat Pasa (1878).

frequently referred to as oligarchic and described most commonly as "a curious combination of Asiatic and European systems and Evils".⁷²

The general perception was that the Ottoman Government had worsened since the Crimean war (1854-6). In some accounts this was represented as the result of the negative effects of European reforms as the old system of government has been replaced by forms which were inappropriate for the 'nature' of the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan according to one writer had been encouraged to contract loans and had "become more and more a despot of the very worst type, combining all the vices of Asia and Europe".⁷³ In other accounts this was regarded as evidence of the lack of desire and capacity on the part of Turks to reform.⁷⁴ Reforms had been of a "French" type which were criticised because of their "extreme inapplicability to a country in the stage in which Turkey now is".⁷⁵ Analysis of events was thus partly underpinned by notions about the Ottoman Empire as an Oriental state and as a Muslim empire which by this period were increasingly seen as negative factors. These notions contributed to the idea that the Ottoman government like other 'Oriental' governments could not be changed because of a fixed and inherent nature. Campbell, for example spoke of the inapplicability of constitutional forms of Government to a 'Mahomedan country'.⁷⁶

Ottoman Government was represented as a system of organised extraction, a government that took but did not give to its people. To some this was a government that had not changed in nature from its beginnings to the present day. Such a form of government was based on the idea of tax collection only. Unlike European states the Ottoman government had no concept of rights and duties between itself and those it governed. Underlying these ideas was a European standard of government that was applied to the Empire. The writer James Baker whose book *Turkey in*

⁷² Campbell (1876), 99. For reform edicts see: Davison (1964).

⁷³ Campbell (1876), 84.

⁷⁴ A widely echoed view. See Campbell (1876); Farley (1876); Eastern Statesman (1879).

⁷⁵ Campbell (1876), 90. See also Freeman who plots the course of Ottoman decline from the sixteenth century when good Sultans were replaced by bad, corruption increased and a "state of anarchy" began to prevail in the provinces. See Freeman (1877)

⁷⁶ Campbell (1876), 88.

Europe first published in 1873 and republished several times during the years of the Eastern crisis described Ottoman Government as a self perpetuating system in which "the idea of government has always been simply to take tribute and secure the paramount position of the Osmanli". According to him the Ottoman Empire was a "tax collecting organisation;" which "took tribute from its provinces and did nothing for them; it employed foreigners and mercenaries; it had an official nobility and a ruling race".⁷⁷ Eliot who claimed to admire the original "remarkable imperial conception" of the Ottomans also considered that the Ottomans were incapable of keeping what they had gained. The reason he gave for this was that "the Turks never outgrow their ancestral character of predacious nomads; they take much and give little".⁷⁸ Eliot's ideas which were expressed retrospectively in a book first published in 1900 were the product of a developing representation from the 1870s. The continuity in ways of thinking shows the strength of these ideas which developed in the 1870s and the ways in which they endured in later periods.⁷⁹

Eliot's account is a good example of the eurocentrism common to most accounts. He stated that the present and future lay with the "active" empires, with states who spread civilisation and not with states like the Ottoman that perpetuated old practices. He compared the Ottoman Empire to the British and to the Arabs in their early centuries, the latter of whom he said had conquered with a higher purpose of civilisation and religion. By contrast the Turks' "talent is to seize and at best to hold for awhile a huge handful but sooner or later it becomes unwieldy and part has to be dropped".⁸⁰ This representation was the product of an imperial mind set blinded by the perceived virtues of British imperialism over that of the 'old' empires, such as the Ottoman.

According to many writers this form of extractive government had not changed. Rather it had simply become more centralised over the course of the nineteenth century. Some writers argued that the centralising reforms of the nineteenth century did help to improve the position

⁷⁷ Baker (1877), 16.

⁷⁸ Eliot (1908), 73-4.

⁷⁹ Eliot was a secretary in the British Embassy in the 1880s and is typical of an establishment view of the Ottoman Empire.

⁸⁰ Eliot (1908), 73-4.

of people, but despite this there were still the effects of "centuries of tyranny and oppression".⁸¹ The general view was that nineteenth-century reforms had merely increased Sultanic power and had few other benefits. It was said that Ottoman Government had basically remained the same and the Sultan ruled "despotically through a bureaucracy the most corrupt...the most vain and pretentious in the world".⁸² The principle of government was force and "The Government decides what it wants and takes it, the subject being no more consulted than the driver consults his horse or the slaveholder his slave".⁸³

The Government was considered as more oppressive the weaker it became. A commonly expressed theme was that the Turks were becoming weaker and the Christian more numerous and stronger and in response to this the Government had become more repressive and misgovernment worse. Ottoman Government was a "rod of iron" over unarmed Christians by "An inferior race, of an inferior religion, inferior in numbers, inferior in intellect, inferior in all economic arts," which rules by means of a corrupt bureaucracy and army in part supported by European money. The Muslim population are armed against Christians "who form a garrison to keep down the Christians".⁸⁴

The Reverend W. Denton who was a prominent figure in the agitation movement of 1876 to end Ottoman rule in the Balkans spoke of the "frightful moral corruption" and a "sensuality most loathsome", "universal amongst the Turkish people" which was fast depopulating the Empire. Depopulation was attributed to the Turk and was also destroying the "Mussulman race". Denton continued that, there was no security of life and property anywhere and "with the diminution of the dominant race, the jealousy and hatred of the Turk towards the Christian is acquiring a new force". According to Denton there had been no attempt by the Ottoman Government to improve the situation. Only amongst Christians did these writers see signs of life

⁸¹ Campbell (1877), 18.

⁸² Campbell (1877), 19.

⁸³ Eastern crisis (1877), 14. See also Eliot (1908), 91-3.

⁸⁴ Campbell (1876), 19-20. His view of centralisation is that the only worthwhile thing it did was to destroy local lords, and thus prepare the way for self government. He too is looking towards the future ending of Ottoman rule.

"superior industry and morality".⁸⁵ Ideas about Ottoman rule were as in the case of Denton interspersed with a racial and religious commentary.

The overall vision was that the rule of the Turk had been one of perpetual misgovernment, negative in its effects on the people and the place. It had shown itself incapable of change, incompatible with modern conditions and beyond all hope of recovery. The Turk was held responsible for all manner of disasters. The writer Barkley held the Turk responsible for deforestation, which was due to a mixture of "the universal mismanagement of the Government and Muslim fatalism, "the feeling of the village Turk that with him the world ends".⁸⁶ The religion of the Turk was also seen as one of the main reasons for the perceived incapacity of the system of rule to change. Ottoman society was represented as a traditional society "shut out comparatively from all knowledge of the world beyond their own limited sphere..." and the Turks "interpret the koran now in the same spirit as their ancestors 1200 years ago". This was a vision of unprogressiveness defined racially and religiously. Writers spoke the language of progress and of the Turk's "hopeless antagonism to Western ideas" because of the strong influence of religion unlike in the West, "The religion of the Turk affects not only his moral but his political life hence his invincible repugnance to modern thoughts and modern requirements".⁸⁷

The focus on religion and race as factors of development were representative of the changed nature of perceptions in this period. The Ottoman Empire was measured solely against European standards and peoples and were considered incompatible with modern conditions. It was only in this period of European empire, that these standards of progress and modernity were expressed with such frequency and inflexibility. The choice to adapt was not being offered to the Ottoman Empire as in the past and non-European societies were judged more from the point of view of whether they had already adapted. If they had not then it was believed that they could not. The explanations that are given for this inability were generally racial or religious resulting from the 'nature' of Ottoman society. The general view was that Ottoman government was

⁸⁵ Denton (187.), 26-27. The events in the Balkans in 1875-6 are used to show the 'real' nature of Ottoman Government. They showed the "ardent desire for vengeance" and the reaction of Ottomans was "a last effort on the part of barbarism". See Campbell (1876) who considers the use of irregulars as a policy of despair.

⁸⁶ Barkley (1877), 219.

⁸⁷ Minchin (1886), 147-8.

"incurably bad". As the Reverend Dr. Allon expressed it,

"it has learnt nothing, it has forgotten nothing. Its course has been one of uniform deterioration; it has now sunk into such a tyranny of rule, a corruption of administration and a negation of morals, that there is no redemption for it. Its day of grace is over and not only in the sense of toleration by others, but in the sense of inherent moral possibility."⁸⁸

Even Campbell who was often considered a pro-Turk called the Government a system of "extreme tyranny", "more completely despotic" and "more completely centralised". In his view the Turks as an 'Asiatic' people should leave Europe and return to Asia.⁸⁹ The overall perception was that the Government could not change and this was partly argued on the basis of past experience but also on ethnocentric and racial grounds. Negative perceptions however expressed no desire that a further experiment in change should be allowed as the Ottoman Government was seen as too awful and in the religious language of the time, beyond redemption. Throughout the period 1876-1908 these same themes were echoed about the nature of the Government, which was overwhelmingly depicted as a government of vice and rapacity, where there was insecurity for life and property, financial decrepitude, corruption, centralisation. These ideas became enduring images of the Balkans under Ottoman rule and were in later years reiterated for other parts of the Empire.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Allon in Proceedings (1876), 46. See also Gladstone (1876a, b, c, 1877).

⁸⁹ Campbell in Proceedings (1876), 11, 12. See also Ashcroft (1877), 17.

⁹⁰ See also Curtis (1903), 30, who presented the same ideas of misgovernment in Macedonia early in the twentieth century, a picture determined largely by ideas about the Turks as incapable and cruel Muslims. In this picture Ottoman rule is the rule of "cruelty and extortion" in which the infidel is "fit only to die".

II.4 European Interference and Christian Malevolence: The Causes of Balkan Backwardness.

The older pre-1870 image of Ottoman Government had seen much to admire in the rule of the Ottomans. This strand of thought continued in the 1870s but during the Eastern crisis and after became increasingly a minority opinion. The older image contradicted the above notions of Ottoman misgovernment and argued that the Ottomans were not oppressive as rulers. Ottoman rule was justifiably a strong rule. In this view it was the Ottomans who were the objects of oppression rather than Christians.

According to this perspective the Balkans were backward because of the Christian populations rather than alleged Ottoman misrule or misgovernment. Ottoman reforms according to this view had given the Christian peasant too much land which had increased the peasants' idleness. The Ottoman Government had been guilty of "mistaken generosity" towards its Christian subjects and had given its subjects "too much time, too much liberty, too much land, too much of everything".⁹¹ The situation in the European provinces was that of a system that worked to the disadvantage of its creators, the Ottomans. The system of land tenure, for example had enabled Christians to obtain land provided they paid tithes, from which had followed many abuses. The idea represented was that the Ottomans were the rightful owners of the land because,

"The Rayahs were dispossessed of their property by conquest, which is itself a right, and the only legitimate proprietors in Turkey are the Turks to whom estates were granted by the Sultans. The existing laws permitting the Rayah to possess land do so to the prejudice of all justice."⁹²

According to this view the Turk had mortgaged his land for a race not worth mortgaging it to. The Bulgarian peasant was seen as not valuing the land he had taken, unlike the Turkish peasant who did. Nor did Christians suffer from conscription like the Turk. It was said of the Bulgarian "If you give property to an idiot it does not make him a proprietor in the true sense of the word, and a child will throw a bank note out of the window; so it is with the Bulgarian". In this vision of the Balkans it was the Ottomans that were the objects of abuse.⁹³

⁹¹ St Clair and Brophy (1877), 123.

⁹² St. Clair and Brophy (1876), 148.

⁹³ St Clair and Brophy (1877).

Typical of positive perceptions of Ottoman government was a relativity about the actions of Governments in general. One writer said that the Ottoman government was no worse than any other 'Asiatic Governments' such as China, or Persia and that what made the Turkish government worse, beyond the fact that it contained all the usual "vices common to an Oriental system of living", was the Turks' contact with "debased representatives of Christian civilisation".⁹⁴ This writer compared the position of Christians to the former position of Jews in England, except that the former were relieved of the onerous duty of bearing arms.⁹⁵

In treating the nature of Ottoman Government and in the pictures constructed of the various populations of the European provinces, ideas ranged from a sympathetic acceptance of the shortcomings of Ottoman Government to views of outright praise and a corresponding negative view of subject peoples. One writer saw the Balkan provinces as an area made difficult by virtue of the large numbers of different creeds and races that inhabited it, "each with their own interests, and energies". These races he argued were attracted by the "superior Government of the Turks to that of the surrounding countries", and he alluded to the benefits provided to the region of a strong 'central rule'. In this perception the image was the old one of the Ottoman Empire as a stabilising factor over warring peoples.⁹⁶

Other writers attributed the ills of Ottoman rule to European interference. The Eastern crisis according to one writer was caused by the fact that the Ottomans had not been allowed to govern for a long time and that the Empire had constantly been the object of interference and meddling by European states. 'Integrity' he wrote referring to British policy had really meant, preventing Turkish rule, and "we cannot say that the Turks misgovern seeing that they are not allowed to govern at all".⁹⁷ Nor he said was it possible to speak of Christian prosperity, which anti-Turkish writers did in order to show Christian moral and material prosperity, because this

⁹⁴ See also anonymous article, *Revelations* (1877), for perceptions which anticipate brutality amongst Eastern races. The author is sympathetic to the Turk.

⁹⁵ See also *Vindex* (1876) which criticises views based on religious and commercial prejudice. The Turk is not by nature cruel and Ottoman action was only against certain rebellious Christians, not for example Catholics.

⁹⁶ Munro-Johnstone (1877), 44-5. See also: *Vindex* (1877), 12.

⁹⁷ *Vindex* (1877), 19.

picture did not correspond to the picture of Turkish misrule and oppression. This writer believed that if the Turk was allowed to govern the different races would be able to resolve their differences. "Turkey", he wrote, "became a sort of province of Europe, which Europe refused to govern, but which Europe prevented from governing itself."⁹⁸ The writers St. Clair and Brophy who were both residents in the Balkans in the 1860s also pointed to abuses stemming from the relationship with Europe. They argued that the position of the government was worsened by allowing Europeans to hold land protected by the capitulations, which caused abuses and further confused the situation.⁹⁹

In general these writers saw the Ottoman Government as tolerable and some even saw it as likeable and were loath to criticise an imperial government, weakened by Europe, who should be allowed time to put their affairs in order. Ottoman rule, they argued should be supported as a stabilising factor. These writers were critical of what they saw as the 'crusading' element in negative perceptions. As the Positivist Frederick Harrison wrote

"When we analyse the arguments for destroying Turkish rule they always rest on an ultimate basis of antipathy to Mahometan religion; and those who are foremost in putting down this particular case of race oppression [referring to events in Bulgaria in 1876] are those who applaud the oppression of race elsewhere [referring to Russia and proposed solutions to let Russia resolve by force the Eastern question]."¹⁰⁰

Positive perceptions were thus underpinned by a mixture of tolerance towards the Ottomans, dislike for subject Christians (perceived as troublesome), the belief in the legitimacy of Ottoman rule as a constituted government, and also by the belief that if left alone they could reform and Ottoman government could be strengthened. This was similar to the old Palmerstonian idea that what the Empire needed was time and peace to reform. The older antagonism to Russia was also

⁹⁸ Vindex (877), 31. See also Forbes (1876); St. Clair and Brophy (1877).

⁹⁹ For studies of Consuls in general see: Isseminger (1968); Platt (1971). St. Clair and Brophy's book which was strongly anti-Balkan Christian was much discussed at the time of the Eastern crisis, especially by its critics, who sought to refute their claims. See: MacColl (1876); Strangford (1877).

¹⁰⁰ Harrison (1876), 729.

evident.¹⁰¹ These ideas over the next few years were gradually superseded by ideas that would not accept the logic that time was required, nor did they think that time should be allowed to the Ottoman Empire.

II. 5 The Ottoman Balkans: A Changing Vision.

S. Lane-Poole, the Orientalist and biographer of Stratford Canning wrote in his book 'Turkey' that,

"Many instructive morals have been drawn from the past and present state of Turkey; but these appear to depend so much for their point and application upon the political bias of the writer... We have all heard about the "sick man"...if we are conservatives we palliate the disease...if we are radicals we send for the undertaker"¹⁰²

It is a misconception to interpret positive ideas about Ottoman rule as somehow amoral regarding the position of Christians in the Empire and negative ideas of the Ottoman Empire as more moral and humanitarian.¹⁰³ Both expressed varying degrees of tolerance and intolerance towards their chosen objects of like and dislike and varying degrees of accuracy, inaccuracy and misrepresentation of the Ottoman Empire based on ideas about what the Ottoman Empire 'really was'. To the liberal or Christian writer Ottoman rule was anathema to their concept of civilisation and to the old type of Conservative, Ottoman rule could be made compatible with European civilisation. To the Imperialist, whose views were apparent at the time of the Eastern crisis the Ottoman Empire was not only incompatible with Civilisation, defined exclusively as European but an anachronistic irrelevance.

Despite the distinct nature of negative and positive views of the Balkan provinces both perspectives were influenced by prevailing cultural norms in late Victorian society. These norms were premised on the belief of Western superiority in all things, political, economic, religious and cultural. Positive views were more tolerant in many ways of the different nature of Ottoman

¹⁰¹ For Palmerstonian ideas see: Hyam (1976), 243-47. For contemporary views about the bases of pro and anti-Turkism see Thompson (1886), I.

¹⁰² Lane-Poole (1908), viii.

¹⁰³ Which appears to be the fault of Shannon's examination. See Shannon (1963).

society and in some senses more accurate in their depiction of the position of the Ottoman Empire as a state that suffered by its relationship to Europe. Negative views were marked by their extreme intolerance towards the different nature of Ottoman society on religious and racial grounds which resulted in an uncompromising condemnation.

Both visions were deeply affected by the developing culture of imperialism based on the idea of the superiority of European civilisation over that of others. To writers of a liberal or Christian frame of mind the Ottoman Government and everything which they believed it represented was not only insupportable on grounds of practical policy but also on moral and religious grounds. It was seen as offending all values both in terms of its nature, purposes and practical government. It was seen as the worst and most evil type of misgovernment.¹⁰⁴ From the time of the Eastern crisis and for the rest of this period the negative perception of the Ottoman Empire remained constant and became more and more imbued with the language of race and Civilisation. Greatest change occurred in the previously positive representation of the Ottoman government based on the notion that it was still supportable as the best of all choices against the threat of Russian expansion. After the crisis this view generally associated with a conservative vision of the Ottoman Empire also became more intolerant towards the Ottoman Empire. Over the decades following the Eastern crisis the latter came to be considered as an old and redundant form of empire in contrast to Britain's modern style empire. The British empire was represented as an 'enlightened' imperialism unlike the redundant forms of empire represented by states such as the Chinese and the Ottoman.¹⁰⁵

This changed vision of the Ottoman Government which came to see it simply as Oriental and ineffective was evident during the Eastern crisis and expressed a mixture of cultural antipathy, mockery and dislike of the Ottomans who appeared more and more unwilling to be accommodating towards the British. The Ottomans were also increasingly seen as inferior on grounds of race and culture. In this sense the passage from tolerance to intolerance on the level of ideas was prepared in an earlier period. Older representations had always been based on the idea of the Ottomans as 'Oriental'. The difference was that this idea in this new context took on

¹⁰⁴ For liberalism see Gladstone (1879), 7 Vols; Morley (1911), 2 Vols, (1917), 2 Vols.

¹⁰⁵ See Dilke (1868).

a new significance and was transformed.¹⁰⁶

This gradual shift of opinion away from a positive view was also evident on the level of diplomacy as well as in the sphere of ideas expressed outside the government. The decisions of the Congress of Berlin of 1878 in which Ottoman rule was more or less effectively ended in Europe was a departure from previous policies especially on the part of Britain. Although the Conservative Government during the Eastern crisis had attempted to maintain a policy of support, under the pressure of events, both outcry against the Ottomans at home and the actions of other states in supporting Balkan peoples the policy had been difficult to maintain.¹⁰⁷

In the years following the Congress although the policy of support was not abandoned in its entirety it is clear that interest was shifting away from the Ottoman Empire towards other areas of the Empire. Britain was in effect condoning a policy of allowing the Empire to fall apart or be broken apart, a process in which it was no innocent bystander however reluctant it might have seemed at moments.¹⁰⁸ The Eastern crisis of 1875-6 was important in its contribution to the negative image of the Ottoman Empire. The significance of changes in British thinking about the Ottoman Empire can be seen in their contribution to a wider process in which British support for the Empire was gradually eroded in these years. The image of the "sick man of Europe" thus had an importance in the course of relations between the Ottoman Empire and Britain. The succeeding two chapters show the significance of this culture of imperialism in the creation of images about the population of the Balkans.

¹⁰⁶ For this idea see Forbes (1876); Pim (1877); Revelations (1877).

¹⁰⁷ See Millman (1979).

¹⁰⁸ Such as the acquisition of Cyprus in 1878 which was not accepted in many political quarters and also the 'reluctant' occupation of Egypt by the Gladstone Government in 1882. See Lee (1934); Robinson and Gallagher (1958).

Chapter 3 The Balkans. Peoples 1: the Turks

111. Introduction: Turkey 'in' Europe.

The Ottoman Empire as a partly European power by virtue of its Balkan provinces had always formed a puzzle for Europe.¹ In 1856 at the conclusion of the Crimean War the provisions of the Treaty of London of 1841 which had included the Ottoman Empire in the Concert of European powers was reaffirmed. The inclusion of Ottoman Empire as a multi-racial, multi-religious state under Ottoman Muslim rule which spanned two continents with territories in Europe and Asia had been largely for reasons of stability and the balance of power in Europe. It was always justified on the grounds of expediency rather than in recognition that it was a fully 'European' state.²

The Eastern crisis of 1875-8 was mainly a question of the future political arrangement of the Balkans and whether Ottoman rule would continue or be replaced by the rule of a European state or autonomous Balkan states.³ The question was conceptualised not only according to criteria concerning the economic and political viability of the Ottoman state but by less objective ones of race and religion and the moral acceptability of Ottoman rule in Europe. The Empire was judged not only according to European standards of development in the economy and polity, but also by standards of Civilisation which constituted a mixture of racial, religious and cultural pre-requisites. These late nineteenth-century standards were exclusive in nature where Europe was synonymous with Civilisation.⁴

Perceptions which developed in the 1870s were underpinned by the idea that the Ottoman Empire did not fulfill these criteria and that its rulers and Turks in general could not be considered even as nominal Europeans as they had been in the past. The following quotation encapsulated the feelings of many in Britain towards the Ottoman Empire:

¹ Kiernan (1988).

² See Anderson (1966); Hurewitz (1975), II; Millman (1979), 232-53.

³ For the Eastern Question of these years see: Anderson (1966); Millman (1979).

⁴ For these standards see: Gong (1984); Hobsbawm (1987); Hyam (1976).

"The great mistake of all European powers for a long time past has been that of treating the Turk as one of themselves and speaking of the 'Ottoman Government', the rights of the Sultan' and so forth, as if they were speaking of and dealing with a civilised power."⁵

As this quotation suggests, issues relating to the Ottoman Empire were not only political in nature but also cultural and religious. British commentators conceptualised the Eastern crisis as a question about Civilisation. From a British perspective the period of tolerance and acceptance of the Ottoman Empire had reached a climax. On racial, religious, political and cultural grounds the Ottomans could not remain part of Europe. The Ottoman Empire although always considered as different in all respects of culture, economy and society did not fit into either the liberal or the imperial vision of the late nineteenth-century. Ottoman rule was considered illiberal and immoral by liberals and an anachronism by conservatives and imperialists.

The previous chapter showed how in conceptualisations of the country and government, the Balkan provinces were perceived as declining and decadent. In both positive and negative representations there was a sense of the Balkan provinces as belonging to another world, either that of a lost Europe or as a categorically Eastern society different in all respects to European states. The examination showed how differing visions of the Ottoman Empire expressed different strands of Victorian thought within a general context of European domination. The overall perspective was eurocentric expressing the belief in a superior culture and in turn demoting the Ottomans to the position of Oriental and a weak state, 'the sick man of Europe'.

This chapter explores other aspects of the image of the Turk as culturally, racially and religiously 'outside' Europe. In particular it looks at how the term Turkey 'in' Europe came to take on new meanings under the influence of these concepts of race and Civilisation to produce the image of the Turk as alien to and 'in' Europe rather than part of it. It explores how the Turk was thought of as inferior, unprogressive, uncivilised, fanatical, incapable of nationhood, negative in his effect on other peoples and destined to die out. Perceptions developed out of an intellectual context in which there was the notion of a cultural historical area that formed Europe and a world outside that was not part of this. Increasingly views of this non-European world were negative.

The image of the Turk as non-European thus took on a new and greater significance in

⁵ Freeman (1877b), 45.

the late nineteenth century and related to the general context of changing British and European attitudes to the rest of the world under the impact of industrialisation and imperialism.⁶ The Ottomans under the influence of racial conceptualisations were demoted to the position of a generalised Oriental and Ottoman society was overwhelmingly seen as inferior to that of Europe. The strength of ideas about race, Civilisation and culture and their general acceptance amongst the mass of commentators of many different political hues affected the image of the Ottoman Empire. The Turk appeared as a racial category and the Empire as the non-European world.

The significance of the crisis of 1875-8 in the Balkans lay not only in what it revealed of tensions and conflicts in British society between conflicting ideologies and foreign policies, but also what it showed about Britain as an imperial power over millions of people in Asia and Africa, and the extent to which this was significant as a determinant of ideas about Britain itself and other societies. In other words the crisis was important for what it revealed about a 'culture of imperialism' in Britain and the role that this played in relations between her and the Ottoman Empire.⁷

III. 1 Europe and Its Aliens: The New Meaning of Turkey 'in' Europe.

British views of the Ottoman Empire in the period from the 1870s were captured by the following quotations that, "the rule of the Turks in Europe" is an anachronism, and an "alien domination"⁸ and

"The Turks are barbarians pure and simple. They have neither part nor lot in civilisation; their religion and its injunctions, their origin, their area of empire, their conservatism bar them out from membership in the European family circle"⁹

⁶ Hobsbawm (1989); Kiernan (1988).

⁷ See Baskin (1971); Cesaire (1972); Hobsbawm (1987) Mangan (1990); Said (1978); Thornton (1966).

⁸ Brassey (1876), 11, 31.

⁹ Forbes (1877), 571, who was largely sympathetic to the Ottomans, which illustrates the way in which even positive views acceded to this kind of stereotyping.

The Turk had always been considered alien to Europe, but had not always been considered an anachronism. The Turk had not always been considered as having no civilisation and he had not always been seen as outside the European family circle. On the contrary from the time of the Treaty of Paris in 1856 the Ottoman Empire had been included in the balance of power, subject to the belief that the Empire would reform.¹⁰ This change in perceptions reflected the change in material and intellectual conditions in Britain, more than qualitative changes in the Ottoman Empire. It was the refraction of ideas about the Turk under the influence of a newly developing imperial civilisation in Britain. This new context was responsible for the shift in perception and caused a new interpretation of Ottoman society that was different from past understandings. As the above quotation illustrated the writer does not need to explain which civilisation he was referring to it was simply Civilisation and by this was meant European.

From the time of the Balkan crisis in 1875 views of the Ottoman Empire began to emphasise the 'alien' nature of the Turk, defined in cultural, racial and religious terms. This way of thinking represented an assertion of Europeaness and exclusivity in relation to the rest of the world. As another writer stated,

"the martial qualities of the nation do not render them more acceptable members of the European family. A half-civilised Mahomedan power can never become an ally on equal terms with highly civilised Christian nations"¹¹

The Turk was 'alien' and non-European, and this idea was used to differentiate him both from those that he ruled and from European states. Furthermore any virtues that he possessed such as military valour which had previously been admired did not act as qualifications for membership to Europe. The Turk was not simply 'uncivilised' he was "half civilised" and could not therefore be associated with the 'fully' civilised powers of Europe. The Turk it seemed did not pass any of the religious, cultural and racial tests for membership of Europe.¹² These images of the Turk and Ottoman rule in Europe reflected common intellectual notions and assumptions which confirmed

¹⁰ For a contemporary overview of rationale behind the inclusion of the Turk in the concert of Europe see Lane-Poole (1908), 352, which was originally published in 1888.

¹¹ Brassey (1876), 31. A writer who was part of the debate that arose in 1876 about the future of Ottoman rule in the Balkans conducted in periodicals, pamphlets and books.

¹² See Freeman (1877a,b).

a sense of European virtue and the idea of the opposite character of the non-European. In one way or another views perpetuated the notion that the Balkan provinces were a European land which should be returned to its 'rightful' ownership. The Turk was an alien presence and should leave returning to lands that were more suited to his character and origins.¹³

Amongst images of the Turk there were different extremes ranging from those which claimed to be positive and pro-Turkish, but which nonetheless contributed to the picture of the Turk as non-European and different, to more extreme versions which were often violently negative and anti-Turkish, which were in favour of the expulsion of the Turks from Europe. These views were expressed by a wide range of political, religious and social figures in books, pamphlets and periodical articles at the time of the Eastern crisis, when the question of the future of Ottoman rule in Europe became a subject of public debate. The ideas of the most important figures who contributed to this debate are used as representative of widely held perceptions. Common themes were reiterated. In the case of both negative and positive views there was a depiction of a peoples who were more 'in' Europe than part of it. By religion and race the Turks were represented as outsiders. The right to rule proceeded from perceived inherent capacities and character of the peoples of the Balkan provinces. It was the influence of these generalised racial and religious ideas that contributed to the image of the Ottoman Empire as unnatural and non-European. The older image which sought to show that the Turks were not aliens in Europe and which supported the continuation of Ottoman rule from this time became a minority view. The term Turkey 'in' Europe had thus taken on a political significance. Despite the very complex ethnicity of the area as a result of centuries of coexistence-existence when British writers looked at the Balkans they saw Turks and Christians, two distinct races, religions and peoples.¹⁴

III.1.1 The non-European nature of the Turk.

One of the most prevalent images in the literature of the 1870s was that of the 'encampment' of the Turks in Europe, and the idea that Ottoman rule in Europe was 'unnatural' and therefore insupportable. This was couched in the language of race and the idea that there were superior and inferior races. Interest in the Turks as a race stemmed from the generalised interest in races that

¹³ Campbell (1876, 1877); Farley (1876), Kinnear (1876).

¹⁴ For the complex history of the Balkans see: Jelavich (1983); Stavrianos (1963).

was common in the late nineteenth century. It was typical therefore of the period that writers should seek to speak about types and try to fit the peoples of the Ottoman Empire into a racial typology. Almost without reserve Turks were seen as an Oriental people which became a racial category in and of itself and carried with it many associations. The religion and social organisation of the Turks were blended into this general category and there were a blurring of lines between race and culture. The idea of the Turk as non-European and Oriental was the significant image to emerge.¹⁵

The ideas of the influential historian E. A. Freeman who was one of the best known and vocal anti-Turkish writers are a good example of the eurocentrism of British ideas in general. He brought together notions about Europe as a cultural/historical area and a vision of the Turks as outside this, which were representative of ideas in general despite the often extreme nature of his views.¹⁶ Freeman provided an outline of what Europe meant to him and other British commentators which became the standard against which the Turk was defined and judged. Europe, he wrote was united by racial, linguistic, moral and religious bonds and its peoples shared an original language, a common history and a Roman heritage, which had produced "ideas and feelings", "not shared by those nations which never had anything to do with either of the seats of Roman power".¹⁷ Europe according to him had a common civilisation and a religion, Christianity. It also shared a code of conduct in politics and morals. He admitted that some European governments had been bad "yet law, order, and justice have never been forgotten".¹⁸

¹⁵ For examinations of racial thought see: Bolt (1971); Dudley and Novak (1972); Gilroy (1987); Haller (1971); Mannoni (1964); Steen (1980). For contemporary racial thought see Blyden (1889); Bryce (1902), (1915). J. Bryce was one of the founders of the Eastern Question Association and Regius Professor of Law at Oxford, Cumming (1864); Prichard (1843).

¹⁶ E. A. Freeman (1823-92) one of the most prominent figures in the agitation movement against the Ottomans during the Eastern Crisis 1875-8. See Shannon (1963). Freeman was the author of many articles about the Ottoman Empire in leading periodicals such as the *Fortnightly Review*. He was Regius Professor of History at Oxford (1884-92) and his historical writings although covering many subjects (see bibliography for references) were important for developing an anti-Norman, Anglo-centric English nationalist historiography. See Burrows (1983); Shannon (1963).

¹⁷ Freeman (1877a), 55.

¹⁸ Freeman (1877b), 6.

Two very important features of this European civilisation according to Freeman had been the prohibition of polygamy and slavery which he hinted were two features that were an essential part of Ottoman society.¹⁹

Freeman's ideas brought together many common themes in perceptions of the Turk. Views were eurocentric in that Europe was the centre of civilisation, forming an integrated cultural, religious and political whole, superior to the non-European world. He brought together the notion of a European world and a non-European world whose histories, languages and cultures made them absolutely different. Europe was of course superior by comparison and his inclusion of the Christian peoples of the Balkan provinces in his definition of Europe and European reflected not only an idea of Europe as a geographical designation but as a cultural and historical entity.²⁰ The Turks in this conceptualisation were "alien in blood, alien in language and alien in religion" to Europe and it was these kinds of notions that were applied to the question of Ottoman rule in the Balkans.²¹

When writers referred to Turks they were usually referring to the rulers and the Muslim peasantry. Although the term 'Turk' was often used to mean Muslim there was usually a differentiation between them and other Muslim peoples such as the Bosnian Muslims, Bulgarian Muslims, Circassians and Tartars. Although there was a general lack of clarity in the interchangeable use of the terms 'Turk' or 'Ottoman' what was more clear was that the Turk had become a type variously referred to as Oriental, Muslim, non-European or in some cases just 'Turkish'. These were rarely precise ethnic descriptions. Rather they encompassed a whole framework of notions about non-European races, cultures and societies.

The origins of the Turks were said to explain everything about their nature. The typical impressionistic and subjective representation was, that the Turks were originally barbarians, nomadic warriors characterised as "tribes of Mongols, and Tartars", who for five hundred years, had created "ruin and havoc", in a reign of "unchecked savageness, and lust", in "the finest lands

¹⁹ Freeman (1877b), 6. For the importance of sexuality in perceptions of the Ottoman Empire see Shannon (1963). Gladstone. For Ottoman slavery see Erdem (1993).

²⁰ For the idea of Europe and non-Europe see: Barker (1988); Baudet (1965); Hay (1968); Kiernan (1988). See also Freeman's *Historical Geography of Europe* (1881), 2 Volumes.

²¹ Freeman (1877b), 11.

of Europe" creating nothing beyond "the most absolute, and filthy despotism on earth".²² Other writers described them as the Red Indians of Europe, a "horde of semi-savage Tartars" who have "made no progress indeed it is contrary to their teaching to change".²³ Turks had in other words remained in a state of barbarism and as a race had retained their original barbaric character.

Turks were differentiated from other races in the Balkans. They were non-Aryan and Turanian and as Freeman expressed it, in contrast to the Iranians whose land Iran is called the "land of lightness" and whose people were Aryan, Turan [by implication the Ottoman Empire] was the "land of darkness". Despite the mixture of Turkish blood with renegades who 'became' Turks i. e. Muslims, the Turks had not assimilated with the original populations. This was unlike the Turanian races such as the Bulgarians who had become Slavs and Christian or like the Hungarians, who although they did not become Slav, accepted Christianity and thus became part of European civilisation. The Turks were alien to Europe and as Freeman expressed it, despite occupying "one of the two great seats of Roman power, one of the great seats of Greek civilisation but they have not thereby become Roman or Greek, or European in any way." They came as Turks and remained as Turks different in religion and race an "artificial nation".²⁴

Religion was the second criteria which differentiated the Turk from Europe. This was one of the most significant points for late Victorians, both those who were well known as Christian writers such as prominent Churchmen like the Reverend M. MacColl or the Reverend. W. Denton, but also by other writers that were not professional Churchmen.²⁵ The notion of Christian Europe was thus an essential part of the way in which the Turk and the Ottoman Empire were understood and presented. The notion of the Eastern question as part of an age old struggle between Christianity and Islam had a resonance in late Victorian society. Despite the triumph of science Victorian culture was still strongly Christian. Even at this new historical conjuncture the old idea of conflict between East and West, Christianity and Islam was still fundamental on a deep level of British culture. The Balkans were represented as a conquered

²² Kinnear (1877), 7.

²³ Cowen (1880), 8-9.

²⁴ Freeman (1877a), 43, 43, 55, 43.

²⁵ For the range of writers see Shannon (1963).

Christian territory and the purpose of British policy should be to restore these lost Christian peoples to Europe away from the 'alien' rule of the Muslim Turk.²⁶

Despite the predominance of writings that were anti-Turkish during these years and views which aligned themselves to the support of Balkan Christians, there was also a smaller group of writers who adhered to the view that Ottoman rule in Europe was legitimate. Unlike anti Turkish perceptions the question of whether the Turks were European by race and religion was less important. A. Borthwick in his *Address on the Eastern Question* written at the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 sought to upturn the notion of Turkish 'encampment' in Europe. He argued that the Turks had struck deep roots in Europe over a period of five centuries and wrote that, "The Turks are throughout the provinces, which own their sway the holders of the soil, its defenders, and in every sense the aristocratic element".²⁷

Ottoman rule in this conceptualisation was considered legitimate by virtue of its longevity, but also because the Ottomans constituted a legitimate government, which should therefore command respect by the ruled. The Turks were lords of the land and this gave them legitimacy.²⁸ Ottoman rule was seen as an imperial rule over subjects and religious differences were considered inevitable in an empire. The image was of an empire which ruled mixed populations that was unable to rule effectively because of outside interference which encouraged internal disturbance and rebellion against the rulers. As Borthwick expressed it, the 'races' in Europe live happily together "if undisturbed from without".²⁹ Despite these views which emphasised the legitimacy of Ottoman rule, the idea that the Turk was 'alien' was more resonant and reflected long standing antipathy towards the rule of the Turk in 'Christian' Europe.

As some of the quotations referred to above suggest, progress or the ability to progress were defined as characteristics of European races which implied the opposite in the character

²⁶ See Thompson (1886), I, II, which discusses this 'crusading' aspect of views and Harrison (1878).

²⁷ Borthwick (1876), 3, (1878), 35.

²⁸ Borthwick (1877). For the traditional diplomatic perspective which saw the Ottoman Empire as a factor of stability in the Near East See Temperley (1964b).

²⁹ Borthwick (1877), 3-4. Writers often go into great detail about the 'planned' nature of the insurrection in 1875 and the role of Russian and Serbian organized Pan-Slavic Committees in the crisis of the 1870s see Daly (1877).

of the non-European. Christianity and Islam embodied respectively these characteristics of progress and incapacity to progress. Unprogressiveness was presented as an inherent feature of the Turkish character on account of race and religion. Turks were seen as examples of the 'effete' and unprogressive races who had lost their former strength. As the well known writer J. Farley expressed it

"Born originally for an active life, to lead great herds, into the steppes and carry war and pillage amongst their neighbours, the Turks have become enervated since the day when driven back from the ramparts of Vienna, the sword fell from their grasp, and they retired to Constantinople where they found their Capua."³⁰

'Effete' races were part of an inevitable process, "the law of human races" in which some races rose and some declined.³¹ These and similar ideas which were widely reiterated in accounts of the Ottoman Empire represented popularised versions of the theories of Darwin and Spencer, and racial theorists about the 'survival of the fittest'. In these popular versions the belief was that some nations and peoples were destined by innate characteristics to advance and represented the stronger races, whilst other peoples represented the weaker races which were destined to disappear. Whether or not writers consciously use racial classifications their accounts were underpinned by dichotomies such as these, which reflected the degree to which late Victorian culture had become fully permeated with the language of race and progress.³²

A typical amateur account equated physical characteristics with mental ones. The Turks were pictured by one writer in the following way,

³⁰ Farley (1876), iii. J. L. Farley (1823-85), was a one time Ottoman employee, the Chief accountant of the Ottoman bank at Beirut and of the State bank in Istanbul in 1860. He was Ottoman Consul at Bristol in the 1870s. From being a prominent philo-Turk, he became one of the most virulent anti-Turks in the 1870s. It was suggested that he turned against his former employees because of arrears of his salary. He wrote extensively about the Ottoman Empire. See bibliography for his many writings.

³¹ Campbell (1876), 51. Campbell who was an India Officer called himself an experienced administrator of 'Mahomedan and other Eastern peoples', and he regarded it as useful that he could bring this knowledge of Eastern peoples in general to an understanding of the Ottoman Empire. See Campbell (1877), 3. Campbell speaks of the Turks found in the European provinces are representatives of the "effete races of Asia Minor, not improved for purposes of modern progress by the strain of Central Asiatic blood."

³² For the influence of Darwin see Burrows (1966); Hyam (1976); Jones (1980).

"Their physique is very fine but there is a want of power about the shape of their head and their mental power and active energy do not seem to be great. In these respects they are not only far behind the Greeks but various competent observers agree that they are much inferior to several other Mohammedan races...for commerce and other pushing industries they show no aptitude whatever."³³

The Turks were represented as lacking the features of progressive races as revealed by their physique which was also taken as evidence of mental capacity. The Turk in this and other similar and common observations was a type, a species. As an ethnological subject there was little specific interest in the Turk, and in the past they occupied a place somewhere with other semi-civilised peoples such as the Chinese.³⁴ Campbell compared Turks to "the best of our Punjab Muslims", which showed the way in which the Turk had been demoted to a position comparable to that of subjects of the British Empire.³⁵ Campbell elaborated on this saying that the Turks were not a 'brutal race' and were "in the main good, and the worst that can be said about them is that they are Oriental, and have not come within the influence of modern civilisation".³⁶ The Turks were outside modern civilisation and representative of races that have not moved with the times. They had become "less actively warlike than they were, but otherwise they seem exempt from those laws which tend to produce a measure of uniformity amongst European nations". The idea was clear, the Turk was non-European.³⁷

The 'effete' character of the Turk was demonstrated especially by the ruling classes who had become 'unmanly' and had "lost their ancient virtues, and those which they have gained are very superficial".³⁸ To some writers this was the result of the ill effects of Western civilisation especially French (an important point for British writers) and was called false adaptation. The result was the "new fashioned Turk", who was perverse and scheming with a "smattering" of

³³ Campbell (1876), 51. One of the 'competent' observers was the ethnographer Prichard. See bibliography for writings. For racial theory see: Curtin (1971).

³⁴ See Hyam (1976); Kiernan (1988), and Chapter I. 3.

³⁵ Campbell (1876), 49.

³⁶ Campbell (1876), 117.

³⁷ Eliot (1908), 88.

³⁸ Campbell (1876), 63.

French culture.³⁹ There was also an older positive strand of thought which reiterated the idea of the good qualities of the upper classes. This however was a diminishing element in comparison to the overwhelmingly negative image.⁴⁰

The image of the Ottoman ruling classes as decadent was influenced by general ideas about the nature of ruling classes in 'Oriental' societies, and by ideas which combined notions of race, religion and culture to produce a picture of ignorance, imitation, unprogressiveness, perversity, obstinacy, extravagance, licentiousness and deceit.⁴¹ Writers generalised their subject and there was much subjective interpretation. The idea that there had been a decline in the calibre of the personnel of the Ottoman Government was touched upon in the previous chapter (II.3). The Ottoman ruling class most commonly referred to as 'Turks' was in general disliked. They were seen as a race that had declined in capacity and values. The reasons given for this were social, cultural and racial. Explanations of the decline of the 'Old Turk' were variously represented as a result of the pernicious influence of the harem, whose existence was attributed to religion.⁴² Campbell for example wrote that the rulers

"are terribly subject to the evils of harem education and oriental vices... that one can well understand how difficult it was and still is in the East for a rich or great man to enter the region of virtue." ⁴³

Writers usually differentiated between the peasant population that formed the bulk of the subjects of the Ottoman Empire and the rulers. Campbell wrote expressing a common view that,

³⁹ Campbell (1876), 62. Many writers also speak of the Turk of the 'Old School' who was noble and generous. This is a common image based on the notion that at one time there were good Turks, people with whom the British could deal. See also Gallenga (1877), I, II. The idea of the scheming and duplicitous nature of these 'new Turks' was a particularly important idea and became a stronger image throughout the period. See Washburn (1879).

⁴⁰ See Borthwick (1877); Pim (1877).

⁴¹ Farley (1876); Mill (1947); Macaulay (1898), 12 Volumes. See also Ch'en (1979), who describes generalised attitudes towards Oriental rulers especially the Chinese.

⁴² Barkley (1877), 20.

⁴³ Campbell (1876), 62; Farley (1876), 106-8 which presents an account of the lounging Oriental whose promise of the after life leads to a life of inaction in the harem with physiological effects.

"It is almost the rule in the East that the upper classes are by comparison very inferior to the lower classes. While the latter have many virtues the former have so many corruptions and temptations"⁴⁴

Turkish peasants were praised for their simplicity and lack of perversion unlike their rulers who had been spoilt.⁴⁵ Nevertheless even the positive features of the peasant were negated by his character as an Oriental, which implied unprogressiveness. As one writer stated it, the Turk in general "hopes for no improvement, but on the contrary, wishes to stop where he is and as he was 400 years ago".⁴⁶ The 'village Turk' according to the traveller and resident Barkley was fatalistic, deferential to his superiors, and careless of agricultural labour, and improvement of the land, the result of which is a "wretched, and dreary land".⁴⁷ The Turk was simply not aware of the great potential of the land, a point so obvious to the English observer.

Religion was also considered an important contributory factor to the unprogressiveness of the Turk. Islam was represented as fatalistic and contributed to the mental and physical immobility of people who professed it. Islam was believed to cause certain types of behaviour and characteristics in believers. In the Turk these features were represented as wholly negative. As James Farley wrote, "His fatalism is in fact indolence in its most exaggerated form".⁴⁸ Two themes were brought together here: that of the indolent native a characteristic of 'Orientals' especially, and also a view of Islam and its negative effects.⁴⁹

Turks were often unfavourably compared to other Balkan peoples. Turkish unprogressiveness was contrasted to the perceived progressiveness of Christian Bulgarians,

⁴⁴ Campbell (1876), 62.

⁴⁵ For perceptions of rulers see: Campbell (1876, 1877); Farley (1876); Gallenga (1877), 2 Volumes.

⁴⁶ Barkley (1877), 248.

⁴⁷ Barkley (1877),

⁴⁸ Farley (1876), 112.

⁴⁹ For Western ideas of Islam see: Ahmad (1978); Kabbani (1978); Said (1978).

Greeks, Bosnians or Herzegovinans, and occasionally the non-Turkish Muslims or Jews.⁵⁰ The writer De Laveleye compared the Turk with the Jewish merchant in the Balkans. The criteria of comparison was entrepreneurial instinct which he considered was lacking in the Turk. The Turk was represented as devoid of commercial instinct, contemptuous of the pursuit of commerce and dependent on the skills of others.⁵¹ This was a common image. De Laveleye stressed physical characteristics and by implication the mental capacity of Jew and Turk to progress. He wrote,

"Look at the two seated in a café. The Mussulman is absorbed in his kaif...he is at the gate of Paradise. The Jew has a bright restless eye, he talks, he gains information, he asks the price of things...he is thinking always how to get richer"⁵²

This idea of Turkish incapacity to progress was widely reiterated and the "bright restless eye" could equally have been that of the Greek, Bulgarian or even other non-Turkish Muslims. The traveller Barkley, for example who spoke with the authority of a resident, likewise confirmed that Turks were "never really good workmen owing to their utter inability to stick long to one thing" and the Turk was not good at steady and continuous work because of praying and smoking.⁵³ These impressions contributed to the notion of the Turk as one of the unprogressive races.⁵⁴ An attitude of mockery could often be seen, as in Barkley's travel accounts of the 1870s, in which the Turk was depicted as different in every way. The Turk was considered to have a different attitude to such simple matters as sleep. Barkley compared British and Turkish attitudes and wrote that "it generally appears as a matter of uncertainty whether sleep will come when required" so it is valued when it does for the Englishman. For the Turk on the other hand "with

⁵⁰ For perceptions of Christian populations see Chapter Four, also Barkley (1877), 285-6 where he compares Turks negatively not only to the Christian populations but also to Muslim populations. He presents a picture of the "industrious, intelligent and peaceful" Tartars who "driving the Old Turk to the wall".

⁵¹ See also Denton (1876), 173, where he speaks of the Turks as a parasitical population.

⁵² Laveleye (1887), 141.

⁵³ Barkley (1876), 176.

⁵⁴ Barkley (1876), 261 and (1877), 192; Campbell (1876), 51 who explains inferiority as the failure to mix racially with superior races such as the Greek.

him sleep is a drug always ready at a moments notice".⁵⁵ Barkley was setting up a contrast here between the Turk as an indolent Oriental in contrast to the busy and dynamic Englishman, both of whom were recognisable figures to the reader.⁵⁶

Unprogressiveness was commonly defined as, a refusal to think, a refusal to move with the times, as a state which had immutable laws, a government which did not have a notion of what government meant and was one of the 'least possible effort'. The Ottoman government was pictured as one, which "relies on the rain for washing its streets, and on the dogs for keeping them free from offal", which implied a state of inaction and indeed indolence.⁵⁷ It was a picture of a stagnant Oriental society which reinforced stereotypes about the Ottoman Government and the Turks as non-European. The underlying idea was that the Turk could not progress because of who and what he was i.e. non-European or as some violently anti-Turkish writers expressed it because he was Turkish and this in and of itself signified incapacity to progress. The Turks days were numbered and as one writer stated, "the Turk reclines, smokes his pipe, and decays".⁵⁸ This quotation captures the essence of his and many other writers overall view of the Turk which is that he could not keep up with the times. The Turk was unprogressive as an Oriental and also because he was Muslim.

Consideration of the Turks as a race built up a negative image which had prejudged the Turk as belonging to the unprogressive races. These representations were significant both during and after the Eastern crisis of 1875-8. At a time when European states were in the ascendancy and the question of who could be considered worthy of support for nationhood was discussed, the negative image of the Turk further reinforced the idea that the Turk was no longer a worthy candidate either for support or nationhood. The Turk had nothing to recommend him and was represented as a burden, a problem, a dislikeable and unnatural as well as unnecessary presence in Europe. Ottoman civilisation was considered remarkable in its lack of achievement. In the case of writers who were not negative in their perception of the Turk and who admired past

⁵⁵ Barkley (1877), 38.

⁵⁶ For the idea of the lazy native see Alatas (1977); Lorimer (1971).

⁵⁷ Farley (1876), 112.

⁵⁸ Farley (1876), 113.

achievement, the weakness of their position in changing the overall negative picture of the Turk in Europe was reinforced by their emphasis on the past.⁵⁹ Even amongst pro-Turks there was no challenge to the idea of the Turk as different, as Oriental, as unprogressive, however much obstacles to progress were considered to stem from internal or external interference rather than from the character of the Turk.⁶⁰

III.1.2 The 'Peculiarities' of the Turk.

In describing the races of the Ottoman Balkans a picture of distinctly different races was constructed. According to the Reverend. W. Denton, a prominent figure in the agitation movement against Ottoman rule in the Balkans, the Eastern Question was not an issue,

"solely between Mahomedanism and Christianity. I believe it is a question of the Mahomedans of the Turkish race against the Christians, and that more is due to the incurable incapacity of that race to rule than even to the imperfect religion they profess."⁶¹

The influential politician W. E. Gladstone likewise differentiated the Turk from other Muslim races saying that the former were "Not the mild Mahometans of India, nor the chivalrous Saladins of Syria, nor the cultivated Moors of Spain", but rather "from the black day when they first entered Europe... Wherever they went a broad line of blood marked the track behind them". Civilisation was in effect destroyed by them.⁶² The Turk was depicted as inherently fanatical as a result of race, origins and religion. This was an image influenced by general ideas about Islam as well as ideas about the Turk. Both of these aspects were brought together in the representation of the Turk as persecutor of Christians. The notion of the fanatical nature of the Turk was one of the reasons why the Turk was considered uncivilised. He fulfilled none of the criteria that Europe had of 'civilised' behaviour. From this perspective the Eastern Question was about

⁵⁹ Kilian (1876).

⁶⁰ See Borthwick (1877); Vindex (1877) who argue that the Ottoman Empire is not allowed to change because of European interference and Christian depravity.

⁶¹ Denton in Proceedings (1876), 16

⁶² Gladstone (1876), 11. See also Freeman (1877a), 58-60 and the views of participants of the Eastern Question Association, Proceedings (1876).

righting the wrongs of previous epochs and restoring Christian peoples to their rightful position as part of Europe away from his blighting influence.

To many commentators the Eastern crisis merely confirmed ideas about the intolerant character of the Turk and Muslim rule of Christians.⁶³ As one writer stated it, the whole system expressed a "Hatred of the Giaour" which "pervaded all ranks from the highest to the lowest".⁶⁴ Another writer stated that although Turks might be kind in other areas of life they were not kind towards Christians. The explanation for this was usually represented as Islam and the perversity of the Turkish character. It was said that,

"His religion combined with the brutalising sense of unbridled tyranny instilled into him from infancy makes him regard the Rayah as a creature belonging to a totally different order of being to himself."⁶⁵

Turks were considered to hold none of the values of European civilisation. Writers argued that there was amongst them a norm of outrage and hatred of the Christian, which formed the basis of the social system of the Turk.

A negative image developed out of contemporary writings which were full of examples and stories of Turkish mistreatment of Christians. A picture of rape, pillage, torture and massacre was constructed, which writers insisted was the normal state of the European provinces. The Turks according to MacColl were "human tigers" and their remaining in Europe was "a scandal to civilisation and an outrage upon humanity".⁶⁶ Turks were considered to be beyond the pale of Civilisation and were beings with "no capacity for civilisation". The only vigour that they had

⁶³ See Freeman (1855), a long standing critic of Ottoman rule. This article was a critique of E. Creasy's *History of the Ottoman Turks* (1855 1st Ed).

⁶⁴ Farley (1876), ix.

⁶⁵ MacColl (1877), 68. The Reverend Malcolm MacColl was an influential and well known religious figure who played a central role in the agitation movement against Ottoman rule in the Balkans. For many years before the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 he had been a vocal critic and had written many books and articles on the subject of the Ottoman Empire. For his writings see bibliography.

⁶⁶ MacColl (1877), 70-3.

was "ruthless oppression".⁶⁷ Overwhelming themes in this image of the Turk were that by nature (or race), by religion, and social organisation the Turk was brutal, lustful, incapable and amongst some writers the very incarnation of evil. The Turk appeared most often in the guise of the persecutor of Christians, the tax collector, the brutal oppressor.

There was also another strand of thought which contradicted the idea that fanaticism was an essential and unchanging feature of the Turkish character. This more positive representation of the Ottoman Empire pictured it as an empire subject to the interventions of the powers, which was not allowed to govern. In this view the insurrection of 1875-6 was not due to Turkish "oppression" and "brutality", rather it was a well planned rising of "a turbulent peasantry reckless of human life, and delighting in burning, and destroying whenever they had an opportunity". Behind it lay the Dreikaiserbund who sought to raise what was primarily a local problem, the "Herzegovina-Turkic difficulty" to the position of an Eastern crisis. One writer who sought to vindicate the Turk wrote, that Turkey is "more sinned against than sinning".⁶⁸ The writer Pim argued against the idea that the Turks were barbaric murderers, and referred to the 'false rumours' spread about atrocities from people

"quite forgetting to consider that the necessary atrocities resorted to by the Turks in crushing the Bulgarian revolt did not exceed those of England in India, and Jamaica...and of Russia in Poland, Circassia, Khiva, and elsewhere."⁶⁹

The Turk was considered to be no worse than other rulers who had to meet challenges to their authority. There was an unwillingness to condemn the Ottoman Government, either because the reports of the atrocities in Bulgaria were disbelieved, or the suppression of the rising was legitimate, or to be expected from an Oriental state.⁷⁰ The Turk, wrote Daly in response to Gladstone's charge that the Ottoman Government was encouraging their people to 'do it

⁶⁷ Cowen (1880), 8-9. Many writers refer to older texts to show the 'longstanding' nature of Turkish oppression. See: Denton (1876); Farley (1876).

⁶⁸ Pim (1877), 10.

⁶⁹ Pim (1877), 14.

Forbes (1877); Pim (1877). Positive images often reflect traditional antagonism to Russia and accounts of Russian atrocities are mentioned to show that it is Russia that is uncivilised. See De Worms (1877).⁷⁰ See:

[massacre] again', "is decidedly peacefully inclined; he is humane, beneficent, and warm hearted, in his dealings open, and straightforward". The Turks were "a noble race", but he was a "lover of order, and will have his laws obeyed".⁷¹

The positive image also stressed the tolerance of the Turk in contrast to the negative image of inherent Turkish intolerance outlined above. The religion of the Turks was not intolerant. Turks were represented as more tolerant than many countries in 'Christian Europe'. Even Campbell presented a picture of a benign religion, the product of the racial character of the Turk who was a descendant of the peoples of "Asia Minor" who had a strongly developed sense of religion and "If so they may be quiet and good men, and yet very sensitive on religious subjects" but he said that does not make them inherent fanatics. Turks he wrote were "like the best of our Punjab Mohammedans" and the mass of people, the rural Turk was "a good sort of man, honest, sober and patient; religious in his way, not prone to ordinary crime and very amenable to decent government".⁷² For Campbell, the Turks were effete, unprogressive and mildly religious. They were harmless Orientals.

Some writers thus saw the Turk as a murderer by nature and represented him as the arch persecutor of Christians. Others saw the Turk as not fanatical, but rather as a legitimate ruler whose brutality was partly the result of his Oriental nature, but also the product of necessity.⁷³ In the popular mind the image of the Turk as fanatical was more influential and continued to influence perceptions in later periods. Even those views that were relatively positive on the question of Turkish brutality adhered to the view that the actions of the Turks were the desperate measures of a dying man. This was a view which became more prominent after the Eastern crisis of 1875-8.

Most often the Turk was represented as a strange mixture of likeable and/ or dislikeable characteristics. Perceptions confirmed the idea of the Turk as a cultural anomaly. His character formed a puzzle and he was a social peculiarity. As Barkley said, the Turkish peasant was "so

⁷¹ Daly (1877), 11. See also p. 15. Daly's attempt to refute Gladstone took place in the public domain, which at the time of the Eastern crisis was a highly charged atmosphere of criticism.

⁷² Campbell (1876), 54, 49, 49.

⁷³ See Forbes (1876), where in an otherwise favourable account he stated that brutality was to be expected from Orientals, which was similar to the anti-Turkish perspective of someone like Freeman.

mixed and jumbled up in his character, that the Turk who will perform an heroic deed one day may the next be guilty of the meanest and lowest action." Turks were seen as a species apart from the European and even experienced pain in a different way.⁷⁴ The mixed character of the Turk was thus a common image even amongst those writers who were not necessarily negative in their views of Turks as a whole. This image was influenced by general ideas about Orientals. The Turk was presented as generous and noble on the outside which concealed his true ferocious and fanatical character. As one writer stated "When the Turk wishes to please there is no one his equal in good manners". Barkley also admired the "flowery speech" and salutations of the Turk, but also said, that the Turk can also behave badly by looks of contempt or oaths.⁷⁵ His conclusion was, that "They are all alike in manners-the peasant and the pasha, the soldier and his general, the judge and the hangman".⁷⁶

Travellers spoke of the illusory character of the Turk, as people who appeared pleasing in their exterior manners on appearance could in fact be brutal robbers and killers. Travellers believed themselves to be in another world.⁷⁷ One writer warned, "never have dealings with a Turk who is dressed in Frank clothes", unless it is taken "for granted he is a rogue". Such dress signified a loss of "native virtue", common especially to town dwelling Turks, as the vices of the "village Turk", were "those of a manly kind".⁷⁸ This writer's depiction of Turks was that they were a "strange anomaly", capable of great loyalty and sometimes heroic deeds, but not really to be trusted, especially by the Christian, upon whom they could turn at any time.⁷⁹ Perceptions expressed the confidence of the British writer in generalisations which were considered universally valid. They expressed suspicion of the intentions of the people who they write about. An image of the duplicitous character of the Turk developed.

⁷⁴ Barkley (1877), 291, 196.

⁷⁵ For the notion of Oriental duplicity see Nasir (1979); Searwright (1969).

⁷⁶ Barkley (1876), 329.

⁷⁷ The theme of another world owes a lot to the genre of travel writing established by A. Kinglake's, 'Eothen' (First Edition 1844). See Cunningham (1992); De Gaury (1872).

⁷⁸ Barkley (1877), 89.

⁷⁹ Barkley (1877), 291.

Many writers spoke of the contempt of the Turk for the West and for Christians in general differing only in the degree to which fanaticism was seen as ever present or a merely potential force. The Turkish character according to Barkley could be summed up as "depths of wounded feelings and prejudices concealed under the polite, almost humble demeanour of the Turk". Barkley in common with other writers of the 1870s, such as Farley, Gallenga and others spoke of the despised Christians and the extent to which the Turkish nation was united on questions of religion. He described them as "brave, docile cunning and suspicious", a people who would join together immediately "to recover the lost territory of Islam".⁸⁰ Barkley along with other writers depicted this as envy towards superior races that was a characteristic of all classes of Turk alike. The Turk, he wrote had a "feeling of contempt for all who are not Turks".⁸¹ He was jealous of the energy of other nations and to the employment of non-Turks and foreigners. Barkley explained this in the following way "they [The Turks] cannot stand their awful energy". The dichotomy between progress and immobility is clear.⁸²

Other features which distinguished the Turks as a race apart from others were their believed uncreativity and inassimilability. The idea of the uncreativity of the Turk which was alluded to above by Gladstone in his distinction between Muslim races was one of the most significant and frequently expressed ideas about the Turk. This idea became another means of condemnation, which had a direct significance for the overall image of the redundancy of Ottoman rule, whether this was defined in religious or racial/ cultural terms. According to the historian E. A. Freeman it was the origins of the Turks and the nature of them as a race that determined their inability to progress, and which confirmed their essential character as destroyers and not creators. According to him the Turks were,

"A rude and bigoted people, in its beginning a band of adventurers rather than a nation rose to power under a line of princes who were endowed with unparalleled gifts for winning and keeping dominion but who had a small share in the qualities which make dominion something other than a mere rule of force. The Ottomans have been simply a power."⁸³

⁸⁰ Barkley (1876), xvi.

⁸¹ Barkley (1877), 290.

⁸² Barkley (1877), 310.

⁸³ Freeman (1877a), 67.

Turks were represented as lacking all originality and were imitators. They had no civilisation of their own to speak of and had made no contribution to civilisation. The Turk unlike Christian European peoples did not have a history beyond that of a "purely military record". Other countries according to Eliot were able to write their history of "various movements, political, religious, intellectual, social, and commercial which the life of each nation presents" and he added this was "very just in the case of nearly most nations." With the Turk however it was something else and "the peculiarity of the Turks is at once apparent when we observe that their history is almost exclusively a catalogue of names and battles".⁸⁴

To represent the Turk in this way showed the extent of his demotion and also the degree of contempt or even sometimes hatred. The history of any peoples is always more than merely the history of their military exploits and depends on the bias and perspective of the observer. To represent the Turks as a people without a history beyond that of battle was really a value judgement on the Turks themselves. It was a view which refused to see them as anything else but destroyers. It expressed a mixture of outright prejudice towards the Turk as well as the deep impact that the rule of the Muslim Turk in Europe had made on the Western mind. It was based on a certain type of reading or lack of reading of older texts such as the *History of the Ottoman Turks* by Creasy. In this work in addition to lengthy discussions of Ottoman military conquests the writers expressed great admiration for Ottoman military and administrative techniques and Ottoman civilisation in general.⁸⁵

A few writers were more sympathetic but in the highly charged atmosphere of the 1870s during the Eastern crisis this view appears to have gone unheard. One writer, a Dr. Kilian, who wrote a sober article about the Ottoman Empire, posed the following question to the critics of the Ottoman Empire. He asked whether a rule of five hundred years, over vast territories could be based on force alone. In an atmosphere that believed, or wanted to believe just that, the question was irrelevant and could be and was overlooked. Kilian also made the point that the "The Osmanlis were not the rude barbarians Christian writers described them to be; they were in advance of the European armies in the conduct of war" and he spoke of their excellent

⁸⁴ Eliot (1908), 56. Eliot's was First Secretary of the British Embassy 1893-8. His book was first published in 1900 as was valuable to show perceptions of this time. The author also referred to himself as 'Odysseus'.

⁸⁵ See Creasy (1855, 1877).

organisation and strict morality which was commented on by the Ambassadors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He believed that Ottoman civilisation should not be condemned in its entirety.⁸⁶ This view which represented an older strand of thought was difficult to sustain during the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 when the public were barraged by constant news and stories of the brutality of the Turk in the Balkans. The image of destruction stuck and became an enduring theme.

The most frequently reiterated view was that the Turkish contribution to civilisation had been non-existent. The idea of imitation was a common idea used to describe Eastern races in this period of European ascendancy. Eastern races especially the upper classes were regarded as mere copiers of Western civilisation, which they did not even copy well. Underlying this idea was the Eurocentric belief that all culture and civilisation emanated from Europe and from Greco-Roman origins. In perceptions of the Turks there was an added dimension to this typically eurocentric idea, which was that the Turks in particular had no civilisation at all, nor ever had. This idea which continued to influence writings about the Ottoman Empire until recent times had its origin in the nineteenth century.⁸⁷

For Eliot who expressed this view towards the end of the century, the Turk was "the most and the least assimilative of mortals; he borrows religion, clothes, language and customs but remains profoundly Turkish in spite of all", and he went on to say that the religion is Arabic the language a mixture of Arabic and Persian, the literature is imitative, their art is Persian or Byzantine and the clothes of the upper classes and army are European.⁸⁸ In other words the characteristics of the Turk were his lack of originality and initiative. He had almost nothing of his own. The following quotation summed up the most common view of the Turks as a race:

"The Turk makes nothing at all; he takes whatever he can get as plunder and pillage; he lives in

⁸⁶ Kilian (1876), 546. Kilian's view was a minority view because even those writer such as Sir. C. Eliot (1900, 1908) who were willing to concede that there was an Ottoman Civilisation saw it as inferior or borrowed. It was not until the twentieth century in the West that Ottoman studies developed which took the study of the Ottoman Empire in its own right. See Cahun (1896); Gibb (1913), 5 volumes. For an examination of this historiography see Berktaý (1990); Davison (1990), xi-xvii, 1-28.

⁸⁷ For an historiographical discussion of this see Berktaý (1990); Davison (1990).

⁸⁸ Eliot,(1908), 91.

the houses which he finds or which he orders to be built for him. In unfavourable circumstances he is a marauder; in favourable a grand seigneur who thinks it is his right to enjoy with grace and dignity all that the world can yield, but who will not lower himself by engaging in art, literature, trade or manufacture."⁸⁹

The combined vision was that the Turk was incapable of governing, of producing literature or science, he was capable only of fighting and the Turks as a race had never had enough energy nor intelligence to make them curious for knowledge. The Turk was thus considered as a barbarian whose role as destroyer rather than creator had remained a permanent feature of his character. He had borrowed all that he had and was incapable of producing for himself, either materially or culturally.⁹⁰

Some writers were of the view that in the past the Turks had a civilisation and that it was only under the influence of Europe that they had lost their old culture. Other writers as mentioned above adopted the view that the Turk had never had a civilisation. The first view saw this misadaptation to Europe as fully demonstrated by the rulers, who had lost their old culture and being unable to create themselves had become mere imitators and poor ones at that. As noted by Campbell, the "modern and comparatively educated Turks" have "more vanity than practical energy and more diplomatic knack than real talent".⁹¹ Other writers saw the new Turks, the 'a la franca pasha' as the traveller H. C. Barkley had called them only in negative light. The one time correspondent for the Times newspaper in Istanbul A. Gallenga saw all classes of Turk as culturally deficient. He wrote that the "Turk does not care to read and has no books to read", he has "no access to foreign thought" and the Europeanised ones are victimised and "charged with having acquired European vices while retaining in full vigour those of their own country".⁹² This was a common image of the Turk as the borrower of all that was bad from the West.

There were a variety of images of the culture of the Turkish upper classes. There were

⁸⁹ Eliot (1908), 91. This account expressed a contempt for the perceived superiority and haughtiness of the Ottoman that was commented upon. Writers were not incorrect to perceive a sense of self sufficiency on the part of Ottomans and the time in which he was writing was however significant as a period of reaction against the West. See Lewis (1961), Hourani (1989).

⁹⁰ Eliot (1908), 94.

⁹¹ Campbell (1876), 66.

⁹² Gallenga (1877), I. 182.

those writers such as Gallenga who would not concede that the Ottomans had any culture at all and there were other writers who gave credit to the Ottomans for their culture.⁹³ In the latter image the underlying assumption was that although this constituted a culture it was still inferior to European and there was still an underlying note of contempt and mockery. Barkley for example admitted that Turkish protocol in meals was elaborate and that there was "quite as much etiquette about a Turkish dinner as there is in a swell London one".⁹⁴ Such features of a traditional culture he said could still be admired. The general perception was that such features of traditional Ottoman culture had disappeared and been replaced by badly copied forms. Often the culture of the Ottoman was an object of mockery. Eliot for example spoke in slightly mocking tones of the Court style of writing, which he described as difficult to understand. Likewise the tradition of popular stories and ballads showed the primitive nature of the Turk and were "rude and coarse and smack somewhat of the barrack room, or rather the campfire but it is a campfire on some Central Asian plain" and "the jins, peris and dervishes certainly suggest the Arabian nights".⁹⁵

The language of the Turk was also said to demonstrate his lack of originality. The question of language was fundamental in the analysis of races. It was used as a further example to show the inferiority of and incapacity of the Turk for nationhood. Until the late nineteenth century there was little interest in the study of Turkish as a language in its own right both in the West and amongst Turks themselves.⁹⁶ A Turkish identity had been merged with that of an Ottoman Islamic one and Ottomans rulers were not by any standards ethnically or racially pure.⁹⁷ The study of Turkish was subsumed under the general study of Oriental languages, Arabic and Persian. Those few writers who do mention the Turkish language in their accounts were not specialists and what they had to say was generally negative. The language was represented as

⁹³ For example both Eliot (1908), 54 and Campbell (1876).

⁹⁴ Barkley (1877), 36-7.

⁹⁵ Eliot (1908), 106. See also Gallenga (1877), I.

⁹⁶ See Kushner (1978). The few Turkish specialists that there are in Britain are writing in the last few years of the nineteenth-century but more so in the twentieth and in comparison to the interest in Arabic were a minority interest. See Lane-Poole (1908), Gibb (1913), 5 Volumes.

⁹⁷ See Kushner (1978); Itkowitz (1973); Lewis (1961).

falsely constructed and usually compared to its detriment to Arabic.⁹⁸ The view was a product of ignorance and prejudice more than anything else. Many writers such as Eliot mentioned above commented on the Arabic and Persian borrowing and the composite nature of the "poor Turkish language".⁹⁹

Writers in this period saw language as evidence of the lack of the ability of the Ottomans to create a civilisation for themselves. It reinforced the image of them as borrowers only. It expressed an incapacity to understand Ottoman civilisation partly because of the difficulties of the language which few Orientalists had mastered.¹⁰⁰ The idea of the Turk as borrower also expressed a lack of desire to understand and perhaps an inability to understand the complexity of the Ottoman Empire. It also expressed pure prejudice. There was a general desire to classify peoples neatly and in many ways the peoples of the Balkans especially the Turks defied an easy classification. They were explained negatively as an amalgam of influences and negative characteristics with very little essence themselves beyond that of their military nature. The Turk was not European, rather he was something called Turkish which was depicted as a combination of negative racial and socio-cultural features.

The significance of this idea of uncreativity was clear when looked at in the light of the Eastern Question which was seen in terms of Turkish 'ability' or 'right' to rule. The picture of destroyer and not creator which developed at this time began to take on a significance as a judgement on the Turk, which eventually became a final judgement on the Ottoman Empire as whole. These ideas were echoed in later years and were expressed also at the time of the First World war when the British were actively working to end the Ottoman Empire. Differentiating races from one another and seeing them positively or negatively and in the case of the Ottoman Empire by actually lending support to them in the Balkans and later in the Arab provinces meant that ideas about the peoples of the Ottoman Empire were much more than merely academic opinions. They were views which actually had a force as ideas in action. This was the overall

⁹⁸ For accounts of Orientalism see Arberry (1948); Djait (1985); Hourani (1991); Kushner (1978); Schwab (1984).

⁹⁹ Eliot (1908), 106. See also 95, where he argued that the structure of the language explained the incapacity to comprehend widely concepts beyond daily needs.

¹⁰⁰ See Cunningham (1992), II.

significance of anti-Turkism as it developed during the Eastern crisis and can be clearly seen in perceptions of the Balkans during the 1870s and in the later years in ideas about other peoples.¹⁰¹

The Turk according to Eliot was "isolated" in his own country. The Balkan provinces were "his country" by virtue of the longevity of his stay, but he was still only staying and not permanently there. Eliot said that there had always been an impermanence about the Turk in Europe, of which the Turk himself was well aware. The reason given was that "The Turks are an Asiatic people who have settled but not taken root in our continent" and "their presence there is a question which may be treated by itself and quite independently of their existence in Anatolia and elsewhere".¹⁰² In other words he drew on the idea of other writers such as Freeman about the 'encampment' of the Turk in Europe. The question was different from other questions because it was a question of an 'Asiatic' people in Europe. This for most writers was the central problem of the Eastern crisis and it was from this perspective that writers viewed the Ottoman Empire. Thus the parameters of the issue were set for the Western audience. The issue of the Turk in Europe was a question in itself and required an analysis different from that of other related questions about the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰³ The reason it was a different question was because the Balkan provinces were considered as European lands and the peoples as Europeans and the Turk was considered as different, as an Oriental in some accounts and as an alien in others. The more extreme negative image of the Turk 'in' Europe presented a view which challenged the idea that Turkish rule in Europe and elsewhere was different as they considered it to be despicable and insupportable everywhere.

Eliot compared the Ottoman Empire to European states, arguing that unlike the states of

¹⁰¹ In this period this view becomes one of the means of justifying the independence of Balkan Christians because of the lack of contact between rulers and subjects and therefore the failure to build a viable nation of the separate peoples under Ottoman rule. See Gallenga (1878). I, II. For the significance of views relating to Armenians see Chapter Six, and for the Arab provinces the views of W. S. Blunt (1880), Salmone (1897), who began to promote the idea of the false nature of the Ottoman claim to the Caliphate. For the development and significance of pro-Arabism see Shukla (1986).

¹⁰² Eliot (1908), 90, 90, 88. 1. He also stated that everything about the Turk gave the sense that he was ready to move on which he attributes to the essentially nomadic nature of the Turk. See also Freeman (1877a, b). For perceptions of the Turk in Asia Minor see chapter Six.

¹⁰³ Eliot (1908), 1.

England, France and Russia which contained their respective races or unlike the Austro-Hungarian races where different races in different areas lived under a central government, Turkey encompassed not only Turks but a "medley of races" living in the same place but with separate languages, customs, dress who supply the "daily round of Eastern politics".¹⁰⁴ The image was of an unassimilated area in which the responsibility for this lay with the Turks.¹⁰⁵ Although Eliot compared the British and Ottoman Empire as the rule of a minority over a majority that was different in race and religion, the reasons he gave for the lack of ability to compare 'Turkey in Europe' to 'England in Asia' were unconvincing and reflected the real underlying idea which was of the unacceptability of the Turk in Europe. The framework for understanding the Turk was the idea of Europe and non-Europe. It was because the Turks were seen as an inferior race with little to recommend them in terms of language and culture that Ottoman and British rule in imperial territories could not in the last analysis be compared. Neither by race nor by degree of civilisation were they comparable in British eyes and it was taken for granted that British rule was beneficial. The Ottoman Government did not and could not (by nature) provide the same things that a European state provided for its imperial subjects.¹⁰⁶

As the previous chapter illustrated, the rule of the Ottomans in Europe was generally represented as regressive and as the main reason for the backwardness of the Balkans. Ottoman rule, generally perceived as misgovernment had held back these fertile countries and peoples in the Balkans. The counter image to this was that the nature of the area was determined more by European interference and subject Christian incapacity and selfishness. However increasingly after the 1870s as a result of the belief in race as a determining feature of societies even the relatively sympathetic view stated that the Turk was an obstacle to progress on account of essential features of race. This view, the legacy of an older conservative tradition of thought favoured British or European control of the area or supported local independence and expressed also the belief that the Turk was incapable of progress on his own.

¹⁰⁴ Eliot (1908), 15-16.

¹⁰⁵ See also Freeman (1876a)

¹⁰⁶ For contemporary views of the benefits of British imperialism see Lord. Cromer (1908), 2 Volumes; Dilke (1868); Seeley (1902). For an historical overview of notions of the White man's burden and an imperialist mentality see Hobsbawm (1990); Hyam (1976); Thornton (1966).

One of the most important paradigms in the nineteenth century (and also later views) was that the Ottomans were merely conquerors, a rapacious horde who pillaged and destroyed the land and gave nothing else to the subject populations. The fact that they were Muslim conquerors over Christian peoples was even less likeable. The most typical image of Ottoman rule in the 1870s was of a "barbarous, anarchic despotism, where the finest countries, in the most genial climate of the world, are wasted by peace more than any other countries have been worried by war"¹⁰⁷ It was an image in which the Turk was equated with dearth, lack of industry and waste. It was a rule of retrogression and decimation. The idea of the uncreativity of the Turk was peculiar to him as a race as other Islamic peoples such as Arabs were not always equated with uncreativity.¹⁰⁸ In many respects these underlying notions in Western culture came into play when the contribution or the lack of contribution of the Turk to civilisation were explored. Their society was represented as corrupt and stagnant partly because of the influence of religion, but more because of the regressive nature of the Turk and Turkish rule. The Turk was depicted as responsible for the failure of Eastern Europe to be like Western Europe.¹⁰⁹ It was as if the Turk had not been a factor in the history of these areas they would have achieved the same level of progress that Western Europe was believed to have achieved.

This image of the negative effect of the Turk was frequently echoed in writings about the Ottoman Empire. The Turk was considered to be incapable of progress because he was Oriental, but worse than that he had prevented others from progressing. The Turk was considered a blight on European peoples and development. The extreme negative image of the Turk was of the Turk as only having raped and pillaged the land and the people and contributed nothing positive at all. This was represented as his whole history. In other writings the Turk had merely taxed his populations and left them in fear of progressing because they would be punished by the Government. One writer spoke of,

¹⁰⁷ Quoted in Denton (1876), 59.

¹⁰⁸ See Hourani (1992). For the debate about the compatibility of Islam and Science see Renan (1948). I; Djait (1985), 42-50; Hourani (1989), 61-2.

¹⁰⁹ For contemporary statements of this thesis see Pears (1903). For the continuity of this thesis of destruction see Berkta (1990); Vuchinich (1951, 1955).

"the standing, the permanent, the incurable iniquity of the rule of the Turk over populations superior to himself in religion, in civilisation, and in enlightenment; and that as long as the Christian provinces of Turkey are sacrificed to Turkish ideas of administration and finance"¹¹⁰

In this vision the system of Government appeared as completely abhorrent, incapable and unacceptable. The distinction in the Ottoman Empire between Muslims and Christians was considered to be the most objectionable part of the system and was represented in the most negative light. There was no willingness to concede the difficulties of rule for the Ottoman government and the threat to its integrity from, for example Russia. There was no sense in which the attempt by the Ottoman government to suppress insurrection against its authority was legitimate and a means of securing the continuation of their rule as could be found in positive images of the Turk. The martial skill of the Turk, previously an object of admiration was now seen as a skill only in use against Christian populations.¹¹¹

The composite image that developed of the Turks in the Balkan provinces was that by nature, race and religion they had nothing that would justify them as nation, nor were they capable of forming a nation with the peoples under their rule. The image of the Ottomans as unable to form a nation depended on the picture that was built up by writers of their history, their religion, of them as a race and their general culture or as writers see it lack of it. Nations and capacity to be nations was associated with 'European races'. Freeman for example said that the Bulgarians were able to form a nation because they were Christian and before that heathens.¹¹² Nation state building in this picture was associated with being Christian and also European.

The idea that the Ottoman Empire did not and could not constitute a nation because it only took from an area and contributed nothing which was explored in chapter two (II. 2.) was one of the main paradigms in perceptions of the Turk in the Balkans. The image was of a rule of disaster and pillage. Turks ruled by force and failed to win the sympathies of the populations whom they could not weld into a nation. As Freeman expressed it the Turk represented the

¹¹⁰ Trevelyn in Proceedings (1876), 71. See especially Farley (1876) and the negative views of participants of the Eastern Question Association Conference in which the 1875-6 crisis is taken as evidence of the negative effect of the Turk, Proceedings (1876).

¹¹¹ Gallenga (1877), I. 190. See Washburn (1879), who although he recognised that the empire's struggles were struggles for survival did not see them as legitimate.

¹¹² Freeman (1877b), 11-12.

unparalleled phenomena of an Eastern race "the enemy and rival of Christianity" ruling in the heartland of Europe and this was the most significant point.¹¹³ The view of many people was that of Gladstone that on account of their nature and rule which was "force, and periodic massacre" and their total lack of contribution to Civilisation for five hundred years, the Turk should carry himself away as he is a medley of undesirable peoples. In a famous passage which has often been taken as representative of anti-Turkish views at the time and was often repeated by contemporaries themselves, Gladstone wrote

"Let the Turks now carry away their abuses in the only possible manner, namely by carrying away themselves. Their Zaptiehs, and their Mudirs, their Bimbashis and their Yuzbachis, their Kaimakans and their Pashas, one and all bag and baggage."¹¹⁴

for they had "devastated and profaned".¹¹⁵ The typical Turk for Gladstone and many others is this bloodthirsty one. The Turk had simply destroyed and created nothing. It was the rule of the barbarian over the civilised unlike for example European imperialism which represented the rule of the civilised over the uncivilised.¹¹⁶

III.2 The 'Inevitable' and 'Desired' Death of the Turk 'in' Europe.

To most writers it was self evident that the days of the Turk in the Balkan provinces were numbered.¹¹⁷ This was either because the Turk was perceived as dying out or for moral, racial or economic reasons or because of his incapacity to progress. He was regarded as an anachronism which had to give way to more progressive and capable Christian races. The general view was that "The Turkish race is fast dying out".¹¹⁸

Several explanations of this death were advanced: that the Christian races were

¹¹³ Freeman (1877a), 2.

¹¹⁴ Gladstone (1876a), 13, 62, which sold 200,000 copies in its first month.

¹¹⁵ Gladstone (1876a), 32.

¹¹⁶ See Eliot (1908), 3 for an imperialist self perception.

¹¹⁷ Farley (1876), Kiernan (1988), 115.

¹¹⁸ Farley (1876), 103.

progressing at the expense of the Turk, that the Turks were being wiped out by conscription, racial explanations about racial struggle, or by the effects of epidemics or incessant wars.¹¹⁹ Other causes of high mortality were the midwifery and "criminal abortions" practised by "shameless and ignorant women".¹²⁰ Other causes were social such as the explanation of Barkley who did not see much hope for a 'race', produced from the harem in which the Turkish mother "is kind to her offspring but is quite incapable of enlarging, and cultivating its [the child's] mind".¹²¹ The advance of modernity was another frequent explanation of the inevitable demise of the Turk. The Turk was considered an anachronism who could not keep up with the times either as a result of his innate character or because of the influence of religion, which increased passivity and indolence. Barkley's views of the Turks and conditions in the provinces expressed this idea that the Turk was a symbol of a former world or as some writers said, a previous lower state of man's existence. Barkley wrote that "the telegraph and other inventions of civilised Europe will eventually drive the half civilised Turk out of Eastern Europe." The area was more a museum for those who wished to see how things were in the past. As for the future this in Barkley's view belonged to the races which surrounded the Turk. He wrote,

"Look out 'Sick man', you are getting weaker every day, and these 'dogs' are waxing strong; they will turn and worry you before long, and when that day comes, who will care to drive them from their lawful prey."¹²²

Even amongst those writers who did not necessarily express dislike of the Turk (whose views were like a knowing father to a child) there was a belief that the Turk could only continue to rule his lands with European help and if European style reforms were undertaken. Some writers suggested that the Turk should leave Europe for his own good and concentrate on ruling like populations in Anatolia and the Arab provinces (i.e. other Muslims). Carlyle said that the Turk should "turn his face eastward, for ever quit this side of the Hellespont, and give up his

¹¹⁹ M. Pardo quoted in Farley (1876), 108.

¹²⁰ Farley (1876), 110. See Cunningham (1992), 81-2, for the old explanation of high mortality in Islamic countries.

¹²¹ Barkley (1876), 91.

¹²² Barkley (1877), 63.

arrogant ideas of governing anyone but himself".¹²³

A few writers suggested British imperial control although because of commitment to empire elsewhere and the complications resulting from the interest of many states in the Ottoman Empire, British imperial control was not seriously considered at least in the Balkan provinces. However given the British acquisition of Cyprus in 1878 and the occupation of Egypt in 1882 it was clear that the Ottoman Empire was no longer seen as an area that could not be colonised, or fall under the control of one or more of the powers.¹²⁴ On the other hand the strongly negative view expressed a mixture of active desire to end Ottoman rule with the belief in the morally unredemptive nature of the Turk. The tone of most writing was deeply hostile to the Turk and can be summed up in the following words by the Reverend Dr. Allon at the Eastern Question Association meeting in 1876 that

"When nations fall into moral decrepitude, then by every law of Divine order or human expediency, they should be permitted to die and hindered from cursing the ground with their rottenness."¹²⁵

III.3 The Standards of Civilisation and the Final Judgement on the Turk: Ideas in Action.

The context of British views of the Turks in the Balkans from the 1870s was British and European ascendancy in the world at a time of European imperialism. The world was envisaged ever more in terms of dichotomies between a civilised and progressive Europe and an unprogressive, uncivilised non-Europe. This was the case amongst a wide range of political views from liberal to conservative and imperialist. It became a dominating perspective and affected views of the Ottoman Empire in the last decades.

In the period with which this thesis deals the image of the Turk was overwhelmingly negative in comparison to earlier periods. The old image based in part on hatred and fear of Russia which also formed the basis for support of the Ottomans, projected the image of the Ottomans as noble, as gentlemen, as good and tolerant rulers. These ideas were also influenced

¹²³ Carlyle in Proceedings (1876), 1. See also Campbell (19876). See Chapter Six for this idea of retreat and perceptions of the Turk in Anatolia.

¹²⁴ Blaisdell (1929); Brown (1984); Langer (1950, 1956).

¹²⁵ Allon in Proceedings (1876), 46.

by a belief that although the Turks were Oriental they had more to recommend them than the surrounding populations in the Balkans. Despite positive support they too were quite clear about where the Turk was on the scale of humanity and he definitely belonged to one of the inferior and Oriental races.¹²⁶ Simply stated in a period of European imperialism it was becoming impossible except amongst small numbers of die hard pro-Turks to see Ottomans as equal and as fellow imperialists.¹²⁷ Despite Ottoman reform of the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire was judged along with other 'Oriental' societies and as a result of this self blinding belief in 'progress' by the British there was little recognition of the difficulties of change in other societies. Explanations of a perceived lack of change were more easily sought in the realm of culture especially in Eastern societies for whom there already existed a body of ideas that could be used to explain their development or lack of development.¹²⁸

The perpetuation of the idea of Europe and a eurocentric notion of Civilisation in the period after 1876 contributed and helped prepare the way intellectually for the future political development of the area into independent states in the Balkans. The difference between this area and for example overseas territories in Asia and Africa that were subject to European control was, that these areas in the Balkans could be considered as European belonging as they did to the European land mass. More importantly the Ottoman Balkans were considered as belonging historically and culturally to Europe but were ruled by an Oriental Muslim race.¹²⁹

To anti-Turks, their rule had also become anathema to their definition of European civilisation and there was no sense in which Ottoman conquest and colonisation are seen as rightful. In this anti-Turkish vision the "native possessors" of the soil were seen as the Balkan peoples who were considered to be tied to Europe by a common history and religion.¹³⁰ It was inconceivable that a European people should be subject to a non-European state and one which

¹²⁶ For older positive views see Slade (1832); St. Clair and Brophy (1866); Urquhart (1839).

¹²⁷ St. Clair and Brophy (1877 edition.). See also Kiernan (1988).

¹²⁸ Daniels (1968); Djait (1985); Hobsbawm (1989); Said (1978).

¹²⁹ See Deletante and Hanak (1988); Iorga (1927), who was one of the main promoters of this idea and the biography of him by Oldson (1973).

¹³⁰ See Thompson (1886), I for contemporary conceptualisations of this relationship and Vyonis (1967) for an historical overview of the relationship between the Byzantine empire and Europe.

was even more disagreeable because it was Muslim. There was therefore also a strong antipathy to Islam. The Empire was perceived as a Muslim empire cruelly oppressing Christians.¹³¹ In their mental depiction of distinct areas of the Ottoman Empire in Europe and in Asia even before the Congress of Berlin of 1878 writers had helped prepare the way for the ending of Ottoman rule. It was these ideas which in addition to the diplomatic reasons for supporting the emergence of new states as a better factor in stability than Ottoman rule which formed the ideological plank beneath the advancement of certain policies towards the Ottoman Empire. Perceptions constituted the projection of the idea of Europe as a cultural concept onto the area. This involved the idea that there were 'nations' in the Balkans that were European which had been submerged in the past by Ottoman imperialism, these people and these lands belonged to Europe. They were Christian and therefore part of the cultural/historical legacy of Europe and should therefore return to the European fold and be allowed to develop accordingly. The obstacle to the realisation of this idea was partly the continued existence of Ottoman rule in the area.

II. 4 The Result: The End of the Turk 'in' Europe.

In 1878 at the Congress of Berlin the Ottoman Empire in Europe was effectively ended except for a few small areas in Eastern Rumelia and Macedonia which over the course of the next thirty years would also be contested and finally lost. To the statesmen of Europe some of whom had actively worked towards this end but also amongst those that had tried to prevent it until the last moment the rule of the Ottoman had proved respectively undesirable, impractical and impossible.¹³² At Berlin Russia gained Kars and Batum in the East of the Ottoman Empire in return for ceding its more far reaching aims in Europe, Austria-Hungary gained a semi-protectorate over Bosnia, Herzegovina, France gained greater commercial freedoms in the Levant. Bulgaria and parts of Rumelia gained independence, the rest remaining under Ottoman control. The Ottomans gained little but lost a lot. Britain in addition to its gain of Cyprus and a protectorate of Anatolia for the time had secured its strategic aims of preventing Russia control in the Balkans and thus future control of the Black Sea and Mediterranean. The diplomats at the

¹³¹ For the idea of the oppressive and fanatical nature of Islam see Farley (1876); Gallenga (1877); MacColl (1876). For ideas of Islam in nineteenth-century thought see: Almond (1989); Bennet (1991).

¹³² Medlicott (1938).

in the Balkans and thus future control of the Black Sea and Mediterranean. The diplomats at the Congress felt satisfied more or less that the Eastern Question that had plagued European relations for over a century had reached some point of decision.¹³³

On a deeper level of culture and religion the vocal anti-Ottoman critics in Britain and elsewhere could also be satisfied in part. Their promotion of the idea of the Balkan Christians as distinct nations and the Turk as the curse of the Balkans had reached an end. The struggle between the Cross and the Crescent that had begun centuries before had been resolved in favour of the superior religion of Christianity. Europe could once again be united. To the imperialist the Congress of Berlin could be interpreted as the vindication of the belief in the superiority of European races over Asiatic ones represented by the dying Turk.

Both on the level of diplomacy and culture it was believed that the problem of 'Turkey in Europe' had achieved a solution. The solution formed the end of the story but the beginning lay in how over the previous decades prior to and during the Eastern crisis the Eastern question itself had come to take on these new meanings. The Eastern question was as much about culture as politics. In this sense there was an intimate relationship between the material and intellectual context. The Turk's stay in Europe was over because Europeans had decided that it was.

¹³³ Anderson (1983); Hurewitz (1975), II; Medlicott (1938).

Chapter 4 The Balkans. Peoples II: Christians

IV.1 Introduction: Christians in the Ottoman Balkans.

The question of Ottoman rule in Europe and especially Muslim rule over Christians was important in Britain. British policy in the nineteenth century had encouraged the Ottoman Government to take steps in the direction of religious equality for all its subjects, Christians and Muslims alike to promote stability in the Empire. Before the 1870s very few people in Britain were in favour of nationalism amongst the subjects of the Ottoman Empire. It was only after this time that support was given to the nationalist aims of Ottoman subjects. However, support for religious equality encouraged subjects in their demands for greater autonomy and also eventually separation from Ottoman rule.¹ This was particularly the case during the Eastern crisis of 1875, when many in Britain were supportive of nationalist demands amongst the Christian populations in the Balkans. It was largely as a result of Ottoman attempts to suppress disturbances in the Balkans in 1875-8 that the image of the Ottoman Empire as the persecutor of Christians became dominant. This became one of the most enduring paradigms about Ottoman rule which was also influential on later understandings. In addition to this negative perspective was a view that represented Ottoman rule in a positive light as stable, strong, and beneficial much better than that of preceding native rulers.² These different perspectives form the subject of the present chapter.

As a result of conquest, conversion and emigration the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman

¹ See Cunningham (1992); Davison (1963, 1990); Kedourie (1987), 9-28.

² The negative image of Ottoman rule can be found in Balkan nationalist writers and in the later writings of Western and Balkan historians alike. The more positive view was that of the Ottomans themselves, of pro-Turks abroad and later in the work of Turkish and Western Ottomanists, the Ottoman Empire was pictured as a tolerant society. Ottoman society according to this view was based generally on peaceful coexistence of different ethnic and religious groups disturbed only by the disruptive influences of Western intrigues. For the slavery thesis see: Iorga (1926); Miller (1913); Seton-Watson (1935). For the toleration thesis see: St. Clair and Brophy (1876); Hobart Pasha (1876); Inalcik (1973); Shaw and Shaw (1987), 2 Vols.

Empire were a complex mixture of ethnicities and religions.³ Amongst the non-Muslim populations were Greek and Slavic Orthodox Christians, Latin Christians (both Magyar and Slavic), Armenian Christians and Jews. Amongst the Muslim populations were Turkish, Circassian, Tartar and Muslim converts such as the Bosnian Muslims and Bulgarian Pomaks. Christians the majority population in the Balkans lived within the Ottoman Muslim state as *dhimmi*, protected peoples of the book.⁴ Ottoman Christians were never as such persecuted and amongst them certain groups such as the Phanariote Greeks stand out as a privileged group within Ottoman society.⁵ Other communities could also be found in the governing apparatus of the Empire. Christian communities occupied a position of autonomy over their civil and religious affairs within the *millet* structure and unlike their Muslim counterparts were free from the burdens of conscription.⁶ Changes in the relationship between Europe and the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century also enabled some of the Christian communities to benefit from the new and favourable conditions for trade. Extra-territoriality and the Capitulations often worked more to the advantage of Christian merchants than to their Muslim counterparts. International trade was almost exclusively a Christian preserve and in the Balkans Greek merchants were amongst the most prominent in addition to Jewish, Armenian and other Orthodox

³ The work of twentieth century Ottomanists based largely on Ottoman sources which looks at developments from within has added much to a knowledge of Christians in the Ottoman Empire. They have pointed to the specificities of nineteenth century conditions and the need to place the history of developments in the Balkans in the context of wider changes in economy and society under the impact of European economic and political supremacy which affected Ottoman development. See the essays in Braude and Lewis (1982), I; Inalcik (1973); Shaw in Jelavich and Jelavich eds (1963). See also the debate between Vuchinich, Shaw and Stoianovich in *Slavic Review* (1962).

⁴ For the population of the Balkans see: Jelavich and Jelavich (1965); McCarthy (1982); Stavrianos (1963). For the position of Christians see Braude and Lewis (1982); Davison (1963, 1992), Findley (1980); Karpas (1973).

⁵ See essay by Clogg in Braude and Lewis (1982), 185-207; Clogg ed. (1973); Papadopoulos (1952).

⁶ See Braude and Lewis, Davison and Mardin in Braude and Lewis (1982), 1-34, 319-37, 141-69.

Christians merchants.⁷

Nineteenth-century Ottoman reform, especially the reform edicts of 1839, 1856 and the Constitution of 1876-7 addressed in part the question of greater equality for Christians. These reforms were partly a consequence of European pressure, but also result of the need to respond to potential disruptive tendencies in the empire. This was particularly the case during the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 when demands were made by various peoples in the Balkans for autonomy. Despite the many and important changes in the position of Christians resulting from reform it has also been pointed out that Christians were and felt themselves to be culturally and politically isolated within the Ottoman Muslim state.⁸ In addition to political inequality there were elements within the Christian *millet*, often from the merchant classes who felt their activity hampered by poor communications and the perceived unresponsiveness of the Ottoman state to their commercial needs. Many from amongst these groups became prominent in the nationalist movements of the late nineteenth century.⁹

The nineteenth century in general witnessed the declining fortunes of the Empire and this is believed to have adversely affected the mass of the population in the Balkans, Christian and Muslim alike. Excessive taxation without corresponding economic development was an important grievance causing sporadic opposition throughout the century.¹⁰ In the late nineteenth century in particular grievances led to significant reactions against the status quo in the Balkans. Although some doubt has been cast on the nationalist nature of the first disturbances in the Balkans in the 1870s as the crisis developed nationalist elements became prominent and rebellion in some areas took on the character of a nationalist rising.¹¹ Nationalist or autonomist

⁷ For the economic position of Christians see Davison, Issawi in Braude and Lewis (1982), 261-85, 319-37, Jelavich (1983), I, 179-186; Sonyel (1991).

⁸ For Ottoman reform as it related to Christians see Davison (1963); Findley in Braude and Lewis (1982), 339-385.

⁹ For the significance of these developments see Davison in Braude and Lewis (1982), 319-37, Jelavich (1983), 171-234, Stoianovich (1960), xx, 234-313.

¹⁰ For the disturbances in Bulgaria in the 1840's see: Pinson (1975). For general developments see: Jelavich (1983).

¹¹ For the effects of economic decline on populations in the Balkans see: Inalcik (1970). For the crisis and some of the debates and issues surrounding its nationalist nature see Millman (1979).

movements were supported in part by the publics and governments of European states. They based their claim to nationhood on the idea of the existence of independent states in pre-Ottoman times, and the idea that since time immemorial 'nations' had existed in the Balkans that had been submerged by the Ottoman conquest.¹² The idea of the retrogressive and negative effect of Ottoman rule which continues to be part of twentieth century historiography dates from this time.¹³

British writings about the Balkans many of which were produced at the time of the Balkan crisis of 1875-8 represented a cross section of opinion intellectually and politically ranging from: the strongly anti-Turkish writings of prominent Churchmen and political figures who venerated the Balkan Christian whilst despising the Turk and another group of equally well known writers that disliked the Christian and admired the Turk.¹⁴ In general positive views linked the Christian peoples of the Balkans to Europe by virtue of their religion and also by race. Some writers saw the possibility of the removal of the Turk as a day of deliverance and the return of lands rightfully belonging to Europe and the Christians there. Admiration was often expressed for the simplicity of Balkan society as a peasant society. These features were often idealised. This reflected in part an older strand of romanticism, which saw 'primitive' peoples as the image of a pure childhood and of a Europe as it once was. It reflected a feeling of nostalgia for lost worlds and was similar to ideas expressed at the time of the Greek War of Independence.¹⁵

¹² For the development of nation states see Jelavich (1983); Seton-Watson (1917).

¹³ For the development of nationalist ideas and the idea of the Slavic world see: Hanak and Deletant (1988). For ideas that developed directly out of the nineteenth-century context see: Buxton and Lesse (1919); Iorga (1926, 1827); Miller (1913); Murray (1910); Seton-Watson (1933).

¹⁴ The sociological basis of pro and anti Turkish views during the Eastern crisis has been the subject of the study by Shannon (1963). In this study Shannon shows that those who were most likely to be anti-Turkish were liberal in their politics and non-conformist in their religion. On the other hand pro-Turks were most likely to be conservative in their politics, anti-Russian and high church Anglican in their religion. Whilst this thesis agrees with the basic outlines of this analysis by Shannon it also sees significance in the common language of description that underpinned both of these perspectives, which was eurocentric and increasingly intolerant in contrast to an earlier period when the Ottoman Empire had enjoyed favour in Britain. See also Wirthwein (1935).

¹⁵ For phil-Hellenism see: Dakin (1955); Webb (1982); Woodhouse (1969).

Negative views on the other hand constituted an older anti-Eastern Christian strand. These writings generally expressed a conservative perspective in that subject peoples were given much less sympathy than their rulers and a strong imperial rule by the Ottomans was favoured. Often both Turks and Christians were represented as non-European and inferior. The extreme version of this view perceived the Balkan Christian as the worst type of primitive being, cringing, servile and superstitious and incapable of ruling himself. Positive and negative perceptions belonged in part to a liberal and conservative tradition respectively, but in both sets of views there was a strong element of racial stereotyping and a dichotomy was posited between 'progressive' and 'unprogressive' races.¹⁶ Both negative and positive views shared a common language of description which was eurocentric in nature.

The previous chapter showed how in views of the Turk in the Balkans the notion of European and non-European was significant. Classification of the area by religious creed and race was central to perceptions and the populations were differentiated from one another and often seen as constituting a series of nations or separate peoples with their own distinct characteristics different from the Turk. This chapter supplements the previous chapter about the Turk by looking at the genesis of these important and influential ideas about Balkan Christians, which involved similar ideas about progress, Civilisation, race and culture. These notions defined the parameters of understanding of events in the Ottoman Balkans. This chapter focuses on the ways in which older ideas about the nature of Islam, Turkish rule, the position of Christians in an Islamic state and Eastern Christians were reframed in a new context of racial and imperial thought.

VI.2.1 Race, Religion and the Redemption of Europe: A Modern Crusade against the Turk.

Intellectual interest in the peoples of the Ottoman Empire before the nineteenth century was limited. In general there was greater interest in the institutions of Ottoman government.¹⁷ Interest

¹⁶ See Shannon (1963), 147-238, which explores the complicated fault lines of views and Kiernan (1988).

¹⁷ For views before the nineteenth-century see: De Busbecq (1633); Montague (1763), 3 Vols. For historical overviews of the subject of pre-nineteenth-century images and ideas about the Ottomans see Cole (1968), 145-53; Rose (1937); Schwoebel (1967); Shaw and Heywood (1972); Vaughan (1957).

in the peoples of the Ottoman Empire was partly the result of the more general diplomatic interest created by the Russian claim in the Treaty of Kucuk Kaynarca of 1776 to be the protector of Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. This signified the beginnings of a pattern of diplomacy which came to characterise the nineteenth century in which European states established relationships with Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire. This diplomatic focus helped to create general attention on Christians as particular groups or communities within Ottoman society.¹⁸ Interest in the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire was also the product of intellectual changes in Europe stemming from the French Revolution of 1789 which helped to create the modern idea of nationalism that became a major feature of nineteenth-century European history, spreading eventually to other parts of the world.¹⁹

This new interest in the subjects of the Ottoman Empire was first seen during the Greek war of independence 1821-31. Interest was partly the product of romanticism and the revival of interest in Greece which had developed since the late eighteenth century.²⁰ Support for the Greeks was expressed in the language of 'West' versus 'East' or 'civilisation' versus 'barbarism'. More important still was the idea of Greece and what it represented for Western civilisation. The negative image of the Ottoman Empire produced by Phil-Hellenism did not succeed in becoming the dominant image of the Ottoman Empire.²¹ During the next forty years between the Greek war of independence and the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 interest in Ottoman Christians was not continuous. It arose sporadically at the time of the crisis, for example in Syria and the Lebanon in the 1860s. In general these events did not excite the interest or imagination of large sections

¹⁸ For diplomatic aspects see: Anderson (1983); Brown (1984); Davison (1976); Ingram (1979). For nationalism see Haddad and Oschenwald (1977); Hobsbawm (1991); Kohn (1936); Rustow in Kiraly (Ed) (1979); Seton-Watson (1917)

¹⁹ For the effects of the French Revolution and its contribution to nationalist thought see: Hobsbawm (1991)

²⁰ For the revival of interest in Greece, the Greek War and Phil-Hellenism see: Angelomatis-Tsougarakis (1990); Constantine (1984); Clogg Ed. (1973); Crawley (1930); Cust Webb (1982); Woodhouse (1952).

²¹ For Phil-Hellenism and the idea of Greece see: Angelomatis-Tsougarakis (1990), which shows the mixed reaction towards Greece in comparison to preconceived ideas about Greece; Bernal (1988), I; Dakin (1955); Woodhouse (1969), who shows how phil-Hellenism dissipated after the war.

of the public of Britain or other European countries.²² These areas were further away geographically and also further away in the imagination to cause a public outcry. Interest and support for Christians was submerged beneath the policy of support for the Ottoman Empire against the threat of Russian expansion.²³

In the 1870s interest in Balkan Christians was produced by a combination of factors of which the development of Pan-Slavism and its influence in European countries was one factor.²⁴ Interest in the Slavs was however a minority concern and when the Eastern crisis broke out in 1875 interest and support had to be created. This was skilfully engineered by committed anti-Turks such as J. F. Farley, E. A. Freeman and the well known visitors to the Balkans, A. Irby and G. M. Mackenzie to arouse support for Balkan Christians.²⁵ News of the 'persecution' of Christians in the Ottoman Empire had a captive audience in Britain coinciding as it did with the revival of a morally earnest brand of evangelical religion. From 1875 a movement of agitation against Ottoman rule developed which drew on these resources and expressed indignation at the alleged massacre of Bulgarians in 1876.²⁶

The negative perceptions which developed out of this crisis were based on a religious dichotomy between East and West. In this sense they continued an older strand of thought in the West. A modern form of crusading language developed based not only on an old Christian/Islamic antagonism, but also on cultural and racial prejudice. These dichotomies between an uncivilised East as represented by the Ottoman Turks and a civilised West, which included the Balkan Christians continued older forms of thought that were essential to the

²² For the crisis in Syria and Damsacus see Fawaz (1994).

²³ For this policy of support and the influence of anti-Russian feeling see: Gleason (1950, 1972), on the genesis of Russophobia; Kingsley Martin (1963), on public opinion at the time of the Crimean War; Shannon (1963), who claims that the Turks had the support of an oppressed peoples against Russian aggression; Temperley (1964), for British policy in the Near East.

²⁴ For Pan-Slavism see: Jelavich (1958); Mackenzie (1967).

²⁵ On Pan-slavism see Kohn (1952); Mackenzie (1967). On the intellectual antecedents to Balkan nationalism see Stavrianos (1957). For the development of interest see: Vaughan (1968).

²⁶ For the nature of religion in this period see: Chapter I. 3 and Bradley (1976); Hyam (1976), 37-52. For the development of the agitation movement see: Shannon (1963), 1-88; Vaughan (1968), 3-22.

Western self image reframed in a new context. This meant that the understanding of the Balkans was not only that Christians were living under Muslim rule, but also that they were European races living under non-European rule. These Christians according to the historian E. A. Freeman were undergoing the "martyrdom of ages" and were "enslaved nations struggling to be free" from the "empire of Sodom".²⁷ In the 1870s at a new historical conjuncture of European imperialism writings combined not only religious imagery but also racial ideas about unprogressive and progressive races represented by the Turk and Christian respectively. Religion was thus intimately linked to a racial and imperialist discourse even amongst people of liberal sympathy who formally set themselves against the idea of empire. Ideas about the Balkans, the Turks and Christians were also influenced by a certain reading of history between the Ottoman Empire and Europe which was given a new significance. One of the main ideas which emerged about Balkan Christians was that they were saviours of European civilisation. The modern role of these Christians was seen as the redemption of Europe from the influence of the Muslim Turk, which was a role they had performed in the past. Balkan Christians were considered to have acted as a safeguard for the West in the past. It was perceived as a duty to support them in their present struggle to liberate themselves from the tyranny of the Turk who had been immorally supported by Europe.²⁸ According to the pro-Slavic writer A. J. Evans Balkan Christians represented "a wall of human flesh and blood" which had "surrounded and protected our Western civilisation". They had performed a service to the more civilised Greek, Romance, and Teutonic peoples as "buffers" who had "broken the collision with barbarism" and had borne the brunt of Ottoman conquest.²⁹ The Eastern question was defined as the "deliverance of the East" from the Turk.³⁰

²⁷ Freeman in Proceedings (1876), 76.

²⁸ See Gladstone (1878), who wrote of the Montenegrins that "Christendom does not know its most extraordinary people", to whom he wants to render tribute, stood firm and faced with great courage the alternatives of "death, slavery, the koran."

²⁹ Evans (1878), 11-12, 18-19. Evans also remarks on the service they performed in keeping out Roman Catholicism from Europe, a typically Protestant view shared by others writers.

³⁰ Evans (1878). See also Freeman (1877a, b), who versed in the history of Western civilisation presents this struggle as the rightful gaining back of the Western heritage based on Greece and Rome, perverted by the presence of the alien Turk in Europe. For the nature of enthusiasm for Balkan Christians see Anderson (1968).

The idea that the Balkan peoples had performed a service to Western Europe by halting an Asiatic advance and had been submerged was one of the most important themes in anti-Turkish writings. It showed the way in which religion, race and generalised notions about civilisation were brought together in representations of the Balkans. The above perceptions contained many common elements about the Balkan provinces amongst which were: The idea that these Christians were really Europeans, whose history had been perverted by 'Asiatic' barbarians, the idea that they were the native possessors of the soil, the idea that they were fundamentally different to the surrounding Muslim populations who were either pictured as conquerors or deliberately planted people.³¹ The concluding theme was that the future of the Balkans was seen to lie with Christian peoples whose day of deliverance appeared near. Freeman expressed this in the following way as

"the beginning of the uprising of a mighty people. It was plain that a ball had been sent rolling which would grow as it rolled; ...which must in the end sweep before it the foul fabric of oppression which European diplomatists had been so long vainly and wickedly striving to prop up."³²

The image of the Ottoman Empire as a religious adversary and of the Eastern question of 1875-8 as a struggle between Cross and Crescent was thus one of the most important images to develop out of the Eastern crisis.³³ As the Reverend J. L. Davis, one of the agitators against Ottoman rule in the Balkans during the Eastern crisis expressed it, Balkan Christians were "struggling fellow Christians" and humanity felt itself outraged as "Christians of these provinces lead lives continually exposed to insults, wrongs and outrages".³⁴ The dominant image of the Ottoman Empire was as the persecutor of Christians. Some commentators saw Russia as the liberator of

³¹ See Christitch (1876), I, 166 who sees the policy of settlement of Circassians and Tartars in Europe as a deliberate attempt to "reinforce the Mussulman element in Europe". The question is seen entirely as an issue of Islam versus Christianity.

³² Freeman in FR (1876), xxvi, 409.

³³ As evident to contemporaries critics and supporters alike. See Harrison (1876); Thompson (1886), I.

³⁴ Davis (1876), 3-6. This essay *The Religious Aspects of the Eastern Question* was reprinted in 1877.

oppressed Slavic Christians and this belief inspired them in a sort of crusade against the Turk in the Balkans which was a moral, religious and racial crusade combined.³⁵

IV.2.2 Europe's lost Christians: The Creation of 'Le Monde Slave'.

Perceptions of Balkan peoples was about the creation of images of 'them' and 'us' based on visions of what the Ottoman Empire was believed to represent or should represent. Positive perceptions of Balkan Christians represented a search for a Europe and a lost European peoples who writers believed had been obliterated by Ottoman rule, but whose day of deliverance was near. On this day these 'European' people could be returned to the fold of Christian Europe and restored to European civilisation. An essential part of the positive representation of Christians lay in the construction of the image of a Slavic world that was different to and superior to that of the Turks in every way. The Balkan peoples were represented as a distinct people with a history, traditions and culture of their own, different and apart from that of the Turk.³⁶

In the depiction of subject populations each writer had his favoured subject population: Bulgarians (Baker), Serbians (Evans), Montenegrins (Gladstone), Greeks (Eliot), or Christians in general.³⁷ Descriptions of them ranged from idealised pictures of virtuous peasants in a simply organised communistic society to pictures of thrifty peasants, who valued labour, education, who were of pure morals, respected the family and were good Christians (despite being of the Eastern Church) and whose virtues were the absolute opposite of the vices of the Turks. These characterisations were influenced by values deemed important in Victorian society, for example the emphasis on the thrift of peasants and their capacity for hard work with an apparent eye on the future benefits of their labour appeared as a mirror image of Victorian culture itself and the values that it represented.³⁸

The Slavic races especially were the focus of interest and attention and an image of a

³⁵ For British diplomacy see: Hoskins (1966); Millman (1979). For Russian diplomacy see: Sumner (1962). For the idea of Crusade as an element of perceptions see the contemporary Thompson (1886), I.

³⁶ For this notion of the Slavic world see Hanak and Deletant (1988) and also Iorga (1926).

³⁷ See bibliography for references to individual authors.

³⁸ For Victorian society see: Briggs (1959); Houghton (1957); Young (1957).

Slavic world with a strong sense of difference and common identity from the Turk was constructed.³⁹ Slavic society was venerated by these writers as a primitive form of social organisation. Christians were pictured in ideal terms. Evans spoke of the lack of individualism in Slavic society which was both its strength and its weakness. More important than its weaknesses was the "cooperation of labour...a certain love of justice" which was inherent in a "free society" such as that of the Slavs.⁴⁰ Montenegrins were admired for their simplicity and purity and particularly because they "have no army; they are themselves a standing army. They go to war with the same zest that an English schoolboy takes to cricket" and their hatred of the Turk was justifiable. The Montenegrins according to one writer's preference were the "flower and aristocracy of the Slav race" and the "antithesis of the Bulgarians" who were peasants. The Montenegrin was a "gentleman" and the people a warrior people. Nevertheless as one commentator pointed out, "No writer upon Eastern peoples can omit all reference to the deeply superstitious side of their nature both Christian and Mohammedan." However, unlike the superstitions of the Turk the superstitions of Balkan Christians were generally forgiven and were represented as endearing features of a simple society.⁴¹ To Evans, for example there was a grandeur and beauty in Slavic superstition. The doleful songs of the people expressed their character and their primitive nature and family relations were "a survival of the old Slavonic family life" which was nearer to "our idea of home".⁴² Gladstone likewise venerated these small noble states like Montenegro which he called the "bishop led community, which held fast its oasis of Christianity and freedom amidst the dry and boundless desert of Ottoman domination."⁴³

³⁹ Evans (1878), 6, in which he sets up a contrast between Slavic traditions of freedom and Turkish despotism.

⁴⁰ Although writers like Evans are generally admiring of the simple forms of Slavic society, they are also critical of it for being unable to prevent anarchy or despotism. See Evans (1878), 8-11.

⁴¹ Minchin (1886) 17, 146, which is an historical sketch of the sufferings of Balkan Christians under the rule of the Turk.

⁴² Evans (1876), 133.

⁴³ Gladstone (1877a), 364. He reminded his readers of the greatness of these little states such as Athens which "instructed all posterity." Montenegro for him equalled the success of Athens if not more so as its enemies were fiercer and they had the additional enemy from within i. e. those who collaborated with the Turk, 372.

Gladstone's lionisation of the Montenegrins was typical amongst pro-Christian writers whether it was the Bulgarians, Serbs, or other populations and the common enemy was always the Turk. He said of the Montenegrins:

"This is the race which, when asked for tribute, offered stones;...whose women freely grasp the rifle in the hour of need; yet whose men of war weep like women for the dead prince they love; and whose fathers in 1484 carried the printing press with them to the mountains."⁴⁴

Gladstone venerated small states and represented the Montenegrins as model Christian fighters against the evil Muslim Turk. The comparison with Greek City states was never far from his mind. Gladstone, like Evans presented a picture of the purity of Christian family life and spoke of the general attachment to the family by both sexes. The implicit and often explicit comparison to this picture of purity was the image of Turkish depravity represented by the licentiousness and impurity of the harem, a theme that was touched upon in the previous chapter.⁴⁵

The Bulgarians, who were one of the main foci of attention during the Eastern crisis were likewise pictured as simple peoples, good cultivators and innocents against their Turkish rulers. As one writer stated it, "All who know the Bulgarians are unanimous in praise of his peaceful virtues, his good natured readiness to oblige, his assiduity in labour and his extreme frugality".⁴⁶ The effect of the Turk on these simple communistic societies was commonly represented in the following way,

"Even where the Bulgarian cultivates the land it yet seems a desert of verdure, a poetic desert in which one would willingly pass years among those simple men, studying their ways...and living with them that primitive life which has disappeared from the rest of Europe."⁴⁷

The Bulgarians according to the traveller Baker were "prosperous, peaceful, and contented, and

⁴⁴ Gladstone (1877a), 363. For Gladstone's veneration of Greece see: Shannon (1963). For the Victorians and Greece in the nineteenth-century see: Jenkins (1980).

⁴⁵ Other writers set up a picture of the purity of Balkan family life in contrast to the depravity of the Turkish, generally seen as the harem, a den of vice. See MacColl (1876); Gallenga (1878). I.

⁴⁶ Robert (1877), 459. See also Millet (1878), 488.

⁴⁷ Robert (1877), 464.

their whole thoughts were concentrated upon education and progress".⁴⁸

Herzegovinan and Bosnian society were generally less liked than other areas because of the influence of Islam through native converts.⁴⁹ Bosniacs according to Evans were lacking in all aspects of culture, and had none of the "surviving polish of an older civilisation". There was a "want of politeness and that ungenerous vice of mean spirits, ingratitude are simply astounding". However, they too had preserved a "democratic genius" which was part of a "mind common to the whole Serbian" and common to "primitive social relatives". His interpretation of the Eastern crisis was that "In the Slavonic provinces of Turkey the choice ultimately lies between despotism and a democracy almost socialistic".⁵⁰

To these writers the Slavic world represented a kind of innocence and purity in contrast to Western Europe and of course to Turkish society presented as its diametric opposite. Evans pointed to the spontaneous patriotism and enthusiasm of Balkan Christians and the lack of social and racial divisions in contrast to the West. The Montenegrins he said had a degree of uniformity and one faith in religion and one aim in politics. Their national enthusiasm was "spontaneous, universal, irresistible carrying all before it like a mighty wind". Balkan Christians were portrayed as a people with a strong sense of nationality as a result of their suffering. One writer spoke of their

"hardness of character, prowess of sentiment, and apathy of heart, even the love of drink will pass away like morning clouds and the nation will shine out, refined by education, clothed with the greatest sweetness, unselfishness, generosity and keener intelligence which always accompanies

⁴⁸ Baker (1877), 64. Based on travels in the early 1870s, republished several times during the Eastern crisis, see bibliography. See also Millet (1878), 488, where he writes that the general features of the Bulgarian population are "language, religion, industry and frugality".

⁴⁹ For perceptions of Bosnia and other areas with substantial Muslim populations see Evans (1877), xc-xciii, where he describes how some Bosnians converted in order to save their lands which created the "extraordinary spectacle of Slavonic Mahometans" and considers it the "headquarters of Mahometan fanaticism", xciii. See also Edwards (1876).

⁵⁰ Evans (1877), 312. See also Freeman (1877a, b). Writers often expressed the belief that Bosnian and Bulgarian Muslims, the ancestors of converts in previous centuries, were really Christians who would willingly reconvert to Christianity. See Baker (1877).

true civilisation."⁵¹

Balkan Christians were idealised in many accounts. Evans wrote of South Slavonian types as "dirty but magnificent".⁵² They were seen to have the characteristics of 'true civilisation' in contrast to the Turk. They were simple peasant communities who had retained their religion and any negative features they possessed were blamed on the Turk or the influence of Islam. A romantic tone was evident in evocative descriptions such as those of Evans who said that he felt himself to be in a "Younger world", a world which was the "paradise of imaginative minds", amidst the simplicity and beauty of Slavic songs.⁵³ Balkan Christians represented a redemptive force through their simplicity and were considered as the races of the future, the 'rising progressive' element, in contrast to the declining and decadent Turk.

IV.2.3 The 'Coming of the Slav': The 'Progressive Races' of the Ottoman Balkans.⁵⁴

One of the most significant ideas about Balkan Christians was that they represented a rising and progressive race. This was an idea based not only on the belief in numerical increase amongst the Christian population, but also on the idea of their capacities as a race.⁵⁵ A picture of rising and declining races in which the Christian peoples were the progressive element in contrast to the Turk who was declining in numbers, in morality and who would eventually die and pass away was constructed.⁵⁶ The dominant perception was that Christians although "degraded" under the "despotism" of Ottoman rule "possess the elements of social advancement," and "it is well

⁵¹ Strangford (1877), 26, who otherwise saw the Turks as more capable of ruling than the Balkan Christians.

⁵² Evans (1876), 77.

⁵³ Evans (1877), 77. According to Evans the Slavic contribution to civilisation was that of a simple society which would give to Europe the simplicity and beauty so evident in their 'doleful' songs which had preserved their identity through the years of bondage.

⁵⁴ Washburn (1898), whose title was 'The coming of the slav' which was suggestive of the idea.

⁵⁵ For population in the Balkans see McCarthy (1982).

⁵⁶ See MacColl (1877a), 27, who mentions the numerical superiority and "industry and thrift" of Balkan Christians in contrast to their oppressors who were only "units among thousands" and who "retard" the movement of the mass.

known that the Christian populations have been increasing while the Turks have been for ages diminishing".⁵⁷

As with racial classification of the Turk explored in chapter three most of these views were influenced by generalised schema of races taken originally from the sciences of Ethnology and Anthropology.⁵⁸ Like Turks, Balkan Christians conformed to types which according to one writer were derivative of European races.⁵⁹ Evans in his book *The Slavs and European Civilisation* presented the Slavs as European cousins from a long past of which there were still traces in the language. Of the Slavs he wrote "speaking generally they are behind the other European nations, Teutonic and Romance in Civilisation and social and political development" but not incapable of improvement. Amongst them "the most powerful representatives of the race are the Russians, the most cultivated the Bohemians, the most heroic the Montenegrins."⁶⁰ Campbell spoke of the Bulgarians as "an increasing people and if the Turks are decreasing the Bulgarians are quite taking their place".⁶¹

The progressive nature of Christians was demonstrated by their economic role in the Ottoman Empire. Turks were said to be dependent on the work of Christians and all useful work was done by Greeks and Armenians and Jews "who are as indispensable as they are despised", "superior as they are in ability".⁶² The Greeks were clearly one of the progressive races and had prevented their own servitude under the Turk by their superior intelligence.

⁵⁷ Nationhood was seen as natural and inevitable amongst Christians. See Millet (1878), 482 where he speaks of the natural creation of the state of Bulgaria and its separation from the "mistaken rule of Mahomet". He sees this as a natural process in which "the forces at work in the great scheme of modern civilisation give as logical results as the laws of the solar system."

⁵⁸ See Burrows (1963); Hyam (1976).

⁵⁹ Baker (1877), 23, claims "I have a Bulgarian in my own employ who might be taken as an original of the illustration of a male Finn in Prichard's work on the natural history of man."

⁶⁰ Evans (1878), 6. Their historical role is conceived in the following way; they have "borne the brunt of the continual assaults of Asiatic barbarism".

⁶¹ Campbell (1876), 72. See also Millet (1878), 488, who argued that racial differences between Balkan peoples were determined by latitude.

⁶² Barkley (1877). See also Gallenga (1877), I.

"The Turks kept their supremacy by force and degenerated in the abundance of their success. The Greeks keep their supremacy by the quality of their natural gifts and acquirements, and a condition of their existence is progress."⁶³

Balkan Christians were represented positively as the population that possessed the commercial skills. They were "stirring and energetic", unlike the "do-nothing and lazy Turk" and the empire was represented as based on Christian enterprise.⁶⁴ It was enough explanation to speak of inherent capacity on account of race and religion. The Turk in this view could not and would not use the superior abilities of the Christians.⁶⁵ The Turks it was argued should give way to the Christians who were "more progressive, more laborious, more commercial, more industrious, and more economical".⁶⁶

Examples of Christian prosperity were not considered to be the product of Ottoman tolerance or even of Ottoman weakness. Rather they were presented as the result of inherent racial and religious attributes of Christian populations. There was an element of idealisation of the Balkan peasantry, who had endured their bondage for so long and preserved their faith. MacColl, for example who agreed with other writers that the Bulgarian peasant was prosperous also explained that this was not due to the Turks, but

"It is on the contrary, an additional proof, in so far as it exists of the withering blight which has ever marked the rule of the Turk. In proportion as his influence diminishes, the prosperity of the

⁶³ Millet (1878), 494.

⁶⁴ Barkley (1877), 34, see also 175. For debates surrounding the respective economic positions of Christians and Muslims see: Jelavich (1983), 179-86 and Sonyel (1991). For the effects of European capitalism on the Ottoman Empire in general see Owen (1981); Pamuk (1987).

⁶⁵ See Washburn (1878), who speaks of the jealousy of the Turk and Chapter Three. See also Baker (1877), 36-7 who discusses the educational progress of Christians at Robert College, the American Missionary School for Christians in the empire. He is prepared to give the Ottomans some credit as they sanctioned this education but is more interested to recount the Bulgarian goal which of self improvement and Campbell (1876).

⁶⁶ Even the writer H. C. Barkley who is generally contemptuous of Christians and Muslims alike adhered to this notion of the rise and decline of a races. The Bulgarians for example are "a steady, quiet, hardworking set of people, patient and unresisting under the Turkish yoke, but at the same time not cringing or servile like their brother Christians the Greeks and Armenians." Barkley (1877), 175.

subject races increases."⁶⁷

The Bulgarian peasant was portrayed as industrious and thrifty, characteristics which were admired by many in Victorian England. Despite what writers portrayed as the general backwardness of the Balkans the conclusion they drew was that "All over the country are plainly visible the signs of the slow decline of one race and the equally slow but persistent progress of the other". The lesson according to the journalist and traveller Millet was that the Turks in Bulgaria shared the fate of North American Indians in the face of these 'progressive' Christian races.⁶⁸

Balkan Christians were also considered superior to the Turk because unlike the latter they had a cultural heritage.⁶⁹ Reflecting the general love of things Greek common to nineteenth-century ideas, the Greeks were admired for their culture, their historical associations with Ancient Greece, and their commercial spirit. The Greeks were one of the "intelligent and money making races of the world". Greeks in the Empire were held up as symbols of the progress possible when the Turk had gone. They had a

"Pride of race and devoted patriotic sentiment keep alive their enthusiasm in the latter occupation (trade), as love of gain and the excitement of trade make them enterprising merchants."⁷⁰

Writers spoke of the rich and continuous literary tradition of the Greeks since the times of

⁶⁷ MacColl (1877b), 837. MacColl also mentioned that the rosy picture of prosperity concealed the "the dreaded tithe collector", and "his brutal retainers". See also Millet (1878), 487, who noted that the Bulgarians although debased had the attributes of a "progressive people". According to him the important point was, that the Bulgarian was a property holder, the "starting point for the development of the model citizen."

⁶⁸ Millet (1878), 488-90.

⁶⁹ See Gallenga (1877), 2 Volumes, who argued that Ottoman culture was the result of Arab and Persian and not Turkish influence. The Ottomans as a people were as shown in the previous chapter seen as culturally lacking. For the importance of Greece in Victorian culture see Bernal (1987); Clarke (1945, 1959), Jenkyns (1980).

⁷⁰ Millet (1878), 494, who admired the Greeks and saw them as superior not only to the Turk but also to the Bulgarian. The Greeks had a "finer wit" proved by their role in the highest offices of Ottoman Government. See also Eliot (1908), 302-4, on the Hellenic charm of Greek islands "untrodden by the Turkish foot".

Ottoman conquest of the fifteenth century and this was contrasted to the lack of civilisation of the Turk or Oriental in general. Other Balkan Christians were admired for their folk culture and also their educational achievements.⁷¹

This idea of the progressiveness of Balkan Christians continued to be influential in later years and came to form one of the main planks of Balkan nationalist ideology.⁷² After the establishment of independent states in the Balkans writers echoed these themes, only then they spoke of the self evident better position of these peoples freed from Turkish rule. H. O. Foster in an article entitled *The Balkan provinces in 1883* spoke of the "enormous value of such a wholesale emancipation as this", which had enabled Christians to fall in line with the "civilisation of Europe". He also spoke as many others did of the inevitability of this process.⁷³

IV.2.4 'Four Hundred Years of Slavery': The Idea of the Submergence of Balkan Nations.

The idea of the unity of Balkan Christian society and the Christians as a progressive race was expressed by the notion of 'four hundred years of slavery' of the Balkan peoples under Ottoman rule. This idea was based on the belief that there were peoples in the Balkans who by race, religion, custom and history were separate nations. The Ottoman Empire was represented as a society composed of peoples who were 'nations' who had been submerged for centuries. This image of perpetual slavery, Ottoman oppression of Christians and of Christians as separate nations in the Ottoman Empire was produced by certain notions about race, Civilisation and religion. It was also an image linked to a particular policy and ideological perspective on the Balkans. Balkan Christians were regarded as European and Christian from which flowed the accompanying belief that they were 'progressive' according to European standards and definitions. As an article from the *Liberal Fortnightly Review* expressed it,

"The principle of nationalities is an immense and incalculable force, which the politicians of the old school vainly persist in ignoring. Like all ideas that have their root in the heart of masses, this force is indestructible, and grows and spreads in the midst of reserves."

⁷¹ For the theme of the cultureless Turk see Chapter Three and Baker (1877); Campbell (1876).

⁷² See Christitch (1876), I, II; Clarke (1971); Zancov and Balabanov (1876).

⁷³ Foster (1884), 404.

The author argued that there was an inevitability about the realisation of nationalism in the Balkans because the Turk could not assimilate the people and the people were becoming "more numerous, richer and better organised" and "Thus the progress of civilisation must work against the Turks and in favour of their subjects". The 'progress of civilisation' was considered as an inevitable law of nations according to this perspective. It was the determinant of the rise and fall of races and for this writer the Christian had History on his side.⁷⁴

As a result of this pro-nationalist context evident in the interest in Slavic peoples of writers like A. J. Evans the idea which emerged was that the Balkan Christians were 'nations struggling to be free'. They were nations that had been submerged by Ottoman conquest in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries whose day of deliverance was now at hand. This was the underlying idea whether this was couched in a religious language of crusade or in a more secular language of liberalism and its moral and political objections to what was seen as a despotic and oppressive rule. Balkan Christians had become a cause, partly humanitarian, partly political but also religious and racial. Ideas which developed at the time of the Balkan crisis in 1875-6 and after showed the importance of the idea of the nation state as the desired form of government and also the eurocentric nature of this belief. It was because these Christians were also 'European' that qualified them and made them capable of nationhood in a way that the Turk was not eligible. As one writer in a leading periodical stated it

"the idea of nationality, like a religious faith is stimulated by adversity. Whatever happens today the future belongs to the Slavs. That is the capital fact of which we must never lose sight."⁷⁵

According to the same writer the Eastern Question was really a question of nationalism.

From this idea that Balkan Christians were nations stemmed the accompanying belief that they had always been nations, which had been suppressed by the Ottoman conquest. The nineteenth-century idea of nation states was thus projected backwards in time to emphasise the idea of the submergence of Balkan nations. The Turks, it was argued had been incapable of absorbing peoples, unlike the Greek and Roman Empires and as a result "every country since

⁷⁴ Fortnightly Review (1876), xxi, 263.

⁷⁵ Fortnightly Review (1876), xxvi, 396.

1453 has widened the gulf between it and the Christians".⁷⁶ Some writers saw Balkan history as a religious struggle and other writers as a racial struggle between European and Eastern races. The history of the Balkans was represented as a struggle between opposing forces, between Christianity and Islam and between the forces of darkness and lightness, this time between progress and lack of progress as represented by the Christians and the Turks respectively. As the writer Sir Edwin Pears an important critic of Ottoman rule expressed it,

"The Slavic and Teutonic as well as the Greek and Latin races had been developing for centuries unchecked by any external influence in the direction of human progress which we understand by the word 'civilisation'"⁷⁷

This movement in the direction of Civilisation had been checked by the Ottoman conquest, but despite this submergence religion "has aided them [the Balkan Christians] to develop the morality, the habits, and customs, the thoughts and ideals, which are comprehended in the modern conception of civilisation".⁷⁸ Christians were submerged but they remained European and retained their faith. It was these factors that were important to Victorian writers.

Commentators thus spoke of Serbians, Bulgarians, Bosnians, Montenegrins as distinct peoples united by their religion and Europeaness. They were a people linked to Europe unlike the Turk who was a mere intruder. As MacColl wrote of the Ottoman conquest, it was "the intrusion into this Christian area of a foreign force, with a different morality, and with a tendency hostile to the habits, customs and aspirations which it encountered."⁷⁹ Balkan Christians were considered part of the European family. Pears wrote that "for upwards of six hundred years they [Bulgarians] had disappeared from the European family" and were "trodden down under the iron

⁷⁶ Pears (1903), 416.

⁷⁷ Pears (1903), 414. Pears was a Lawyer working in the Ottoman Empire for many years and wrote many books and articles on the Eastern Question and Ottoman Empire both historical and contemporary (see bibliography). At the time of the Bulgarian massacres he was correspondent for the Daily News and played an important role in the dissemination of information about events in Bulgaria in 1876.. He remained a vehement critic of the Ottoman Empire and especially of AbdülHamid. For his role in the Eastern crisis see: Shannon (1963); Wirthwein (1938).

⁷⁸ Pears (1903), 414.

⁷⁹ Pears (1903), 414. See also Evans (1876) where he speaks about the language difference that divides the rulers from the ruled.

heel of their brutal conquerors", without rights, property and honour, they had become "ignorant rayahs" but nonetheless "as if to show how indestructible is the element of nationality, they are resuscitated, a vigorous people".⁸⁰

The conflict in the Balkans in 1875-8 was seen as a conflict between Christianity and Islam represented in its most brutal form by the Turks. One writer spoke of the fate of "befallen Christian fathers and mothers from the frenzied brutalization of the Moslem population". The image was of an heroic Christian effort to save itself in the face of Muslim oppression. Instead of these areas profiting from the "blessings of European civilisation" they had been "hid in Mahomedan darkness" which prevented any communication and to support this rule was to go against the "enlightenment of the age" and against Christianity.

In order to show that the Ottoman Empire has always been like this writers produced detailed historical descriptions of the Ottoman Empire to show the long standing abuses of the government (also described as the "Turkish occupation") such as abuses in the collection of taxation. Ottoman rule according to the Reverend M. MacColl

"gives up the Christians life to the Ottoman murderer, the Christians chastity to the Ottomans lust, and the Christians religion to the Ottoman's bigotry, and the Christians property to the Ottoman's greed."⁸¹

In relation to the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 Farley stated that areas "even recently covered with flourishing villages and occupied by industrious inhabitants" had become wastelands of slaughtered children and men.⁸² It was an image of intolerance and oppression explained as the result of Turkish religion and the unnatural nature of the empire described by one writer as "a misshapen agglomeration of races without cohesion, with mingled interests, without a language, without laws, without religion...unity, stability of power".⁸³ To anti-Turkish writers the Bulgarian massacres of 1876 deserved the sympathy of Britain with the "wrongs of Christian races under

⁸⁰ See also Edwards (1876), 46, in which he argues that the modern history of the Slavs has been that of the struggle with the Turk.

⁸¹ MacColl (1877), 147.

⁸² Farley (1876), 130-131 and also 144, 5 for a picture of oppression in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁸³ Richards (1877), 5.

an alien domination". The Ottoman Empire was for these writers, "full of the horrors of 400 years".⁸⁴

IV.2.5 The Effect of the Turk.

Previous chapters have discussed the idea of the regressive effect of the Turk on the economic and political development of the Balkans. In addition the Turk was blamed for his apparent negative effect on the populations. The reasons that Evans and writers like him gave for Balkan Christian backwardness were the Turk or Turkish influence which was almost always represented as negative. Writers wrote about the effect of the Turk on the peoples and what they saw as the deleterious effects of proximity to Eastern culture. In addition by presenting a picture of how the Slavs had retained their traditions and customs this was used to justify their separation from Ottoman rule. Racial or religious explanations were used to explain what was perceived as the inevitable conflict between Christians and their Ottoman Muslim rulers. Few writers accorded any praise to the nature of Ottoman social organisation, which from another point of view was the reason why the Slavs had been able to keep their own forms and traditions of social organisation. Few writers sought to contextualise the conflict of 1875-8 and see it as short term in origin and economic in nature.

Some writers argued that Ottoman rule had made Balkan Christians incapable of self Government and they therefore required an "enlightened autocracy" either by Turkey under European supervision or quasi-independent feudatory states supervised by Europe and some advocated the model of Lebanon. Other writers disagreed that the area was not capable of self government despite what the Ottomans were believed to have done. They cited the example of areas that have been freed from the Turk such as Serbia and Greece and the great advancement that these areas had made once freed from the blighting influence of the Turk. Other writers saw the populations as weak as a result of Ottoman rule and it was common to blame any negative characteristics on this. The Christian subject it was said had been robbed of his money and was in a degraded position and as a result of this populations like the Bulgarians,

"have neither the bold determination of their neighbours the Servians nor the spirit of enterprise,

⁸⁴ See also the views of the participants of the Eastern Question Meeting in 1876, Proceedings (1876).

combination and fiery valour of the Greeks; they more resemble the serf of Russia a machine guided at the will of the engineer."⁸⁵

The Ottoman Empire was represented as a barbaric state in which the "Turkish system of Government is based upon slavery and the slave trade" such as the *Yeniceri* and other "habits of barbarism".⁸⁶ Turkish rule according to the Bishop of Oxford was as it had always been, "for four hundred years the Turkish dependency was the fervour of the Mediterranean and the scourge of European commerce. It never changed. Turkish policy never does change"⁸⁷ It was always an "army of occupation", and "instead of changing its character as other conquering races have done, instead of amalgamating itself with other countries it has ruled, it remains an army of occupation still", an army of oppression, a tax oppression, a rule of sexual depravity. Christian and sufferer were synonymous terms in this common view.⁸⁸ The general perception was that the Turk was able to stay in power for a limited time only and that his retreat was inevitable in the face of stronger nations. Turks were "capable of only retarding, not stopping the progress of the Christian population in knowledge and general prosperity". The minority rule of the Turk could only "embitter the existence of the general mass" which "moves on". MacColl's picture like that of other writers was a picture of an unstoppable train of Christian progress.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Richards (1877), 15.

⁸⁶ Buxton in Proceedings (1876), 21. Buxton uses the present tense to describe this, but the *Yeniceri*, the traditional Ottoman infantry had been abolished in 1829. Furthermore the *devsirme* practise of converting to Islam and training Christian boys, many of whom had come from the Balkans had ceased in the seventeenth century. Writers in this vein often seem little concerned about historical accuracy.

⁸⁷ Bishop of Oxford in Proceedings (1876), 26.

⁸⁸ Richard in Proceedings (1876), 28

⁸⁹ MacColl (1876), 145-6. See also the Fortnightly Review of 1876, where this idea is strongly expressed.

IV.3 Europe's Orientals: Negative Perceptions of Balkan Christians.

The previous chapter focused on perceptions of the Turk and the main paradigm was that of the Turk as non-European or Oriental. Negative perceptions of Christian populations included the Christian populations of the Ottoman Balkans in this category of non-European. They might be Christian but this did not mean that they qualified as European. In contrast to the ideas explored above these ideas represented another influential strand of thought which was negative in its perceptions of Balkan Christians. In this vision Christian peoples were seen as primitive which unlike in the positive vision was considered a negative attribute. Primitive denoted a lower state of existence which justified Ottoman rule, represented as the rule of an imperial race. Primitive meant to these writers behind in the march of nations generally conceived in racial terms.⁹⁰ Negative views represented most fully the imperial mind set common to late nineteenth-century thought.

This anti-Christian element also resembled older views of Christians in the East. To these writers the Ottoman Empire including the Balkan provinces were the 'East'. The peoples were inferior, backward and Oriental and the Balkans formed part of the Ottoman Empire which was an Islamic empire. The idea of a pure East for Islamic peoples had a long heritage in Western thought. It was built on the preconceived idea of what the 'East' should be like, which can best be described as an 'Arabian nights' vision. Whether or not the Balkans lived up to this vision or not was not significant in this context but what these writers resented was a false vision as they saw it of the West in the East whether this was by the 'imitative' Turk or the Christian who thought himself European by virtue of his religion.⁹¹

For these writers the Balkan Christians were only nominally European. They were primitive, superstitious and practised a form of Christianity that was objectionable. Furthermore they were regarded as pawns of Russia. There was a great deal of pure prejudice and bigotry in views of Christians as much as for Turks. There was a resentment against what some writers saw as the pretensions of Eastern Christians to be Western and they were often simply regarded as pretentious imitators. Negative views of Eastern Christians in other parts of the Ottoman Empire

⁹⁰ Hobsbawm (1987); Hyam (1976).

⁹¹ For traditional negative views of Eastern Christians see Thompson (1875 edition); Palgrave (1872), both of which were well known and referred to.

in Asia Minor and the Arab provinces such as the Lebanon were similar. Native Christians were often regarded as clients of the West and of particular foreign powers. They were not seen as the rightful owners of the land as the Muslim peoples were and were negatively compared to Muslims. In the case of some writers there was antagonism towards them as 'Eastern' Christians rather than Latin or Protestant.⁹²

IV.3.1 'Primitive, Superstitious, Cringing: The Christian non-European in Europe

In the period after 1876 older views of the Turk and Ottoman Christians were influenced by the newly developed racial discourse and according to these notions of race Balkan Christians were seen as primitive who lacked the dynamism and energy to progress on their own. This was said to be the result of Ottoman rule, as well as the consequence of the inherent incapacity of the Christian races themselves. Anti Christian writers had the preconception that these peoples were inferior in the same way that pro-Christian writers had a preconceived view of Christian superiority. According to the resident and traveller H. C. Barkley

"All the people of the East feel pain much less acutely than the Europeans and through this they have gained a character for stoicism. I think though we have the pull over them, for by pluck we get through our troubles, and our capacity for enjoying pleasure is ten times greater than theirs."⁹³

These "people of the East", by which he meant all the populations of the Balkans were seen as different in every way to Europeans and Europe. Barkley believed that the European in general had difficulties understanding the East where behaviour was inexplicable. The European even had difficulty understanding the behaviour of Christians there. For him and others of similar views the Ottoman Balkans were a totally different world. Barkley gave the example of what he called Christian 'hangers on', who were once in a position of power and had become wily individuals and "[the Christian] spies and exaggerates the manners of the dominant race whom he in private discourse affects to despise".⁹⁴ The idea that these were not Christians that were

⁹² For the lack of sympathy towards Balkan Christians by both the High Anglican Church in England and the Roman Catholic Church in England and Ireland during the Eastern crisis see Shannon (1963), 171-201.

⁹³ Barkley (1876), 196.

⁹⁴ Barkley (1877), xiii.

understandable to Europe formed an essential part of the image. They were Easterners and had fully taken on the characteristics of the East.

Often there was an attitude of mockery or contempt and occasionally outright hatred expressed towards the Eastern Christian. Peoples were not seen as human beings so much as types with certain inherent characteristics. The idea that these people felt pain less than Europeans was an example of the impressionistic stereotyping common to British writers in this period. Peoples were superhuman or subhuman but never simply human. Their capacities or incapacities were represented in stereotypical form both by writers who had visited the area and by those who had not. Barkley's views were a typical example of a Western spectator, who perceived himself as superior to the populations that were the object of the enquiry. Although Barkley's views did not express the hatred of some other writers, they did express mockery towards Christians as well as to Turks. The overall representation of the Balkan provinces was that of a primitive society in which the Westerner, British or otherwise had a relationship rather like that of father to child. The people were neither likeable nor dislikeable. Barkley who claimed to 'know' the area by virtue of his residence there stated that Balkan Christians were "teachable" and quite good workers under English instruction. Others said that nothing could be done without such instruction with the resulting image of primitives, teachable or unteachable.⁹⁵

Balkan Christians were negatively represented as a simple people. Their oral traditions and folk cultures were regarded as belonging to a different and lower social existence. The Bulgarians said one writer "require enlightening" as "their favourite heroes, mythical and real are men who fought a little and ate a great deal, which latter accomplishment is most admired".⁹⁶ As mentioned above the expression of the idea of 'primitive' in this perception meant something different from pro-Christian writings. It meant to be inferior and at a different level of development from Western Europe. It signified inferiority and a level below that of Western Europe. Primitive was equated with incapacity to develop without European help or control. The standard of measurement was wholly eurocentric. Europe was considered developed, economically, politically and culturally. Europe was seen as the home of culture, the arts and literature and that which did not resemble European arts and literature was regarded with

⁹⁵ See: Strangford (1879), v, 823.

⁹⁶ Steele (1877), 16-7.

contempt, amusement or in slightly mocking tones. This had also been evident in perceptions of the Turks.⁹⁷

The idea of the primitive and backward nature of Balkan Christians was found in its most negative expression in the writings of C. B. Brophy and G. A. St. Clair in their book *Twelve years study of the Eastern question in Bulgaria*. The authors, one of whom (Brophy) was a former consul in the Balkans were strongly pro-Turkish. This book which had originally been written and published in 1867 and republished in 1877 gained notoriety in the context of the debate about the future of the Balkan provinces. Their book provided a comprehensive picture of the Bulgarians as a race and people. Although they pointed out that the book had been written a decade earlier when no one had even heard of the Bulgarians, they regarded the picture of the Bulgarians contained in the book as valid and applicable to 1877 as it was ten years earlier. The Bulgarian character had not changed for them.⁹⁸

In the Preface they outlined the contents of the book, and its aim claiming that they had "depicted the Bulgarian as he is and not as he may appear to a passing traveller, or the interested imagination of the missionary resident". Rather they had shown the Bulgarian to be "a lazy drunkard, and a fanatical fetishist" against the background of "foreign intrigue", which he was. Given this "true" depiction they asked, "How can anyone, if he can realise the true Bulgarian...be at all astonished at what happened in May last? [i. e. the massacre of Bulgarians in May 1876]".⁹⁹ The Bulgarians were represented in the most negative extreme. Theirs was a picture of a primitive and uncivilised people. According to them Bulgarian houses were built "without order or arrangement", and the interiors were the same reflecting no sense of hospitality. The inhabitants were an unwashed people and "the Rayah, like the Negro diffuses around him a peculiar aromatic odour by no means Sabeian". Bulgarian villages did not reflect a patriarchal simplicity as deemed important by other writers. On the contrary villages represented the Bulgarian desire to deceive the foreigner so that "you begin to believe that the boasted hospitality

⁹⁷ See Campbell (1876); Eliot (1908).

⁹⁸ St. Clair and Brophy (First edition 1867, revised edition 1877). Both Campbell (1876) and MacColl (1877b) tried to refute the 'incorrect' picture of St. Clair and Brophy. For a study of Consuls see: Iseminger (1968); Platt (1971).

⁹⁹ St. Clair and Brophy (1877). Preface.

of the East is a mirage", until the traveller arrived at a Turkish village where he was greeted immediately with unconditional hospitality for no payment.¹⁰⁰

According to the authors Bulgarians were superstitious in the extreme and believed in vampires and witches. They lacked a culture beyond a "spurious literature", reflecting "vague traditions of bygone ages". To Brophy and St. Clair this lack of culture stemmed from the lack of a properly developed language, which stood in stark contrast to the "legends, the songs, the poetry of the Turks". Turkish culture they argued could be seen in the popular culture of the Turkish peasant where it was always possible to hear some remarkable 'unpremeditated lay'. In remarking upon the Bulgarians' lack of culture they did not blame the Turk, rather they blamed the Bulgarians themselves. It was not they said the result of their 'slavery', as other enslaved peoples like the Poles and Lithuanian peasants had a rich popular culture. It was the product of the innate racial incapacity of the Bulgarian.¹⁰¹

Brophy and St. Clair in their views of the Balkan peasantry were a good example of the new racial discourse which developed from the 1860s and their mention of the 'Negro' was significant as it was partly the American Civil War that had contributed to changes in perceptions of people considered as primitive. Bulgarians were placed into a category like that of the Negro. They were considered to be a sub-human group and the composite picture was of a primitive people reflected in their lives, their habitations and their morals (or lack of). This perception incorporated much that later became the standard imperialist discourse, one greatly affected by pseudo scientific racialising based on the idea of superior and inferior races, the former having an innate capacity to rule and the latter only to be ruled by the fitter, better races.¹⁰²

For St. Clair and Brophy, Bulgarians were slaves because they deserved to be and in fact they did not really characterise them as slaves. The representation was simply one of innate incapacity which did not result from a lowly position in the Ottoman state. Certainly it was not attributable to Ottoman rule which they criticised as too tolerant. In addition to representing the racial discourse that would become prevalent in later years Brophy and St. Clair's ideas about the Turk were representative of an older perception which saw the Ottomans as fellow imperialists

¹⁰⁰ St. Clair and Brophy (1877), 5-6, 17.

¹⁰¹ St. Clair and Brophy (1877), 54, 69.

¹⁰² For racial theory see: Chapter One, I. 3 and Bolt (1971); Hyam (1976).

and their rule as that of a superior peoples over inferiors.¹⁰³

The idea of the superstitious or idolatrous nature of Eastern Christians was also an older idea, but in British writings negative views were often simply the product of pure prejudice. The East in general was conceptualised as superstitious and Barkley, for example certainly believed that he was in the East and not in Europe when he was resident in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire. "Every second man in the East has a perfect cure for the fever" he wrote depicting this other world.¹⁰⁴ These were images of a superstitious and pre-scientific society in contrast to Western rationality. To the writer Barkley there was no doubt that what he saw he regarded as belonging to the past or to a lower order of mankind. He was quite open in his expression of the belief that these people could only 'progress' with Western help as on their own they were incapable. It was these ideas which were typical of attitudes in general.

A common perception of Ottoman Christians was that they were 'cringing' and subservient. Variations on this idea were determined by whether or not the causes of Christian subserviency were attributed to the 'rule of the Turk' or whether these characteristics were regarded as enduring features of the people as a consequence of their 'primitive' state of existence. Whereas pro-Christian writers regarded this 'cringing' as a result of Turkish oppression, anti-Christian writers regarded it as a result of the innate inability of Christians. Armenians were "born to swindle" and he is "proficient in the art" stated Barkley, whose ideas differed from those that expressed extreme hatred of the Christian. Rather his position was that of detached indifference because he saw all the peoples, Turks and Christians as Easterners which meant that superstitions could be expected of a primitive society in which everything was represented as the opposite of European from the way that people worked, ate and rested, to the way they related to one another. Barkley did not see the Christians as any more deserving of sympathy than the Turk or other non-Turkish Muslim peoples. He admitted that the Christians were discriminated against, but generally he represented them as prosperous and although a little

¹⁰³ St. Clair and Brophy as Consuls in the Ottoman Empire are quite typical in their sympathy for the Turk resulting from their position as representatives of a policy of support. Consuls often expressed negative views towards the Christian populations who were often seeking to gain berats to trade and European protection. They were regarded as a nuisance in contrast to the Turk who was content to leave them alone in an attitude of contemptuous superiority. For a study of Consuls see: Platt (1971).

¹⁰⁴ Barkley (1876), 207 and see also 261.

in advance of the Turk in terms of civilisation, nevertheless not much.¹⁰⁵

Writers differentiated between the Turks and Bulgarians. The Bulgarians were generally considered as an "industrious and plodding race" in agriculture or education. Balkan Christians especially the Bulgarians were generally seen as prosperous and often compared favourably to their equivalents in Europe. Unlike pro-Christian writers who saw this prosperity as a result of the ingenuity of the Christian peoples despite their oppression, anti-Christian writers saw it as result either of deals with the Turks or through exploitation of the Turk. The image was of a society in which Christians although subject to some disadvantages were not in a position of danger nor persecution. Christians aroused some jealousy from the Turk but were generally left alone.¹⁰⁶ This picture in contrast to the pro-Christian picture of Turkish persecution did not represent the Balkan provinces as an area of inveterate hostility between races. For Barkley as for other writers the idea was that both Turk and Christian were primitives belonging to another kind of world from that of Europe and any problems that they had were to be expected from peoples such as them. European standards of society should not therefore be applied meaning that the West should not be sought in a society which was not Western.¹⁰⁷

Viscountess Strangford the wife of the one time Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire who had been involved in relief efforts to the populations of the Balkans in 1875-6 saw the Bulgarians as a simple though likeable people without much real cause for complaint.¹⁰⁸ Bulgarians were prosperous, she wrote and, "they became as they are now, wealthy and comfortable and constantly able to buy off the depredations of bad governors and rapacious officials".¹⁰⁹ She believed that inequality was to be expected in any society where "feudal" traditions linger i.e. in a place where respect has to be shown to a superior. In her view this was a society that was traditional and not modern. She considered the Bulgarian peasantry to be well placed in comparison to Russians and the peasants of Southern Italy, Switzerland, Spain,

¹⁰⁵ Barkley (1877), 325-9.

¹⁰⁶ See Borthwick (1878), 35.

¹⁰⁷ See Barkley (1876, 1877); Forbes (1877); Strangford (1877).

¹⁰⁸ For the work of Strangford see: Anderson (1968).

¹⁰⁹ Strangford (1879), 824.

Austria, Greece, England and Ireland. Every man she said owned a bit of land and "the country is wide enough for all; wider now that every Bulgarian has possessed himself of his Moslem neighbours land, and will keep it".¹¹⁰

Strangford was one of the few writers that commented on oppression against Muslims at this time which was an aspect of the Eastern crisis that few wished to believe. Her representation of the Turk was that "the Turkish peasant is not of an aggressive nature he is law loving and gentle in comparison with the Bulgar". Although she did not have an extreme negative view of the Bulgarian she still regarded them as a "grossly superstitious people", "like all backward and ignorant nations". She commented on "Mr. Barkley's and Captain St. Clair's,...very amusing books" which gave "a frightful picture of the superstitions which they [Bulgarians] hold along with the Servians and other Slav nations".¹¹¹ Her conclusion was that although the Bulgarians and other Christians are teachable (like children),

"The Turks are today more capable of governing than the Bulgarians. The latter will develop. They have good qualities which the Turks have not; but in self interest, in selfishness, in injustice to their own people, they are hardly behind the Moslems."

and that "it is plain that the race which has been so overbearing and unjust is today more capable of government than the subject one".¹¹²

IV.3.2 Integrity not Nationality: The Image of an Integral Empire.

In contrast to anti-Turkish views the Ottoman Empire was conceptualised as an integral whole and the issue of the day (i.e. the disturbances in Bulgaria, Bosnia, and Herzegovina) were seen as an internal matter between Government and subjects. Religious differences between ruler and ruled were recognised, but accepted as natural in an Empire. The Eastern crisis was not portrayed as nationalist in nature. Rather it was seen as an insurrection against legitimate authority. According to Daly and others writing in a similar vein it was the Turk that was oppressed and not the Bulgarian, or other Christians. Daly like others rejected the picture of Bulgarians as

¹¹⁰ Strangford (1878), 825-8.

¹¹¹ Strangford (1878), 825-8.

¹¹² Strangford (1877), 68.

presented by Gladstone, as "docile, patient, and submissive". On the contrary Daly wrote they were a "troublesome people", who were "following the dictates of the treacherous Muscovite" and the Turk was obliged "to rule them with a firm hand". Such characterisations often involve racial stereotyping as Daly suggested that,

"were this system to be abolished for one moment the Bulgarians would soon degenerate, and become what they once were, viz... a migratory band of robbers, and a nuisance to their surroundings, Christians as they are."¹¹³

In his view sympathy should lie with the Turk. Balkan Christians were a quarrelsome people and caused more problems for the Ottomans than the latter did for Christians. The conclusion was that primitive and warring peoples like them required a firm hand.¹¹⁴ Some writers pointed out the difficulties of governing these difficult peoples. The M. P., H. A. B. Munro-Johnstone, for example in speaking of the Herzegovinan insurrection of 1875 spoke of the difficulties of governing Highland areas. The area was,

"the most difficult to govern in the world, not only from the wild and turbulent character of their inhabitants but from their containing almost every conceivable material of combustion religious, social, national and political"¹¹⁵

He referred not only to Christian Muslim antagonism but also inter Christian hatred and all the "social elements of confusion", a powerful democracy and the remains of a "turbulent aristocracy" which the Tanzimat and the new order had tried to reduce at the point of the sword. The Ottoman Balkans were a "boiling cauldron" of agrarian strife".¹¹⁶ Ottoman rule was represented as a stabilising force over troublesome peoples and some writers favoured the

¹¹³ Daly (1877), 12. Written in reply to Gladstone's *Lessons in Massacre* (1877).

¹¹⁴ See also English Liberal (1876), where he calls the Christians, the descendants of Alexander the Great are the "most contemptible race of whites on the globe" and speaks of their "their effeminacy, selfishness, treachery towards each other, and cowardice towards the Turk have rightly brought them into a state of servitude." They lack the noble and courageous characteristics of the Turkish race.

¹¹⁵ Munro- Johnstone (1877), 44.

¹¹⁶ Munro-Johnstone (1877), 44.

strengthening of this power, especially in the light of events in 1875-6, which they believed had revealed the weakness of the government to do this. Others regarded the strengthening of Ottoman power as too difficult and prone to further rebellion and therefore favoured Austrian control of rebellious areas. Few amongst these writers favoured the idea of autonomous states. Stability of the area was the most important consideration and the causes of instability were usually seen as outside interference rather than the result of Ottoman rule per se. This was the old Palmerstonian vision.¹¹⁷

The idea that Christians did not constitute an oppressed "national" minority, meant that amongst these writers the insurrections were not seen as struggles for national independence. Features such as the mixed nature of populations were provided in support of these points and there was criticism of the over simplistic view (as they saw it) of a mass population of oppressed Christians ruled by a minority of Muslim Turks. Bulgaria, it was argued was composed of some mixed villages of Christians, Jews and Muslims. The nationalities question in the Ottoman provinces was therefore perceived differently than amongst pro-Christian writers. Races were not considered as greatly different from one another. Contrary to what anti-Turkish writers said these writers believed that the Turk was not dying, and "the traditional courage of the past is not dead". There was one writer said a "Turkish nation beyond the denizens of the luxurious palaces of the Bosphorous, and courageous soldiers as well as Bashi Bazouks". The Turkish defence of Plevna in 1877 revealed "not mere animal courage, but a brilliant dazzling fire of genuine patriotism", heroic devotion, sacrifice, and obedience to commands and this writer concluded such a nation as this has a right to live.¹¹⁸ The present problems of the Ottoman Empire did reveal, the anonymous writer was eager to point out the need for change, which had often been lacking in the empire as a result of "Their [Turks] traditions, their creed, and their training", which had meant they had been "stationary while other nations have been moving". However, the author was confident that this was recognised by Ottoman rulers.¹¹⁹

In these conceptualisations Ottoman rule was represented as legitimate. Some writers

¹¹⁷ For Palmerston see Pemberton (1954); Webster (1951)

¹¹⁸ For the effect of the Battle of Plevna on public opinion see: Anderson (1968); Wirthwein (1935).

¹¹⁹ Eastern Question (1878), 49.

compared Ottoman rule to that of Protestant rule in Ireland and the history of massacres there. Daly made this point and added that Serbia which had joined in war against Turkey in 1876 was still a tributary state and although its justification had been to aid fellow Christians, he wrote "it does not follow that because a vassal state becomes discontented, that every absurd demand it makes on the parent country is to be granted".¹²⁰ Discontent did not justify rebellion. This was basically a conservative vision of the Ottoman Empire in which rebellion against constituted rulers was considered illegitimate. Relations between Ottoman rulers and subjects were understood in similar terms to relations between social inferiors and superiors elsewhere. For example the writer Forbes outlined the relationship between rulers and ruled with particular reference to Bulgaria. He wrote

"The period begins with the Bulgarians, subject indeed to the Turks, taxed no doubt heavily, and arbitrarily, annoyed occasionally by a zaptieh, who must have been nearly as bad as the omnipotent agent on the estate of an Irish absentee landlord, bound to dismount when encountering a Turk on the road, just as a rural inferior at home is bound to touch his hat to his local superior; but withal prospering mightily."¹²¹

In his view whatever occasional oppression might have resulted from Ottoman rule, the position of Bulgarians was "tolerable enough". He agreed that the country was 'badly governed', or rather 'not governed at all', but instead of this being oppressive it was exactly the kind of situation in which Bulgarian peasants had been able to prosper and become the envy of their peasant neighbours, both Christian and Muslim. Forbes spoke of the 'rich acres of pasture' of the Bulgarian peasant. Overall he was unsympathetic to the idea of Christian subjection and his attitude towards Bulgaria was that rebellious subjects should take the consequences of their rebellious actions.¹²²

The reaction of pro-Turks to the Eastern crisis was that these events proved Russian expansionist aims and the war between Russia and Turkey (1877) was that of might against right respectively. The threat of Russia was that "Asiatic, and Slavic ignorance would ride roughshod over European culture, and civilisation". In this representation the Ottomans were the safeguard

¹²⁰ Daly (1877), 18.

¹²¹ Forbes (1877), 573.

¹²² Forbes (1877), 576-8.

for Europe against Russia as Christians were seen by pro-Christian writers as the safeguard for Western Europe against Muslim Turks. Russia for this writer represented the threat of Pan-Slavism. Turkey he believed should be supported as it was too weak on its own to resist Russia. It should be kept in its position as "the doorkeeper of Europe". He did however believe that rather than Ottoman control over the Bosnia and Herzegovina these areas should be ceded to Austria. This would remove an 'aching tooth' from Turkey and prevent future disturbances in the area.¹²³

Other commentators following the line that both on humanitarian and diplomatic grounds Ottoman rule was better than Russian sought to support the continuation of Ottoman rule on the Balkan peninsular. Baron Henry de Worms argued that Russia was more intolerant than the Ottoman empire had ever been. This writer did not deny Ottoman misgovernment, but he said that the answer was not to place it under Russian control, rather,

"What is really wanted is a reformed Administration, which should strengthen the Turkish Government until the Christian population are able (of which there is yet no sign) to walk alone; i.e. as long as there is no danger of their exchanging the almost nominal, and practically harmless supremacy of the Sultan for the formidable leadership of the Tsar."¹²⁴

Underpinning this representation of Balkan Christians was the idea that they were not capable of ruling themselves. De Worms wrote that "I can hardly conceive anything more ridiculous than the attempt to inflict representative institutions on the masses of the Christian provinces." He argued that Balkan Christians lacked a disinterested leadership and a sense of "individual responsibility". He considered the Balkan Christians incapable of self government and preferred to see the Turks rule as the Turk "could be better trusted" as his instincts, as well as his capabilities were "of a higher class".¹²⁵

As these perceptions reflect, negative views of Eastern Christian were often coupled with pro-Turkish views. This did not contradict the idea of the Turk as non-European, as Oriental or as an alien in the Balkans. Views which sought to continue Ottoman rule during the Eastern

¹²³ Anonymous (1877), 2, 5, 21.

¹²⁴ De Worms (1877), 43-4. See also Shannon (1963), 198-201, for ideas about the pro-Turkish attitude of the British Jewish community.

¹²⁵ De Worms (1877), 19-20.

crisis of 1875-8 did eventually under the pressure of events accede to the ending of Ottoman rule. Even if old preferences lingered in later years, the idea of the Turk as non-European was ultimately more significant in the context of European imperialism. Negative perceptions of Balkan Christians combined a new kind of racial thought with the older anti-Russian perspective, which was of long-standing in the nineteenth century. Antipathy towards subject peoples was also the result of a view of the world which was anti-liberal and anti-nationalistic and which favoured the maintenance of a world order of large and imperial states.

IV.4 The Old and New Question of 'Us' and 'Them': The Meanings of Perceptions.

Perceptions of Balkan Christians both in their negative and positive versions reflected the strong influence of an imperialist culture in Britain under which older ideas were reformed and restated. Late Victorian writers constructed a very clear image of 'them' and 'us', the European and non-European. Liberal, conservative and imperialist variations of this were evident, but what was important about views at this time was degree to which they were imbued with a racial discourse and eurocentric comparative framework.

The image of the positive virtues of the Balkan peoples in contrast to the rapacity of the Turks was one of the most enduring images of Turkish rule and became the basis for nationalist ideologies in the Balkans. In the period after the Congress of Berlin of 1878 when Balkan independence from the Ottomans was granted the positive view of the Christian peoples now regarded as liberated from tyranny became the dominant perception of Balkan history. The history of the Balkans was represented as the history of the rise of Balkan nations against the Turk, whether this was argued in religious or secular language, or a combination of the two. This was the perception that stayed and was reiterated in later writings. It made a direct contribution to nationalist historiography and continued to influence the particular view of the Ottoman Empire and Eastern Question until the present time.¹²⁶

The negative view of Balkan Christians was important for what it revealed about ideas

¹²⁶ See Miller (1913). Where he presents a version of Balkan history which is one long development for nationhood. Ottoman institutions, practices are scantily referred to in the text in comparison and he writes as though the Ottoman Empire had already been written out of the equation. See also Seton-Watson (1917, 1935), who was strongly pro-Gladstonian and Christian and anti-Turkish.

of Eastern Christians in general and also views of peoples considered to be non-European and backward. It was however less effective against the overwhelming negative perception of Ottoman rule in the Balkans. As British diplomatic prerogatives altered over the course of the next two decades with a period of rapprochement with Russia, the old pro-Turkish anti-Russian Palmerstonian perspective, which was part of this negative view of Eastern Christians was less frequently voiced. The dislike of Eastern Christians did however remain as a perspective on the Balkans and was expressed in later years. Although less effective than the 'four hundred' years thesis these ideas were eventually incorporated into later literature about the history of the Ottoman Balkans. The significance of these traditions of thought were clear not only in relation to the development of nation states in the Balkans but also to the perpetuation of ideas about Turks and Christians in the area and the general understanding of Balkan history in later periods.

Chapter 5 West meets East: perceptions of Anatolia and Istanbul

V.1 Ottoman Anatolia and the 'diplomacy of imperialism'.

Underlying British perceptions of the Ottoman Empire in general was the idea that Europe was progressing in contrast to the declining East represented by the Ottoman Empire. This idea of Western progress versus Oriental stagnation and decline underpinned British perceptions of Anatolia and Istanbul.¹ This chapter explores the ways in which Anatolia and Istanbul were represented and understood in late Victorian Britain. It shows how an image of stagnation was constructed by general travellers, specialist writers and other commentators in their depiction of the country, economy and society. The focus is on the main lands constituting the present day Turkish Republic: Western, Central and Eastern Anatolia and the capital Istanbul. The examination shows the ways in which Anatolia had become an object of imperialist thinking in Britain and the ways in which preconceptions as well as the prevailing culture of imperialism determined the image of an Oriental declining state. Anatolia as the geographer, W. M. Ramsay stated it represented "the battlefield between the Oriental and the Western spirit" and the "central movement in Asia Minor is what it has always been, a conflict between the Eastern and Western spirit".²

V.2. 'The Land and the Books': Asia Minor, the Biblical, the Ancient, the Oriental.

Anatolia had a particular significance for a British and Western audience because of its historical and biblical importance for Western Civilisation. Anatolia (Asia Minor) had been,

"the scene of the most important events in the early history of the world recorded in the scriptures;...the arts, learning, and enterprise of Ancient Greece and Rome;...its south western portion distinguished as the spot chosen by God for the special revelation of himself to mankind, and for the advent of the saviour of the world."³

¹ See Introduction.

² Ramsay traces this struggle from Ancient times to the present see Ramsay (1897), 2.

³ Milner (1877, new edition), 275. Milner's book was one of the classic accounts of the Ottoman Empire. It was republished during the Eastern crisis of 1875-8.

But in 1896,

"The lamentation of Cicero over the desolate cities of Hellas might be echoed now in Asia Minor upon sites that were still great and populous in his day; for its peoples have shrunk within it like the laen and slippered pantaloons."⁴

The dominant image of Anatolia in the late nineteenth century was of a once great and important area that was now in decline under Ottoman rule. The generic term used to describe this present state was 'Oriental' which brought together interest in the past and the present into a vision of Anatolia as the declining East.

The archaeologist and writer D. G. Hogarth said of travel in Anatolia, that on the one hand the traveller could experience scenes like those from the Arabian Nights, but usually travel was about "tramping around torrid and odorous villages".⁵ This constituted modern Eastern travel for the late Victorian commentator. The state of Anatolia was represented as a picture of Eastern decline. As one reviewer of the 1890 edition of Kinglake's *Eothen* noted in reference to the perceived passing away of the "glory of travel",

"The romance of travel belongs to the past. The traveller of today, instead of starting from Belgrade on horseback, with a retinue of dragomen and tartars armed to the teeth, leaves his hotel in an omnibus, and departs for the railway station armed only with a Cook's ticket."⁶

Yet although this reviewer pointed to the changed nature of travel, this was true only of travel to the capital Istanbul. Elsewhere in Anatolia the methods of travel were similar to those at the time of Kinglake, especially in Eastern Anatolia. More importantly a picture of the East and underlying assumptions about the unchanging nature of the East had not changed. Rather these 'facts' were interpreted in a new light, sometimes with a new tone which was not always less romantically expressed. Nor were accounts produced by the less romantic conditions of travel more true in their depictions. They remained culturally bound accounts. Few writers were able

⁴ Hogarth (1896), 63. See also Amery (1899), 523.

⁵ Hogarth (1896), 19.

⁶ Crosse (1891), 375. The main areas visited in Anatolia were the West coast and Istanbul and its environs such as Bursa. Less frequently visited were Central and Eastern Anatolia. There appear to have been several routes and modes of travel and for these see: Wilson (1895), 1-17.

to transcend the limits of their own culture and in most cases the traveller had already visited the East even before leaving England. The popularity and influence of older texts and ideas about the East in this period was striking not only evidenced by re-publication and reference to older writings, but also in the similar use of language and stereotypes about Eastern life, customs and people.⁷

The demand for realistic depictions and solid information which reviewers saw as the desire of the late Victorian audience did not mitigate against the continuing popularity of texts like that of Kinglake. There was still a preference for more readable and lighter accounts.⁸ The general reader in seeking to find out about Anatolia was like (as revealed by republication) was more likely to read about the travels of Burnaby or Barkley, rather than the four volume statistical account (in French) of Vital Cuinet describing conditions in Anatolia. Or, alternately they would have reached for one of the older classic texts. Other readers might have turned to the writings produced partly in collaboration with the Royal Geographical Society such as the works of D. G. Hogarth and W. M. Ramsay, which were well reviewed and received much publicity.⁹

Throughout a wide range of writings the idea of an essential East which was inferior to Europe was evident. In specialist and semi-specialist literature this idea was even more

⁷ See Woods Pasha (1890), 2-5, employee of Ottoman Navy, who pointed out the nature of Christian European prejudice and Thompson (1886), I, 25-105, who detailed the presumptions on which views of the Ottoman Empire were based. For influential older texts about the Middle East see bibliography for references to B. Disraeli, A. Kinglake, E. W. Lane, W. M. Thompson. For histories of ideas about the Middle East see Ahmad (1978); Daniels (1966); Kabbani (1988).

⁸ See review of Burnaby's travels, *Quarterly Review* (1878), Vol. 146, 549-594, which is considered light reading but good. See also review article 'Early Victorian Travelling', Gregg (1897), Vol. 62, 190, which regards Kinglake's work as the debunking of romanticism characteristic of earlier in the century.

⁹ Ramsay (1890, 1897, 1902, 1903); Hogarth (1896, 1910). Both Ramsay and Hogarth were well known as writers and were regular contributors to periodicals. Both their more specialist accounts of the historical geography and history of the area and also more general travel accounts were important as a source of ideas about the Ottoman Empire. Travel literature in general was a highly popular form of literature throughout the nineteenth century. For travel writing, its nature and importance see: Sampson, ed. (1970). For a study of the Guide book as popular genre see: Vaughan (1974). For the activities and influence of the Royal Geographical Society see: Cameron (1980).

prevalent. Some of the most 'Orientalist' accounts were those of the 'specialists'. Travellers on the basis of impressions taken from their own cultural world and background or on the basis of reading such texts went in search of either the different (Oriental), or the familiar (biblical/historical) or both. When the world of Anatolia disappointed this vision the result was various levels of interpretation as to why the idea did not match the reality. It is in this way that 'Oriental' remained a fixed category subject only to the changed intellectual climate of the period.¹⁰ Thus an image of Anatolia was created, as it had been for the Balkans that often reflected more the culture of late Victorian Britain than it did the conditions of the Ottoman Empire.

This picture of decline was partly the result of negative comparison to European development. In addition it was the product of interest in the biblical and the ancient and pre-conceived ideas about the nature of Oriental societies. Reference to the classical past contributed to the idea of decline, whilst the biblical perspective presented a picture of stagnation and a position unchanged for centuries. Although these notions appeared contradictory as one perceived Ottoman society as unchanged, and the other perceived it as a decline from a better condition (pre-Ottoman), the overall image of the Ottoman Empire that these two perspectives produced came together on the point that the Ottoman Empire could not go forward. There was a congruence of ideas about why this was so, which moved in the common realm of assumptions about the essential nature of Oriental societies, about racial and religious differences and the laws of human progress from which the Turks especially as an Oriental and Islamic people were exempt. The assumption was that the Empire could either only stay the same or get worse. In general it was deemed incapable of improvement. The picture of decline which formed the common perception of the majority of commentators was a variation on the theme expressed by W. M. Ramsay that

"Orientalism [represented by the Ottomans] is ebbing and dying in the country. The tide of Western ideas and Western thoughts is flowing and strong; eight centuries of strict and stern repression are behind it and drive it on irresistibly."¹¹

¹⁰ For the intellectual climate see Chapter One, I. 3.

¹¹ Ramsay (1897),

The underlying assumption of most writings was that of the superiority of the West in contrast to the declining East. Where there were signs of Westernisation and development such as in Western Anatolia then hope for improvement was expressed. The capital Istanbul reflected the contradictions of the Ottoman Empire as a place where this conflict between East and West could be seen. Istanbul was not perceived as a 'bridge' between East and West, but more as a declining Oriental city. The dynamic of history was represented as 'progress', a characteristic seen as fundamental to Europe and not to the East. There were few accounts of Anatolia that challenged this idea of decline. Differences in perception lay more in the degree of sympathy or lack sympathy of the individual writer for the subject than in the production of different visions.

V.2.1 The 'Decline of Asia Minor': Perceptions of Central and Eastern Anatolia.

Central Anatolia was that "apparently never ending sea of land, treeless, waterless, hideous in its vastness, desolate, burnt up, brown and barren" so wrote the resident and traveller H. C. Barkley in a picture which encapsulated the basic elements found throughout descriptions of Central Anatolia in this period.¹² The picture was invariably one of decline, ruin and devastation measured against a picture of former prosperity. It was as the writer Davey expressed it "an unhappy empire, now so fallen from its ancient glory".¹³ Anatolia for the traveller was a picture of "dull monotony" in its scenes of devastation and decay.¹⁴

The comparison between past and present was general, as was the comparison between image and reality. This comparativism formed an essential element in the 'Orientalist' vision which was based on the confirming or negating of ideas about Eastern societies. Travellers recounted how towns from afar appeared beautiful but expressed universal disappointment on contact. Oorfa (Urfa) in Eastern Anatolia was like most towns picturesque from a distance, but

¹² Barkley (1891), 64.

¹³ Davey (1897), I. 229. Davey's book *The Sultan and his Subjects* was widely reviewed in the press and periodicals and formed one of the most comprehensive accounts of the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth century. The various chapters that make up the book were independently published in periodical form (see bibliography).

¹⁴ Other writers complain of the monotony of Central and Eastern Anatolia which does not provide variety for the traveller. See Ramsay (1897), 21, who complains that villages provide an uninteresting uniformity and lack of originality including the houses which are of "uniform design".

on entering it the visitor found the 'usual' dirty narrow streets and "dilapidated mosques, dirt, poverty, wretchedness." The people and the place were said to be biblical in appearance. Barkley commented that he saw "girls and women descending into those wells with their pitchers on their shoulder, doubtless in the exact manner in which Rebecca did".¹⁵ The certainty in the voice of Barkley was clear. This was what he as the traveller saw and he was merely the recorder of the scene. The effect of such accounts was to remind the audience of the unchanged nature of conditions in Anatolia.

Perceptions of the country reinforced the idea of the permanent and monotonous never ending unchanging nature of conditions. Anatolia, both the country and the people appeared fixed in time. As the writer Stevenson said of Koniah (Konya) in Central Anatolia,

"All we see belongs to and illustrates the past; the costumes of the people, the tents, the implements of husbandry, the threshing floors, the strings of camels."

She represented Konya in scriptural terms and noted that "The East is changed most marvellously little;" and "the same scenes go from day to day that St.. Paul saw when he travelled over this plain in the beginning of the first century."¹⁶

Writers often indulged in romantic evocations of scenes. The traveller Bigham said of Angora (Ankara) in Central Anatolia that it appeared beautiful at first sight as "The villas of the Ottoman magnates looked pretty through the trees. Crowds of handsome peasants in gay dresses were on the platform at every station".¹⁷ However this colourful and relatively innocent scene masked, according to him the reality of conditions there. His account was typical in its disappointment. On the negation of first impressions travellers generally moved on to describe the 'reality', posing the picture they saw against that which they had imagined. Barkley wrote of Angora that it provided evidence of former prosperity but then extrapolated,

"The glory of these days has departed and the Angora of today can be little like the Angora the Turks found when they became masters of the country. Unbaked and brick buildings stand on the foundations of marble temples and palaces. Decaying mounds of filth and rubbish fill every

¹⁵ Barkley (1891), 253, 257.

¹⁶ Stevenson (1880), 308. For depictions of Konya see Stoneman (1987), 152-7.

¹⁷ Bigham (1897), 13. For other views of Ankara see Stoneman (1987), 142-50.

vacant place."

Rather than beauty there were badly paved streets and ruins, both of which were, according to him, the result of Turkish neglect. Barkley called this the "usual plan of destruction" of the Turks regarding historical ruins, thus adding his interpretation of the scene.¹⁸ Likewise Konya, which Stevenson described as historically important both to Christianity and to the Turks presented the scene of "mud walls, the crumbling ruins and the unparalleled state of the roads leading into the town," which "take away all the idea of dignity and grandeur, and the decay is so terrible that the size of the city is lost."¹⁹ In reality Konya, she wrote was a "large mud built village" with bad roads and no irrigation. As for other writers, for her too this unpleasant scene was mitigated by the scenes typical of Eastern life such as the bazaars which were "amusing" for the "variety of trades, the novelty of the articles for sale, the busy scene amongst the camels and mules, the costumes and different nationalities, and the life and bustle".²⁰

These perceptions typified the common British response to the Anatolia. The area was preconceived as the East and the travellers experience consisted of the negating and confirming of these prior notions and ideas. Travellers upon whom the British public was largely dependent for representations of Anatolia typically proceeded to the area with a host of presumptions and preconceived ideas. On contact with that reality the typical traveller then passed through the stage of unfulfilled expectations, which caused feelings of remorse, nostalgia or resentment. The next stage was the reinterpretation of the surroundings, which either appeared to confirm what was known in which case conditions were said to have not changed, or to have been ill affected and perverted by time, the Turk, by Europe. As the traveller gained confidence in his interpretation he then most often put himself forward as the knowledgeable raconteur of things Eastern and provided tips and advice for the future generation of travellers. Generalisation then became possible according to the self perception of the traveller to be 'experienced' and used to

¹⁸ Barkley (1891), 104, 106.

¹⁹ Stevenson (1880), 312, 311.

²⁰ Stevenson (1880), 317.

Eastern travel.²¹ The effect of travel accounts was to reinforce stereotypes about Anatolia as the declining East.

The image of decline was reinforced by a picture of depopulation and economic backwardness. As there had been in perceptions of the Balkans, in Anatolia there was generally an expectation that the population would be greater than travellers in fact found and this was taken as evidence that there had been a decrease. Sparsely populated areas in Anatolia confirmed the travellers' view that the area was depopulated rather than having always been relatively sparsely populated. Almost no account was taken of the features of the land such as accessibility to water which might have accounted for the character of habitation and the nature of economic life. As one writer expressed it, the notable features of Anatolia were the "want of population" from which resulted the general decline, "every town is more than half in ruins, simply because there are not enough people to occupy the houses and keep them in repair".²²

Travellers were not so much incorrect in their representation of the lack of population, but it was the way that these 'facts' were interpreted that was significant, and how information was refracted through various filters and ideas.²³ Lack of population was perceived as a decline from an imagined once greater populated situation. Often the idea of former large populations came from older texts, even Ancient sources that pictured a populous area, evident in the references made to older sources. The modern condition of Anatolia was interpreted as a regression. A typical statement was that of the traveller C. Bigham about Erzeroum (Erzurum) in Eastern Anatolia who agreed with a fourteenth century opinion of the place, that it had once been prosperous but had been wasted by the Turks "the decay of the city has steadily continued since that time" and any prosperity he considered was due to the Armenians.²⁴

Anatolia was also represented as economically poor. Writers pointed to evidence of

²¹ See Ramsay (1897), 2 who claims generalisation is not possible as they are negated on contact with the area. Yet in his case these negations produce new generalisations about the East, Oriental life, Oriental peoples and Geary (1878), 275 for generalisations about neglect of roads. For Orientalism see Said (1978).

²² Stevenson (1880), 352-3.

²³ The population of Anatolia was approximately twenty five inhabitants per square mile in. For population studies see Augustinos (1992); Karpas (1985); McCarthy (1983).

²⁴ Bigham (1897), 56. See also the comments by Cunningham (1992), 79-83.

economic development such as mines, but they were little hopeful that this potential would be realised by the Turks. The picture of the country was one of "Bad roads, stumbling houses, scorching sun, inefficient servants, dirty lodgings, and detestable food."²⁵ This was the common perception of all areas in Central and Eastern Anatolia and the most frequently reiterated explanation for decline was the rule of the Turks. Interpretations of conditions in Anatolia were limited by the explanatory framework of race and culture as determinants of conditions and features of the country. Late nineteenth-century views were locked in an explanatory discourse of race and culture.²⁶

Anatolia was a disappointment to travellers in its apparent decay and decline. Nevertheless it was still of interest as an 'Oriental' society. In general the Ottoman Empire had a curiosity value as 'Oriental' and the traveller could find many things to edify himself in the different customs of the people. In common with earlier writings about the East, Anatolia was pictured as different in every way to Europe. Writers in search of the different produced in their accounts a picture of the Ottoman Empire which fulfilled their expectations of what an Oriental society was/should be like. All the elements of Oriental type scenes were reproduced in writings: of Turks smoking Nargiles and drinking Turkish coffee, a picture of a life which was generally without event, reconstructed as a picture of Oriental repose. Soldiers according to Barkley were pictures of inactivity. They "just vegetated" whereas the officers were to be found "sitting all day cross-legged on the divan".²⁷ People and places were stereotypes of Eastern life. The world of Anatolia was said to be cut off from Europe. Noticeable to the traveller was the lack of shops and also the curiosity of the people to foreigners," As one writer expressed it, the people in Mudurlu taking as much interest in an Englishman as the inhabitants of London would take in a chimpanzee or newly arrived gorilla". This writer noted in Eastern Anatolia the same kind of curiosity towards foreigners and provided an explanation that "Asiatics are proverbially reticent."

²⁵ Barkley (1891), 133.

²⁶ The line between observation and interpretation is often very fine for examples see: Barkley (1891); Stevenson (1880).

²⁷ Barkley (1891), 334-5. See also Burnaby for traditional picture of repose (1877 2nd Edition), I. 15.

The impression conveyed was of the insularity of Anatolia.²⁸

In addition to its perceived insularity, Anatolia was depicted as a difficult area to travel in. Writers offered advice for prospective travellers about how they could mitigate these difficulties, by staying with European consuls. Houses were generally disliked and hotels were said to be non-existent. Travel was generally frustrating for the Englishman who had to do without many comforts. The traveller could on the other hand be lucky such as Burnaby at Erzingan (Erzincan), who stayed with a 'good' Pasha there, who "had found time to put the streets in tolerable order, and to make the town one of the cleanest in Anatolia". The overall view was that Anatolia was a difficult terrain.²⁹ Perceptions of 'Turkish travelling' as Kinglake had described it in the 1840s, were in the 1880s and 1890s similar as summed up by Amery,

"The archaeologist becomes an explorer, a politician an Orientalist. He practices all the rules of diplomacy to appease or intimidate suspicious kaimakans and all the artifices of the bazaar to obtain his treasures from the reluctant vendors. He has his own scheme of political reforms and his own theories as to which officials most deserve hanging."³⁰

Despite these difficulties of travel, the people were represented positively. Hospitality, wrote Burnaby in common with other writers was "universal" and "proverbial" and "the generosity of the Turks is equally great. In fact they carry this virtue to excess" and "No matter where an Englishman may ask for shelter, he will never find a Mohammedan who will deny him admittance". Hospitality was according to Burnaby "as rife in 1877 as in the days of Mohammed II".³¹ Burnaby's advice to critics of the Ottoman Empire was that "those people in England who have declared that it is impossible to reform the Turk would do well to learn the Turkish

²⁸ Burnaby (1877, 2nd Edition), I, 92.

²⁹ See: Barkley (1891), 51, on the need for local police escort (zaptieh); Burnaby (1877, 2nd edition.); Hogarth (1896) Some travellers in Asia Minor in line with other Eastern travellers adopted a disguise against the fanaticism of the population in the East. See Ahmad (1978); Kabbani (1988), 86-95 for an interpretation of the meaning of the Western device of disguise.

³⁰ Amery (1899), 524. A Kaimakan, in Turkish Kaymakam was a district official.

³¹ Burnaby (1877, 2nd ed), I, 151, 172. See also, Barkley (1891), 136-7. Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839).

language and travel in the Sultan's dominions. Human nature is everywhere much the same".³²

Hospitality was represented as the virtue of a simple society in which the people were unknowledgeable and easily impressed. Travellers recounted how they found themselves speaking down to their peasant audience and putting information into comprehensible terms. There was often condescension in this view, as the traveller felt himself to be in a superior position of knowledge. Occasionally the primitive nature of life was depicted in extreme negative terms. Ramsay, for example related how the villagers could not understand the motives of the traveller to travel for "mere desire for knowledge, and work for mere ideals". Rather travel for them was understood as pecuniary, for example to find gold. Ramsay represented it as a failure of Christianity in the East to have not imparted this lesson of innocent travel to the "Mohammedan mind". He also advised the prospective traveller to remember that he was in the East and that in the East authority especially that of the representative of imperial England was respected. "In dealing with Orientals" he wrote "a prime necessity is straight forwardness, and transparent honesty" and "You must speak and act as one having authority".³³

The picture presented above was a vision which had pre-categorised Anatolia and indeed the Ottoman Empire as a whole to the past, but which was of interest to the Westerner as a type of Oriental society existing for edification, elucidation of the past and not for much else. Ramsay's perception of an essential conflict between East and West had for him as for others merely confirmed the belief that the East belonged to a former time and the West to the present and future. Ramsay was not alone in the view that he expressed after years of travel in Anatolia when he wrote that he began travel there with a full belief in the "imperial mission of Britain" and "I end with a stronger faith in the English speaking race".³⁴

³² Burnaby (1877, 2nd ed), II, 313-4. See also review of Burnaby's travels and the negative review of Bryce in *Quarterly Review* (1878), Vol. 146, 549-594 and Stevenson (1880), 400.

³³ Ramsay (1897), 295-6, 28, 31. See also Barkley (1891), 184, on the duplicity involved in encounters with natives, so much so that the traveller comes to expect promises of milk and honey. For the typicality of these perceptions of 'Easterners' see: Nasir (1979).

³⁴ Ramsay (1897), Preface. Not all writers disliked the Turk, but there was a general belief that the Turk and Asia Minor were in decline. See also Burnaby (1877); Stevenson (1880) for more positive views of the Turk.

V.2.2 The 'Western Spirit' in the East: Mixed Perceptions of Western Anatolia.

According to the geographer Ramsay, the history like the geography of Anatolia "has always lain in the action and collision of forces moving Eastwards and Westwards" which reflected "phases in the immemorial conflict between Europe and Asia". This battle according to him could be seen even in the layout of the Ottoman Empire. Western Anatolia along the Aegean coast was a reflection of the Western spirit, whilst the rest of Anatolia was Eastern in culture and institutions. The Aegean coastlands were to him more like a part of Greece, they were

"full of the light and the vivacity and the joyous brightness of the Greek lands; the rest, including the whole plateau being alike in geographical character and in spirit part of Asia, impressive in its immobility, monotony and subdued tone."³⁵

This kind of differentiation between parts of Anatolia, which in part reflected the real economic and demographic differences formed a cultural/racial explanation, in which Western Anatolia with a larger Christian population and greater contact with Europe was associated with 'progress', whilst Central and Eastern Anatolia represented the 'real' East, unprogressive, static or declining.³⁶

Western Anatolia was also represented as 'Oriental' in character but accounts were interspersed with pictures of development and potential in contrast to the picture of Central Anatolia. Amongst some writers such as Ramsay there was a positive response to signs of development as this was a further confirmation of the spirit of Western progress. There were also writers who bemoaned the passing of traditional Eastern society. These visions expressed differing responses to change in the East common to Western perceptions in general. Both were however affected by the idea of an 'East' and a 'West' as distinct entities, the former contented with its disappearance, the latter discontented that the 'East' of the imagination was becoming un-Eastern.

Western Anatolia as one of the main areas of former Ancient Greek Civilisation was of course of interest to the British and other European states in general because of these historical associations. Perceptions of antiquities provoked the same kind of dismay and disappointment

³⁵ Ramsay (1902), 260.

³⁶ Augustinos (1992) for the Greeks in Asia Minor.

that have already been noted in perceptions of Central and Eastern Anatolia. The presumed past greatness of ancient remains in Pergamos, Thytria, Sardis (the Ancient capital of Lydia) and Ephesus provoked comments about the present which did not live up to expectations of the viewer. Hieropolis and Laodicea were according to one writer "mounds of debris" which had "long since degraded into a common quarry for the lime burner and builders following the Goth who has stolen its sculptures".³⁷ Disappointment was general in regard to ruins which were not as they were imagined to be, despite the similar disappointment of travellers earlier in the century. A typical comment was "comparing the present scene of desolation to students of Lydia with past greatness, its evident poverty with past riches".³⁸ The famous Troy (Truva) was generally disappointing to travellers. As one writer expressed it "it is a stretch of the imagination to designate them [ruins] as cities" as he pondered on the ages that had passed. Troy appeared as a mere mound of rocks and ruins rather than evoking the splendour of the past.³⁹

Despite the nostalgia and regret produced by the sight of ruins, Western Anatolia was generally seen as more beautiful and more developed than other parts of Anatolia. Travellers reminded their audience that they were still in the 'East' in their depiction of Oriental type scenes and also by their reiteration of the difficulties of travel. Positive evocations of surroundings often produced romanticised pictures of innocent states in the process of being lost. Bursa was generally liked and evoked such typical descriptions as,

"Children in pink, yellow and purple play in the streets; men with jackets and turbans stiff with gold and silver embroidery or with flowing robes of many colours smoke or grind coffee at every corner."

These scenes were portrayed by this writer as "magic vision of Arabian Nights rather than a reality of the present century", which created a "dreamlike impression". It was a world in which

³⁷ Cochran (1887), 248. For the history of these areas see Akurgal (1983); Bean (1966, 1968, 1971); Stoneman (1987), 72-142.

³⁸ Cochran (1887), 371.

³⁹ Hogarth (1896), 208. See also Cochran (1887), 82-3, who like other writers also indulged in imaginings about Ancient history and a glorious past. See Angelomatis-Tsougarakis (1992) on the disappointments created by visits to Greece in the early nineteenth-century. See Stoneman (1987), for the search for Ancient Greece.

the "solemn Turk sits cross legged" smoking his nargile and sipping coffee, eating Turkish delight and roseleaf jam.⁴⁰ Even the journalist A. Gallenga who was generally negative in his views of the Ottoman Empire, described the Aegean coast as beautiful and likeable, encapsulating a vividness and freshness of scenes where there was

"nothing more peaceful than the herds and flocks lowing and bleating...and the peasants themselves forgetting as it were all differences of race and creed living in harmony and security with wide open cottage doors neutralising by their innocence the baneful influence of the vile Government."⁴¹

To another writer, the bazaar at Bursa presented a picture of activity and a colourful throng of people, where "Even the butchers shops are amusing from the extraordinary manner in which the meat is cut up for sale". Everything in this Oriental picture was presented as exciting, different, mysterious and colourful. It was a vision of the East in which "Every arch and aperture even here frames a brilliant Eastern picture, where merchants sit and smoke over their costly bales in the dim interior".⁴² Bursa was "a very pleasant, peaceful spot," which was "just the sort of place for anyone tired of the turmoil of the busy cities of the West to retire to".⁴³ The East was the redemption for the tired Westerner, a function that it had always had as a place of escape where life was simpler, and in many ways still contained the excitement of adventure caused by the difficulty of conditions.⁴⁴ The British observer could feel a sense of achievement in mastering a difficult terrain.

Western Anatolia was also represented as a strange mixture between Eastern and Western conditions, which provoked different responses. As one writer said of Smyrna (Izmir) the largest town in Western Anatolia, "The tide of commerce was in full flow; the bustle of life quite

⁴⁰ Richings (1891), 629-30. See Stoneman (1987), 72-76 on Bursa.

⁴¹ Gallenga (1877), II, 12.

⁴² Richings (1891), 633.

⁴³ Barkley (1891), 40.

⁴⁴ See Richings (1891); Hogarth (1896), 1, who describes the inspiration to travel as an impulse "a temptation to original sin" as well as to produce knowledge for posterity.

European" and it was "The least Asiatic in appearance and habits".⁴⁵ Perceptions of development were interspersed with a catalogue of Oriental scenes which appeared pleasing and picturesque. Western Anatolia was represented as a country of strange coexistence of fertile areas and brigandage, an industrious peasantry and bad roads, but also with European style industries amidst Oriental conditions. Izmir represented for one writer some of these contradictions. It was described as,

"that strange agglomeration of squalid huts and noble palaces, crooked badly paved, ankle twisting streets, myriad shops, reckless carriage drivers, sun shaded bazaars, scents, stench, dirty puddles side by side with white marble door steps."⁴⁶

It was unattractive to him by comparison to London and Paris and he complained of bad infrastructure, ill paved streets and the lack of things to see except the "usual Mohammedan mosques and Greek churches", some handsome Government edifices, hospitals, schools, colleges, museums, bazaars, but in general of "the truly artistic and attractive sights characteristic of London, Paris, Edinburgh and some of the old towns of Germany, Holland and Spain there are none".⁴⁷ It was typical to compare Anatolian towns to European ones and the comparison nearly always resulted in a negative image.

In addition to its Oriental character Western Anatolia was represented as more developed, and with the potential to develop further. It was on this question that mixed responses were evoked. Responses to signs of development reflected the contradictions of Western perceptions in general. To one group of writers development was considered a ruining influence which spoilt the people and the places. They wanted the East to be preserved in an authentic state. To others it was a positive step which they attributed to the Christian populations more than to the Turk. Explanations of development were generally racial and cultural in nature rather than

⁴⁵ Cochran (1887), 299-300. See Stoneman (1987), 98-102 on Izmir. For economic conditions in Izmir see Augustinos (1992), 91-4.

⁴⁶ Cochran (1887), 191. See also Hogarth (1896), warning of Turkmen encampments.

⁴⁷ Cochran (1887), 328-9.

economic.⁴⁸ In many cases there was an underlying expectation of Oriental characteristics such as costumes and other traditional elements and features and universal disappointment when that image did not meet the reality. This invariably led to the explanation that Oriental peoples had been spoilt by the West. In this vision the East was seen as a kind of redemption against what had been lost in the West. As one writer expressed it at the sight of the Muezzin,

"We seem transported into a world far distant from that which we usually inhabit, and the unanswerable question recurs to mind as to the compensating gains of our higher civilisation for the loss of so much that is beautiful in the form of colour of primitive life."⁴⁹

This writer had a negative view of progress. He compared the ugliness of the manufactures of Birmingham seen in the bazaars of Bursa with the genuine products of the East. He was critical of what he saw as the admiration of the Easterner for the products of the West. This was explained in the following terms, that "the leaver of evil already begins to work in the Asiatic mind, and the coarse machine-made wares win universal admiration". This writer was adamant that "the picturesque surroundings of local manufacture" should not be destroyed by the "all pervading influence of Europe". His explanation was that "Eastern indolence and Western energy play into each others hands, and Europe is quick to receive what Asia is so slack to retain."⁵⁰ An Orientalist discourse based on the idea of East and west incorporating a standard imagery and language of description was clear through this and other accounts of Western Anatolia.

Some writers were positive about development such as the writer Cochran, whose especial interest was the silk industry of Western Anatolia. In his account of Izmir he presented a picture which showed evidence of improvement. The Turks, he wrote contradicting the prevailing orthodoxy, although they had a history of massacre the "nation as a whole is far from cruel", and nor were all Turks unprogressive. He described the various institutions he had seen and visited that gave hope for progress, such as a khan and a hospital both of which he represented as pictures of order and cleanliness. In addition he described a school for orphans as

⁴⁸ See Kedourie (1987), 20-7, which describes British criticisms of Western influence in the East in the post 1878 period.

⁴⁹ Richings (1891), 636.

⁵⁰ Richings (1891), 635.

"another noble monument to Turkish philanthropy and progress", and the Schools of Commerce and Agriculture which according to him were both architecturally pleasing and signs of progress.⁵¹

In travelling around Izmir he pictured an area rich in potentialities for development, saying that almost anything could be grown there depending on the climate of each area. He quoted a Turkish writer in the *Journal de Smyrna* about Aidin and its products. This writer according to Cochran was a good example of an enlightened official, who he compared to the "self made man of humble origin" in England, who had been able to rise "by perseverance, study, rectitude and sheer ability". The view represented by Cochran was a minority one. Cochran was more positive than most writers about the ability of change to come from within the Ottoman administration. Such enlightened Turks as he described were generally seen as few and far between, the exception rather than the rule.⁵² To Cochran however the things he saw were examples of how institutions were coming "under the influence of modern ideas". He hoped that these ideas would become dominant in what he described as this "age of enlightenment and progress". Western development was regarded as the panacea for change in the Ottoman Empire as it always had been. Cochran differed only from others in his belief that this process could stay in Ottoman hands, which was a belief that most other writers did not share.

In contrast to this positive representation of Turkish progress and more widely expressed was the negative view of Turkish indolence and lack of progress. This was an explanation that was convincing to many more people than the idea of Turkish capacity to progress. In this period in general there was little belief in the ability of Eastern societies to develop. The picture of dearth and decay that was recorded in the rest of the Empire and also the comparison of present conditions against the imagined splendour of the past made this idea of Turkish progress difficult to believe.⁵³ In general Turks in Western Anatolia like elsewhere were represented as indolent Easterners, picturesque but useless. Barkley was typical of this way of thinking. He mocked the idea of development in Anatolia. In reference to the difficulties of reaching Bursa he wrote,

⁵¹ Cochran (1887).

⁵² Cochran 199-201. See also Hogarth (1896).

⁵³ See for example Bigham (1897); Grenville Murray (1877, revised edition).

"No; let the line crumble away [a railway line built under European management], let the bridges fall in, and the locomotives rust. As it was in the beginning, it is now, and it always will be; and God save "the splendid Turk" for he will not save himself."⁵⁴

Barkley like other writers saw signs of progress emanating from quarters other than the Turks. The journalist Gallenga also suggested that the dynamic of the area was between the Greek and the Turk "the Greek by mere thrift, and good courage, insensibly and yet irresistibly ousting the more indolent and despondent Mussulman."⁵⁵ This idea was far more widely expressed than optimistic views of Turkish development.

The overall perception was that although Western Anatolia was of interest for its historical associations and signs of progress and industry, it was nonetheless still 'the East' and such development as there was resulted from the presence of larger Christian populations especially the Greeks rather than the Turks. According to this perspective, development was also caused by the greater proximity of Western Anatolia to Europe and European influences. This idea of the development of the West as a result of Christian populations rather than the Turk was the idea that underlay these perceptions. This was a vision in which the West was dynamic and the East passive. The consequence of this way of thinking about the Ottoman Empire was that when the influence of the Turk was less and the influence of Christianity or the Greeks more then progress economic or otherwise could be expected. The overall expectation was that the West and its representatives [i. e. Christians] were progressive, whilst the East and its representatives [the Turks] were unprogressive.

A minority of British writers did not equate the Greek with progress. Sometimes the Greeks in Western Anatolia along with other Eastern Christians were pictured negatively. The believed untrustworthiness of Greeks was often mentioned as was their lack of honour and poor attempts to imitate Europe. However in such cases very often neither Turk or Greek were represented in positive terms.⁵⁶ Rather progress was seen to be the result of the degree of Western

⁵⁴ Barkley (1878), 240

⁵⁵ Gallenga (1878), 236. For perceptions of Greeks and the equation of them with progress see Ramsay (1897). For the history of Greeks in Anatolia see: Augustinos (1992).

⁵⁶ See for example: Grenville Murray (1877, revised edition).

(meaning European) influence which alone was seen as progressive force. In general perceptions confirmed the idea of Ramsay mentioned previously that the history of Anatolia like the history of the East in general was the working out of the ancient struggle between the Western and Eastern element, or in the language of the late nineteenth-century between Western progress and Eastern stagnation.⁵⁷

V.2.3 'Placed between Europe and Asia': Istanbul and the Contradictions of the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁸

Istanbul or Constantinople as it was usually referred to, had from the time of the earliest writings in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries excited the imagination of travellers and commentators. The dominant representation of Istanbul in the late nineteenth century was that it was a city of much historical importance, but like the rest of the Empire was in decadence and decay. Some writers went further and spoke of the city as symbol of the rottenness of the empire as a whole. With a mixed population and a character derived from different influences Istanbul represented the contradictions of the empire in its confusing mixture of Eastern and Western elements where East and West "interweave themselves like the many coloured threads in the gorgeous fabric of the Eastern loom".⁵⁹

Historical knowledge encouraged by older influential texts like Warburton's *The Crescent and the Cross*, and by the modern guide books intended for the visitor, reinforced the expectation of the splendour of the capital. On contact with the city, historical imaginings abounded, but the splendour and exoticism of the city was felt to be lost, and was most often relegated to a former period of its history. There was often an expectation of a wonderful and splendid East and thus a degree of disappointment when visitors to the capital did not find this exotic picture. Rather they were faced with a city much influenced by outside influences which had changed the character of the capital.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ See Chapter One, I. 3.

⁵⁸ Wilson (1892), 20.

⁵⁹ Bryce (1878), 350, 351. For an historical overview, see: Lewis (1963).

⁶⁰ Warburton (1844 first edition). By 1898 this was had reached its eighteenth printing. For other editions see bibliography. For guide books see: Wilson Ed. Murray (1890) and bibliography for

The ruins of the city caused the same sort of historical imagining provoked by biblical or ancient scenes elsewhere in the empire. The visitor could visit the Roman ruins, the Byzantine ruins where they were "carried back in thought a thousand years". Objects of interest were also Ottoman such as Topkapi Palace the old residence of the Ottoman sultans which provoked memories of splendour, mystery and intrigue: "Dynasties of tyrants have reigned in it for fifteen centuries and wrought in it the deeds of cruelty and lust than in any other spot on earth has seen".⁶¹ Representations such as these reflected older ideas about what the Ottoman Empire was in the past and also what it had meant to Europe. These pictures also presented an idea of the past against which modern conditions were compared. Bryce went one step further in his denigration of the city writing that the history of Topkapi palace was,

"a tedious record of palace assassinations and intrigues. Not even a gleam of the literary radiance which surrounds the Mahommedan courts of Baghdad Cordova and Delhi ever fell upon the Seraglio of Constantinople."⁶²

Ottoman architecture was often represented as much inferior to that of previous Islamic states such as the early Caliphates. James Bryce, for example, denigrated the Ottoman legacy in Istanbul. Although he had a particular dislike of the Ottomans, and was an active agitator against Ottoman rule, this idea can also be found in many other accounts.

Istanbul was still regarded as picturesque and of interest as an Oriental city. Hogarth aware of the developing touristic nature of the city was of the view that "There is so much to look at, and make notes of during a limited space of time", and "the ordinary tourist, with only a week or a fortnight to spare is certain to omit something worth investigation" such were the many things to see. He generally found the city of interest and found many of the mosques such as the Sulemaniye more interesting than such famous places as Aya Sofya, which was an attraction for

other editions. See also Lewis (1963); Stoneman (1987), 21-71 especially 68-71 for nineteenth-century views.

⁶¹ Bryce (1878), 346.

⁶² Bryce (1878), 341. For later descriptions and histories which include Topkapi palace: Freely (1983); Sumner-Boyd and Freely (1972, 1983).

the British and Western visitor.⁶³ Even Bryce who was generally contemptuous and critical of Istanbul and wrote that the "interior is very dirty and irregular and tumble down...smells offend the nose and loud harsh cries the ear", admitted that at the same time the City was

"so wonderfully strange and curious and complex, full of such bits of colour, such varieties of human life, such far reaching associations from the past that whatever an inhabitant may desire, a visitor at least would not willingly see anything improved or cleared away."⁶⁴

Picturesque features were the crooked streets, the steep hills, the scenes of "stolid old Turks sitting cross legged sleepily smoking, sometimes amongst piles of gorgeous fruit...a group of gaily painted houses, with walnut and plane trees growing around them".⁶⁵ This was the picturesque 'East' that was desired by the British and Western audience in general. It was these scenic aspects which often made writers critical of Western influence, because the "Constantinople" of their imagination would be lost. This desire to see and experience the genuine 'East' was one of the contradictions underlying British ideas in general. In a period when there was much less tolerance of difference, (almost always perceived as inferior), writers were also critical of change and development when it had occurred. They wanted the Oriental, whilst at the same time they held it in varying degrees of bemusement, dislike and contempt.⁶⁶

Prior knowledge about and expectations of Constantinople voiced in this age of European imperialism contributed to the picture of Istanbul as a declining Oriental city. The city from afar appeared beautiful but writers qualified their impressions on contact. To writers who had travelled in other parts of the Empire it was a typical Oriental city where image did not meet reality. Old Stamboul was generally depicted in negative terms as a typical dirty Oriental place, but was still able to excite curiosity for its monuments and Oriental features such as bazaars and other aspects typical of Oriental life. Writers complained that it was dirty, ill paved and unkempt,

⁶³ Hogarth (1896),. See also De Amicis (1878); Muller (1897); Wilson (1892).

⁶⁴ Bryce (1878), 343.

⁶⁵ Bryce (1878), 343.

⁶⁶ Some writers in the tradition of Urquhart (1839) were aware of the disadvantageous aspects of the relationship with the West and how the area was spoilt, but most commentators, especially travellers would have preferred easier conditions which implied change. See Kedourie (1987), 24-28 for the range of discussion about change in the East.

dirty and dislikeable. Galata for example was invariably described as "a long, low, dirty district...full of Greek sailors and bad smells".⁶⁷ Underlying contempt was often apparent, as in the account of the journalist Gallenga. When he visited Constantinople apart from the Bosphorous he was full of scorn. Pera, the diplomatic quarter of Istanbul was described as a particularly dislikeable area, which he called "that detestable metropolitan suburb". His views reflected typical reactions to 'Oriental' cities but despite this Istanbul was still of interest for its 'Oriental' nature, as a object and a specimen of another world.⁶⁸

Areas outside Old Istanbul such as the Bosphorous and villages along the Bosphorous were generally liked by visitors. They were full of admiration for the beauties of the Bosphorous, such as the sight of minarets from afar, the scene of the sea and the outline of the city. These sights usually provoked romantic descriptions such as "the sharp bold outline of the rocky isles that rise from the surface of the sea of Marmara", or the view of the hills that rise from the sea which were "glittering white" and the houses along the Bosphorous were intermingled with "dark green cypresses". These descriptions were also compromised on close inspection. The city was beautiful from afar but the overall perception was that it had been spoilt by the Turks and provided few comforts and entertainments for the tourist.⁶⁹ Gallenga despite his negative views of the old part of the city admired the beauties of the Bosphorous and even said that the Turks should be given credit for their love of open air. He also qualified this positive view by providing a picture of Oriental repose and inaction. The Turk, he wrote, enjoyed the Bosphorous, but they do so because to sit is natural and to move is unnatural and "their idea of earthly bliss is to sit in a boat, to squat cross legged on the grass...to sit or lie there hour after hour, smoking much talking little".⁷⁰ Such accounts reinforced the idea of Eastern stagnation.

The city was overwhelmingly seen as a city in decline. It was nearly always the idea that

⁶⁷ Bryce (1878), 341.

⁶⁸ Gallenga (1877), II, 21. See also Stoneman (1987), 64-5, for description of Pera. For ideas about Islamic cities see: Çelik (1992).

⁶⁹ Bryce (1878), 342. For some writers such as Muller (1897), the scenery is compensation for the unpleasant sides of the city. See also Stoneman (1987), 64-66, for descriptions of the Bosphorous.

⁷⁰ Gallenga (1877), II, 23.

the city had seen better times that determined the picture. Writers complained of the dirty and ill maintained streets because "the Turks leave everything to chance" and had no concept of maintenance and improvement. The overall impression was that the city has "the air of having been built all anyhow", not according to any plan and this is what made it Oriental and not European. Istanbul was represented as a confusing mixture of old and new. It was clear that Istanbul like other areas was being judged by Western standards. When writers spoke of lack of plan, the inference was of lack of European style plan. This was a view that took almost no account of the different functional and economic/political nature of the layout of the city. Such views were superficial and subjective impressions.⁷¹

Visitors were depicting a city that did not appear understandable to them and their impressions merely reinforced this sense of difference. The perception of difference was not in itself strange or unexpected in a society that was different to Britain, but it was the interpretations of this difference that were important. Descriptions of the city like those of the people were not value free. Information about the landscape and people was refracted through an already defined perspective which reflected cultural and political bias. The journalist Gallenga referred to above represented an unconditionally hostile view, but he in many ways merely took to an extreme point ideas that were quite common. His views were not necessarily considered extreme by his readership, who had already developed a series of ideas about the Ottoman Empire as a result of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8. Gallenga's writings, for example presented a general account of the Empire as well as prescriptions for the crisis in the Balkans. His representation of Istanbul was difficult to disentangle from the general picture of the Ottoman Empire that he presented.⁷²

In addition to this Gallenga intended general conclusions about the Ottoman Empire to be drawn. He described Turkish villages along the Bosphorous in a way that inferred that they were a microcosm of Turkish society. Villages, he said were 'closeted', with "houses with black fronts, with jealously latticed windows, no sign of life at the rigidly closed doors, hardly anywhere the sight of children playing". The Asiatic side of the Bosphorous was represented as

⁷¹ See Lewis (1963), 96-144, which shows the complex nature of trades and the social, religious and political functions of the city.

⁷² Gallenga (1877), 2 Volumes, which deal with all subjects relating to the empire and Eastern question.

more beautiful and "there was in short something harsh in this genial looking Thracian atmosphere, something to remind us we were still on earth," and that the "Bosphorous was not yet paradise much as its best moments it looked like it".⁷³ Certain ideas and assumptions underpinned these perceptions. In the case of Gallenga these images constituted deliberate constructions of the 'reality' of the capital and Anatolia. He deliberately associated the Turk and things Turkish with unfreedom, and things Western with light, joy and freedom. As shown above, even in the apparent innocent descriptions of the beauties of the Bosphorous a positive description was qualified.⁷⁴

Istanbul was compared unfavourably to European capitals because it was said to offer few comforts and lacked museums and picture galleries. This apparent lack was generally blamed on the Turks who 'lacked' historical and archaeological awareness. Visitors noted and criticised the lack of churches, pointing out that half the population were devout Christians. They interpreted this lack of churches as irreverence for Christianity, due to the fanaticism of the Turk or general intolerance.⁷⁵ The sight of religious buildings and especially Aya Sofya provoked regret, anger and remembrance that this was a Muslim empire. Aya Sofya wrote Bryce is a "noble monument of Christian art" and he like many British visitors could not but hope that one day this monument would be restored to Christianity and the "voice of Christian worship be heard once more beneath this sounding dome".⁷⁶

The population of the capital was generally negatively represented. To some writers the people were considered as objects who added colour to the scenery, but to others their existence was a point of general irritation. The population of the capital were variously described as a "motley assemblage" of Turks, Armenians, Greeks, Jews, and Franks. Istanbul, Milner said referring to the eighteenth century account of Montague, was a "tower of babel".⁷⁷ Bryce described Istanbul as,

⁷³ Gallenga (1877), II, 35.

⁷⁴ See also Ramsay (1897), who presents this dichotomy in Western Anatolia between things Greek and Turkish.

⁷⁵ Bryce (1878), 343.

⁷⁶ Bryce (1878), 346. See Stoneman (1987), for descriptions of Aya Sofya.

⁷⁷ Milner (1877, new edition), 324.

"an endless crowd of every dress, every tounge and religion, fat old Turkish pashas lolling in their carriages, keen faced wily Greeks, swarthy Armenians, easily distinguished by their large noises, Albanians with prodigious sashes of purple silk around their waists."⁷⁸

The implicit and often explicit comparison was with Western cities, or other 'Oriental' cities which were part of the British Empire and by the 1880s and 1890s this comparativism was symptomatic of British views in general. Istanbul was represented as an Oriental city which had declined, and which was inferior in every sense to European capitals. In seeking the cause of this decline, the rule of the Turks was the favoured explanation. Istanbul was interpreted as one more instance of the blight and incapacity of the Turk to govern. The city was still picturesque and exotic in many ways, but writers often regarded this as a diminishing quality, and resigned themselves to the inevitable advance of Europe. Istanbul was represented as a symbol for the rest of the empire, as the same picture of decay and misgovernment. Istanbul was thus 'Oriental' in both its negative and positive meanings as was the rest of the Empire.⁷⁹

The perspective and standard of judgement of Istanbul were clear. The capital was criticised for being Oriental, but its European features caused it to be criticised as false, not properly done or even un-European like. Istanbul had several functions for the British observer: It served as an object of touristic interest, for a glimpse of 'Eastern' life, it served to confirm ideas about the Ottoman Empire and its inability to progress, and ultimately it served as a confirmation of British and Western superiority. It was a museum piece and as Bryce expressed it, Istanbul "is nothing because it is everything at once because it mirrors like the waters of the Golden Horn,

⁷⁸ Bryce (1878), 349, 350. Bryce was one of the main sources referred to in Murrays Guidebook for Constantinople. See Wilson (1907). Many writers commented on the mixed population. See Muller (1897), 11-13.

⁷⁹ See Bryce (1878), Gallenga (1877), II. See also Kesnin Bey (1888), ix-xv, 17-32, who claimed to be an Ottoman citizen. He sought to debunk the myth of the exotic East, the 'fairylend' of Lamartine, Chateaubriand and others, by showing that the 'magical aspect of the city' was "but a mask to hide the melancholy picture of a people in the last stage of decay, social corruption and immorality." (xiii). He negatively compared Istanbul to Egypt, by this time under British rule. The former "stands still", whilst the latter "goes forward with the march of Western Civilisation" (24). These assertions were strange if they genuinely came from an Ottoman citizen and could have been voiced by a negative critic like Gallenga. The interesting point was that few writers still had a romantic view of Istanbul, in the same way as earlier in the century. More often the comparison was negative to that of Europe.

the manners and faces of all the peoples who pass in and out of it".⁸⁰

V.3 'Turkey in Asia'.⁸¹

According to the well known geographer and writer on Anatolia W. M. Ramsay "the Turkish Empire stands on a pre-Turkish foundation and is built up of scraps and fragments of ruined Roman institutions" , and

"there is hardly any social institution in Asia Minor showing any degree of legal or social constructiveness that is not an older Anatolian creation, Moslemised in outward form, and usually degraded in the process."⁸²

Ramsay touched here on some of the most important themes that were expressed about Ottoman rule in Anatolia. The term 'Turkey in Asia' like the term 'Turkey in Europe' was in this period a term of some significance. Although it never quite took on the connotations that it did for the Balkans, there was still an underlying notion that the Turks were 'in' Asia as they had been 'in' Europe and that their role in Anatolia was similar to the negative role that they had elsewhere.⁸³

The picture of decay and decline that writers presented in their accounts of Anatolia contributed to the idea of the negative effect of the Turk, who was variously represented as doing nothing (indolence), doing too much (oppression), or doing everything incorrectly (mis-government). In its most extreme version, the thesis of destruction associated the rule of the Turk with dearth only. In some writings there was also the view that Anatolia belonged to the West as the land of the former Byzantine/Greek empire. In this representation, the Turk was an interloper in lands that did not belong to him, which was similar to the idea of the Turk as alien in the Balkans.⁸⁴

The idea of the uncreativity of the Turks and the perception of them as destructive only

⁸⁰ Bryce (1878), 352.

⁸¹ The term used by many writers to describe mainly the area co-existent with Anatolia, referred to otherwise as Asia Minor, Asiatic Turkey. See Campbell (1876); Eliot (1908); Farley (1878).

⁸² Ramsay (1897), 265, from a chapter entitled *Turkey's debt to her predecessors in Asia Minor*.

⁸³ See chapter three.

⁸⁴ The latter of which appears to be the view of Ramsay. See Ramsay (1897, 1903).

had a long heritage in Western thought in general. As the writer Milner in his *History of the Turkish Empire* republished in 1877 expressed it the Conquest [of Constantinople 1453] was "a dreadful calamity to the thousands in the path of the conquerors" and only of benefit in that Europe was saved by the halting of the Ottomans in the Balkans. The Ottomans were for most of their history were the enemies and rivals of Christendom and although their threatening nature had disappeared by this period, in the understanding of the past and present of the Empire these ideas were reiterated.⁸⁵

In addition to this negative perception there was also a more positive one that had its origins in the writings of diplomats and residents in the Ottoman Empire from the fifteenth century such as O. G. C. De Busbecq. His account had shown a grudging admiration for Ottoman military skill and administrative organisation. These ideas were reiterated in later writings including histories of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth-century such as Creasy's well known *History of the Ottoman Turks*. Like Milner's *History* this was republished during the Eastern crisis of 1875-8. This recognition of Ottoman civilisation as worthy of respect was a diminishing view by the late nineteenth century. By the late nineteenth century it had been replaced either by the old Christian polemic which as previous chapters have shown regarded the Ottoman Empire as the enemy of Christianity, or by the idea that the Ottoman Empire was the enemy of 'progress'. This idea of the lack of contribution to Civilisation that had been voiced so strongly at the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 was the dominant view throughout this period. When the Turkish contribution or lack of contribution to Anatolia was assessed, a similar idea was echoed.⁸⁶

Like the negative perception of Ottoman rule in the Balkans, Ottoman rule in Anatolia was represented as a rule of devastation and unprogressiveness, and the Turks were considered as having contributed nothing to the area. Ramsay who was acknowledged as one of the main writers about Anatolia was unwilling to concede much to Turkish creativity. He perpetuated the idea that there was little in Anatolia that was not of an pre-Ottoman or Greek origin. Trade guilds for example were "merely one of the old social facts which the Turks did not succeed in destroying" and had an Anatolian origin rather than a Turkish one which could be traced to the

⁸⁵ Milner (1877, new ed), 85.

⁸⁶ De Busbecq (1633, first ed); Creasy (1877, revised ed). For the lack of civilisation thesis see chapter three.

Romans.⁸⁷

For writers with an archaeological interest, which was one of the main types of intellectual interest in this period, there was a common perception of the lack of interest and positive obstruction from the Ottoman government to archaeological endeavours. This was represented as evidence of the culturally destructive role of the Turk. Turkish neglect of monuments showed according to Ramsay that "The action of the Turks in every department of life has simply been to ruin never to rebuild". Ramsay linked these 'facts' about Turkish rule to contemporary events. This shows the general importance of the link between ideas and their effect not only on contemporary understanding but also in their relationship to the wider context of relations. Writers such as Ramsay were opinion makers, especially in the case of Anatolia where there was much less literature produced. Contemporaries often intended their views to be effective and make an impact. In the case of someone like Ramsay, he saw it as part of his role as a specialist to educate the British public and bring about change.⁸⁸

Writers like Ramsay spoke of the neglect of roads and the lack of understanding or recognition for historical monuments which they said proved the destructive and uncreative nature of Turkish rule. Roman and Greek ruins had been replaced by "Towns of mud bricks" and there was "not one building with the faintest pretensions to architectural beauty".⁸⁹ According to Ramsay, not only were the Turks responsible for the destruction of Roman and Greek monuments, but had also caused moral and intellectual destruction. They had "annihilated every educative and humanising influence in the land" and reduced and brought back the country "to the primitive simplicity of nomadic life". The Ottoman conquest was in his view retrograde in every sense and could only have been built on the basis of pre-existing empires otherwise it would have remained nomadic.⁹⁰ Ramsay touched on a frequently echoed theme that became

⁸⁷ Ramsay (1897). Reference to trade guilds was in response to an article by Sutcliffe (1896), Vol. 66, 820-29, which had attempted to show the longevity and beneficial nature of traditional Turkish guilds, which were threatened by European encroachment. See also the review of Ramsay's *Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (1890), in *Quarterly Review* (1892), 211-34.

⁸⁸ Ramsay (1897).

⁸⁹ Barkley (1891), 130.

⁹⁰ Ramsay (1897), see also (1902), 263.

a fundamental part of perceptions of the Ottoman past which influenced much twentieth century literature. This was the idea that the Turk contributed nothing to culture and to human civilisation. According to this frequently expressed view the Turk had borrowed his religion, used the skills and labour of others and also borrowed his statecraft from Persia. Ramsay went further to minimise any Turkish architectural contribution, stating that there was a stark contrast between "the stately ancient monument and the modern rag hung tree or common place turbe" which was he argued "a typical of the degeneration of Asia Minor under the Turks".⁹¹

In Ramsay's view which was representative of many others also, the only thing that the Turks had actively contributed to Anatolia was Islam, and this itself prevented development. Islam, he stated was a religion suited to "tribes in a certain primitive stage of development", and it "furnishes a more rapid and efficacious means of improvement than perhaps any other religion", but "it carries them only to a certain stage and leaves them inexorably fixed". Islam was unable to progress and the effect was seen in the following way,

"A Nation can not step backwards except in the direction of intellectual degeneracy; and in social organisation, the peoples of Asia Minor stepped backwards when they became Mohammedan."⁹²

Ramsay who was one of the main writers on the history and geography of Anatolia was willing to concede little to the Turks. It would have mattered little that there was a discussion of the Ottoman Empire's debt to former civilisations if it was a purely academic question only. However, at a time of European expansion in Asia the expression of these ideas had political significance. Such views reinforced the belief that the Turks were neither capable of ruling or developing their resources. These ideas implied that the Turks also had no claim to the land or resources. Turks were represented as a negative factor only and from this stemmed the idea that

⁹¹ Ramsay (1897), 266. For the twentieth century idea see Iorga (1935) and Köprülü (1935) Koprulu was one of the first Turkish Republican writers that tried to overturn and also come to terms with the idea that the Ottoman Empire was simply built on Byzantine foundations. For his ideas see Berkay (1990).

⁹² Ramsay (1897), 269-70. The idea of the unprogressiveness of Islam had become almost a catch phrase by this period partly as a result of the work of European scholars like Ernest Renan and British scholars like Sir William Muir. See Renan (1893). For a critique of this see: Djait (1985); Muir (1894, 3rd ed., 1897), and for nineteenth-century ideas about Islam, Almond (1989); Bennet (1992).

the solution for the Eastern question was either to allow the growth of the Western spirit amongst the Christian populations or enforce European control.⁹³

Hogarth another well known writer on Anatolia was generally less negative in his view of Turks. However, he also attributed the decline of Anatolia to Turkish influence. For him both the 'East' and the Turks were in decline. His view was that the lesson to be learned from what he called the intercourse between civilised and less civilised races was that it was impossible to revive that which had passed. Under Turkish rule Anatolia was in decline and there was little hope of Turkish progress. Chances for progress amongst Christians was greater, and he compared populations with the conclusion that,

"The Turk is only active when he is destroying...and the Christians (Armenians) are as a race more given to working with their heads than with their arms and legs."

According to Hogarth the Anatolian was a dying race, being thrust out by "Alien Greek, Armenian, Circassian", who take his land by "fraud or force" leaving him weak and pathetic and the Anatolian peasant "appeals to no one, but dies by inches".⁹⁴

V.4 The 'Western' Solution for Anatolia.

The picture of decline presented above was not premised on the belief that the area could not be revived and improved, but it was premised on the belief that this improvement could not come from within, from the Turks. British writers placed their hopes for improvement on the Christian races of the Empire, or more generally on European sponsored improvement. Ottoman 'misgovernment' was considered a cause working against change from within. Misgovernment it was argued revealed the true nature of Ottoman rule, which was oppressive, anachronistic and corrupt. Misgovernment was generally seen as endemic to the rule of the Turk and there were few writers in this period that recalled earlier times when Ottoman government was at its height and had a well ordered and conducted administration. Turkish rule was seen as incapable and its

⁹³ See Ramsay (1897), 264, which was a common view of this period.

⁹⁴ Hogarth (1896), 65. Hogarth speaks of the slow death of Asia Minor and that "the most pathetic figure" is "the Anatolian Turk"(162), "unspeakable only in that he speaks so little", see 64-5.

rulers as unwilling to maintain order. As a result the contribution of Ottoman rule to the overall decline of the area was considered central.⁹⁵

Despite these negative perceptions there was a general agreement that the area had potential to develop. The well known journalist, political commentator and statesman Leo Amery who was important both in the 1890s and during the first two decades of the twentieth century as a commentator on questions relating to the Ottoman Empire, spoke of the potentialities for development basing his view partly on the idea that these areas were "not new and untried countries", but areas that had once been great.⁹⁶ The area at present was a situation of "decay produced by centuries of misgovernment", but there were also traces of once former populous areas.⁹⁷ Amery, like Ramsay saw the Ottoman Government as the obstacle and his conclusion was that this was the obstacle that should be removed in the same way that views of Ottoman rule in the Balkans had lead to the same conclusion.⁹⁸

Farley who had gained publicity from the crisis in the Balkans in the 1870s, and who for two decades had been trying to sponsor the idea of development by Britain of the Ottoman Empire, also represented Anatolia as an area that was capable of development. His views still remained negative about the Turks and he advocated greater British control at their expense. Farley's view was that,

"To regenerate Turkey in Asia is a work of which Englishmen might well feel proud; for there is probably no country in the world that possesses in an equal degree, the raw material of national greatness."⁹⁹

He pointed to the rich mineral deposits of Anatolia which when the British protectorate of 1878 was announced heralded "a new Eldorado...to the enterprise and energy of Englishmen". To

⁹⁵ For a discussion of this changed perspective see Kedourie (1987), 20-8.

⁹⁶ Amery (1899).

⁹⁷ Amery (1899), 67,68,69

⁹⁸ Amery (1899), 70. For railway development in Anatolia in this period see Chapman (1948); Earle (1929); Quataert (1983); Shaw and Shaw (1977), II. For the Balkans see: Chapters Two and Three.

⁹⁹ Farley (1878), 79,80

Farley rejuvenation could only come about as the result of the efforts of 'Englishmen' and not from the Ottoman Government which was perceived as rotten to the core.¹⁰⁰ He reiterated the common medical and anatomical metaphor used to describe the Ottoman Empire whose "entire body politic is rotten from the head to the extremities". Rottenness was the result of the supreme power of the Sultan, the lack of justice and a state of provincial administrative disorder. The image was of a country that was fair but the rulers corrupt, oppressive and backward.¹⁰¹

Many writers saw Anatolia through this developmentalist perspective, in which the potentialities for development were emphasised. Most of them, like Farley saw Western control or influence as the panacea for this improvement. Such control was considered the only way, as the Turk could not be relied on to develop the land. Some of these writers albeit a minority saw European colonisation as a means of achieving development and made a clear distinction between what could be achieved by the Turks themselves and what could be achieved by European help. Colonists from Western Europe were advocated by C. E. Austin in a work entitled *Undeveloped Resources of Turkey in Asia*. Colonisation he argued would have a beneficial effect and the people of Anatolia and the land would be improved by contact with European colonists. It would also be a solution to depopulation.¹⁰² Some writers were even sceptical that problems could be solved by foreign interference because of the lack of population. One writer spoke of the possible emigration of the Turks further Eastwards to Asia, but even this might not settle the problem because of the vastness of Anatolia where the Turks "would be a mere drop in the ocean".¹⁰³

The resources of Anatolia were considered to be under-used as well as mis-used. Writers spoke of the lack of technical skills to develop and exploit resources. Burnaby expressed the opinion that if the Turks realised this then they could pay their debts and Turkey "would speedily

¹⁰⁰ Farley (1878), 195-216, which discusses the rottenness of the Ottoman Government and the "terrible responsibilities" of the British protectorate, 216. See also Eliot (1900), 458. For the diplomatic history of the period after 1878 see: Anderson (1983), 220-60.

¹⁰¹ Farley (1878), 82, 83, 84.

¹⁰² Austin (n.d), 86,87. De-population was a common perception see: Burnaby (1877, 6th edition), I, 102, 172.

¹⁰³ Barkley (1891), 131.

become one of the richest countries in the world."¹⁰⁴ A few writers were sympathetic to this problem of under-used resources and the very real potentiality as they saw it, but all writers whether sympathetic or not acceded to the view that what was happening in the Ottoman Empire was the reverse of what was happening in Europe. As the sympathetic Burnaby expressed it, "Poor Turkey, she has descended the steps of civilisation, and not ascended them like European nations".¹⁰⁵

The obstacle to development was thus commonly perceived as the Turk who was the cause of decline and the obstacle to progress. Even Burnaby wrote that the Turks "will not advance with the times in which they live; if they adopt European inventions, they copy them blindly, and without adapting to circumstances."¹⁰⁶ Barkley who attributed the ills of the country to climatic and geographical problems as well as human factors noted that the "other drawback is the Turk. Without foreign assistance he will do nothing; ay more, without foreign coercion he will do nothing".¹⁰⁷ Barkley's verdict was that the Turk was satisfied with conditions as they were at the time of his fathers which was a condition of, "A barren and unfruitful land; a miserable, half starved peasantry; an empty exchequer, and the steady periodical loss of provinces". He perceived a long-standing unwillingness on the part of the Turk to be helped. Turks were stubborn and unwilling, "like a wild, untamed savage animal, his instinct is to destroy and not create".¹⁰⁸ Descriptions of the resources of Anatolia and their development potential were thus also described in a language of race and culture. The underlying idea was that Anatolia under Ottoman rule could not progress because of the non-European nature of the society and the people. The notion of Oriental was therefore important in discussions about the economy because it was largely in this realm that Britain saw itself as superior.

The writer Ramsay had a theory of causation in which the history of Anatolia was the continual struggle between the West and the East which in this modern period has resulted in the

¹⁰⁴ Burnaby (1877, 6th edition), I, 168.

¹⁰⁵ Burnaby (1877 6th edition), I, 172.

¹⁰⁶ Burnaby (1877, 6th edition), 303.

¹⁰⁷ Barkley (1891), 129-30.

¹⁰⁸ Barkley (1891), 130.

victory of the West. Hogarth also had a causatory schema whose conclusion was the same but the framework different. The East for Hogarth belonged to the past. It was once great and greater than the West and a once declined great civilisation resembled that of a "childhood" but it was a "second childhood". The nations of the East such as the Egyptian and the Anatolian developed great civilisations long before the West did, but he argued that the problem was that "Now they are old and cannot put on again their youthful energy, or fall into the ways of a later generation." He took issue with the view that the West had of the East as the child of the West to be taught its' ways. Rather he said the West was the child of the East which has now surpassed its fathers,

"we have learned of them, but we shall surpass and outlive them, and our development is not just what theirs has been, even as development of a second generation is never quite like that of the first."

The West's relationship to the East was that of "the modern son who proposed to bring his father up to date", and in one passage which illustrated well the nature of Britain's relationship to the 'East', he wrote, "We are dominant in those lands for the sake not for their but our own development, and in order to use them as our own stepping stones to higher things."¹⁰⁹

Anatolia in this period of imperialism was of interest for its history, of curiosity value because it was 'Oriental', and significant for its economic resources and its strategic position. When Anatolia was thought and written about the image was of former civilisations against which the present was measured. The dominant representation was of a declining Oriental society, once important but increasingly irrelevant in modern conditions unless major changes were made or Western control enforced. This was the conversion of the idea of the 'sick man of Europe' to that of the 'dying man of Asia', whose illness was perceived as terminal and the Turk when he realised that his day had come would "succumb to fate" and recognise that the future lay with the West.¹¹⁰ The British vision encompassed a view of the past and the present of Anatolia which was intimately linked to prescriptions for the future. It was the nature of solutions that were advocated that made British ideas politically significant. Again, for Anatolia as for the Balkans, British perceptions were not merely academic opinions, but were intrinsically connected

¹⁰⁹ Hogarth (1896), 99.

¹¹⁰ See Barkley (1891).

to the wider context of relations and power.

Chapter 6 Ottoman Anatolia. The Peoples I: The Turks

VI.1 Introduction: the Turks in Anatolia.

The notion of Turkey 'in' Europe which was the subject of chapter three was based on the distinction between European and non-European. The Eastern crisis of 1875-8 was interpreted as a sign of the progress of the West indicated by the decline of Turkish power and the rise of Christians respectively. In a similar way the underlying idea about Anatolia was that of the progress of the West represented by the perceived rise of Christian populations there or by signs of Western style development. After 1878 diplomatic attention in Britain shifted to Anatolia. Consequently there was greater interest in the population and resources of the area. As in perceptions of the Balkan provinces a discourse of 'progress' defined in racial and cultural terms was also applied to Anatolia. Race and religion were seen as the determining feature of peoples and the means of understanding their ability or inability to adapt themselves to the conditions of modern life and Civilisation. Perceptions of Anatolia were underpinned by the notion that the East was declining. The notion of Turkey 'in' Asia, like Turkey 'in' Europe was also significant. Embodied in this term was the idea of the alien nature of the Turks in Anatolia. In some accounts Turks were considered as 'in' Anatolia as they had been 'in' Europe. More generally they were seen as part of Anatolia and the area itself was represented as Eastern in character. Anatolia was therefore 'suitable' for the Turks defined as an 'Oriental' people. Despite these different perceptions there was a shared belief that Turks represented a declined or declining race which would eventually have to yield to the superior Western spirit.¹

This chapter focuses on perceptions of the Turks and Ottoman society in Anatolia. It explores how in the period after 1878 the tradition of comparison between populations continues as the framework for understanding the Ottoman Empire. Ideas were expressed in the context of the debate about the future of the Ottoman Empire and whether the Turk was fit to rule and whether the Empire could reform and progress. Ideas were also expressed in the context of support for nationalism in the Empire. The negative view echoed at this time was that the Turks although a distinct race were not a nation, either amongst themselves, or as rulers of mixed

¹ See Campbell (1876); Eliot (1900, 1908); Ramsay (1897, 1903).

populations.

VI.2.1 A Race of the Past: Perceptions of the 'Ottoman Turks'.

Older accounts of the Turks or Ottomans as they were more generally referred to had represented them as a race distinguished by their martial qualities. Creasy's influential *History of the Ottoman Turks* republished in 1877 reflected admiration for the martial qualities of Ottoman civilisation, for the longstanding loyalty to the Ottoman dynasty for over five hundred years and for the original institutions of government that demonstrated the skill of their creators. These features according to Creasy reflected the tolerance and noble qualities of Ottoman civilisation. Creasy also compared the Ottomans positively to other Muslims races for their "high personal qualities" and the Empire was admired for its tolerance.² However, in this revised edition of 1877, Creasy also pointed to the loss of many of these qualities as he compared conditions with when he wrote twenty years earlier. In the 1877 edition he wrote,

"Modern observers have been repeatedly struck by the metamorphosis of the high minded and generous country gentleman of Anatolia and Roumelia, exemplary in all the relations of domestic life, into a sordid and grasping tyrant [The Ottoman official]."³

Creasy's changed perceptions of the Turks were significant. They pointed to an important shift in British perceptions of the Ottoman Empire in general, from that of seeing the Ottoman Empire as a civilisation on its own terms and the Ottomans as worthy of admiration, to seeing the Empire as a declined 'Oriental' power with little to commend it. The dominant representation in this period 1876-1908 was to portray the Ottoman Turks as a race of the past. Differences in perceptions lay between those that recognised that there was a distinct Ottoman civilisation and others that were unwilling to concede that the Ottoman Turks ever had a civilisation as such.⁴

Post 1878 perceptions were distinguished from earlier ones by the definition of Ottomans as one of the Oriental races. This was important at a time when progress and nationhood were the standards of judgement. Turks were represented as a mixed race which had become a

² Creasy (1877), 100-110.

³ Creasy (1877), 109.

⁴ For the former see Davey (1897), for the latter Freeman (1877a, b).

negative designation in that Turks were not seen as conforming to a racial definition of nation based on purity. They were perceived as having no national culture or civilisation like other peoples in the Empire such as the Greeks, Armenians or Arabs. Most writers expressed contempt towards the Turks, even to the 'pure Turk', seen as the Anatolia peasant. These pure Turks were not considered as the material out of which a nation could be constituted. Generally Turks were equated with Muslims in the Empire but differentiated from Circassian, Tartar and Kurdish Muslims. They were defined as a racial group rather than a nation unlike the Christian peoples in Anatolia. British writings reflected an awareness of the different usages of the terms Ottoman and Turk and produced a stereotype of Turks as a distinct peoples. Turks were most often represented in the negative capacity of not European, not Arab and not Christian. Turks were a species apart, a mixture, a puzzle, a composite of negative characteristics.

Ideas about the Turks of Anatolia thus presented two main ideas which were: that of the Turk as a distinct although mixed race, and that of the Turk as an Oriental race, both of which were significant. The former was significant because it continued the process begun in the 1870s in reaction to the Balkan crisis, of defining a category of peoples called 'Turks', however negative this was. This eventually had implications for the rise of Turkish nationalism which was in part a reaction against negative European perceptions, as well as the general process of disintegration resulting from nationalism amongst other peoples. This negative image of the Turk also had implications for Anglo-Ottoman relations and contributed in part to anti-British feelings.⁵ The image of an Oriental people on the other hand was significant because it revealed the changing perception of the Turk at a time of European imperialism. It illustrated the degree to which the Turk once tolerated and considered worthy of admiration had been reduced to a category which had become an increasingly negative one of simply Oriental, or one of the Asiatic races that belonged to the past.⁶

Ideas from the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 reflected the change in perceptions of

⁵ See Kushner (1978).

⁶ Amongst the writings examined there was only a handful of writers who represented the Turk as capable of survival as a race, of which Hobart Pasha (1878); Woods Pasha (1890) and the Orientalist Lane-Poole (1888, 1908) stood out. The latter pointed out that although the common view was of the 'sick man', the Turk has not been significantly defeated in any of the wars in which he had engaged in the nineteenth century.

the Turk under the influence of a new type of racialising about European and non-European peoples. What was important to the British observer was that the Turks were non-European and non-Christian. This image was evident in perceptions at the time of the Eastern crisis and became a general image after that time. In the period under study although use continued to be made of older texts like Creasy's, writers used this knowledge in a way that helped to reinforce a racial classification that was more divided along the lines of European and non-European than anything else. This has already been illustrated in the case of views of the Turk in the Balkans.⁷ This can be seen quite clearly in both scholarly and popular writings about Anatolia from the late 1870s which reinterpreted the old classifications in the light of the new types of racial theorising.

VI.2.2 The Defining of a Race: The Turks of Anatolia.

At the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 the idea that the Turk should retreat back to Anatolia had been voiced. Underlying this idea was the notion that Anatolia was more suitable for the Turks given their race, origins and character. Turks were the majority population in Anatolia and as the older history of T. Milner republished in 1877, stated

"It is in Asia chiefly that the Turks look like themselves, having preserved unchanged the costume of their ancestors; whilst in Europeanised Constantinople, tight fitting clothes, patent leather boots and cravats encase the limbs of the Muslim."⁸

According to Milner and reiterated in later accounts of this period, the Ottoman Turks were a branch of a larger Central Asian Turkic speaking peoples who shared common physical, racial and linguistic features. Milner differentiated the Turks of the Balkans from the Turks of Asia. The former he said resembled more the Caucasian model of European nations having mixed with European peoples, whilst 'Asiatic' Turks were of the 'Mongolian or North Asiatic variety' and therefore were more pure. However he qualified the notion of purity by arguing that the Ottomans were not pure Turks as they had undergone a process of racial intermixture especially with Circassians. When Milner used the term Turk he was referring to Muslim peoples of

⁷ See Freeman (1877b), 11, who differentiates the Bulgarians and Magyars as part of the same Turanian race from the Turanian Turks, because the former by adopting Christianity and assimilating themselves became 'European'.

⁸ Milner (1877), 2, 293.

Anatolia and the Balkans who were of Central Asian descent and were not Slavs, Turkomens, Kurds or Arabs. Turks in his definition were the followers of Osman from which the Empire developed. The Ottoman Turks he said had a consciousness of themselves as belonging to an empire with splendid achievements in the past. They were more pure because they had been less affected by Western civilisation.⁹ For Milner the Turk was equated with Ottomans.

In the period covered by this study, unlike the precise use of the term Turk by Milner, the term was used inconsistently. Sometimes the term 'Turk' was used to mean the non-Christian populations of the Balkan and Asiatic provinces, with the exception of Arab speaking provinces where the majority of peoples were defined as Arabs with distinct linguistic and cultural characteristics, but with the Government described as 'Ottoman' or 'Turkish'. At other times the term 'Ottoman' was used to signify the descendants of a dynasty and the ruling classes of the original fourteenth century empire (similar to Milner's definition). On other occasions the term 'Ottoman Turk' was used to distinguish them from other kinds of Turk. Very often the term was used synonymously with Muslim. Less frequently a linguistic definition was used so that Turks were those in the Ottoman Empire who spoke Turkish.¹⁰ Occasionally there was an awareness of Ottoman usage in which Ottoman and Turk were differentiated, the latter term applied to the peasants of Anatolia, and the former to those members of the dynasty and administration, who spoke Ottoman Turkish, practised the Muslim faith and were part of high Ottoman culture. When the term was used in this way by British commentators, the term Ottoman was applied to the government and the term Turk to the Muslim peasantry of the Balkans and Anatolia. When they used the term Ottoman it was usually to refer to the upper and Most often 'Turk' and 'Ottoman' were used interchangeably. The confusion in definition and terminology reflected in part the complex ethnicity of the area. It also represented the lack of clarity, interest, or care on the part of the observer. 'Turk' or 'Ottoman' was not in general used for Christians unless they had 'turned' Turk, i. e. converted to Islam, as the popular *Handbook for Asia Minor, Transcaucasia*

⁹ Milner (1877), 3-4.

¹⁰ See Hogarth (1896); McCoan (1878); Milner (1877); Ramsay (1897); Wilson (1895). For an examination of Ottoman usages, see: Kushner (1978), 20-6; Lewis (1973), 1-2.

and Persia pointed out.¹¹ Impressionistic racial stereotyping dominated perceptions in this period.

A typical account of the 1880s was Bettany's *The teeming millions of the East* whose subtitle was *Being a Popular Account of the Inhabitants of Asia. The History of Existing and Extinct Nations, Their Ethnology, Manners, and Customs*. This genre of writing presented Turks along with other Asiatic peoples in an account of a generalised East inhabited by a species of non-Europeans. This book showed how the Turks were portrayed from a popular ethnographical point of view.¹² The book was based on the idea of the essentially distinct nature of East and West. The latter was defined as homogenous, unlike Asia which "has been the theatre in which the Semite, the Aryan, and the Mongol have developed, have varied, have struggled with one another".¹³ The framework of thought was that of superior and inferior races. As Bettany expressed it, tribes will "excite melancholy when we think of their low organisation, their superstitious beliefs" or on the other hand "they may inspire us with cheerfulness when we reflect how far other portions of the human race have risen above them". The mind-set was clear, Turks and other races in Anatolia were represented as a lower form of mankind, a primitive peoples almost childlike.¹⁴ Bettany's sketch of races differentiated the "true Turks" from the nomadic Yuruks and Turkomans. The former were

"agriculturalists with brownish complexions, black eyes, dark hair and slightly prominent cheeks. They are a rather coarse looking race, physically strong, but neither very adaptable nor skilful, slow and deliberate and encumbered by heavy clothing."

Other types of Turk were the "official or the European Turk," who was distinguished from the "true Turks" who were defined as "naturally honest," and who told the truth which made them

¹¹ Wilson (1895), 56. It is also an interesting and revealing point that British commentators on the Ottoman Empire hardly ever speak of 'Ottoman Christians' which suggests that they did not see them as such.

¹² Bettany (1889), ix.

¹³ Bettany (1889), v. See also 9, which puts forward what has become a commonly accepted view that the Turk is an obstacle not only to present populations but also the discovery of previous ones. See Chapter Five, V. 4.

¹⁴ Bettany (1889), vii-viii.

an object of ridicule by their Greek and Armenian neighbours. These "true Turks" were "kind and hospitable, welcoming and assisting strangers, and treating them as honoured visitors, placing everything at their disposal, and "Tolerance is also a virtue and much greater than that of the Christian populations that surround them."¹⁵

Bettany included in his definition of 'Turk' or 'Ottoman' those other peoples who had converted to Islam, such as Bulgarians and Bosnians. He included also Albanians and Tartars. Among the Ottomans he wrote were descendants of Arabs and Negroes from Africa. The Turk was a "warrior" who had "developed out of a predatory nomad;" who now having ceased to be a warrior; "seems to lack the power of becoming much else, and is declining".¹⁶ This account which has made use of some of the current authorities on ethnicity and race represented the Turks as an Asiatic Muslim race of mixed origin who were once great, but were now in decline. They were not racially pure, although there was a category of 'true Turk' (which the author defined by behaviour which he made synonymous with race). These 'true' Turks had admirable characteristics. He distinguished them from the other inhabitants of Anatolia such as the Turcomans, Tartars, and Christian races. Bettany's representation of races in Anatolia could be found in other accounts of the Ottoman Empire in this period. What was significant in this account which was typical in many of its notions about the Turks was that the Turk was considered to be an Asiatic race, one of the inferior races and part of a civilisation that had now declined. This was certainly the importance for this writer. What was also significant was that although the Turk has been classified according to the popular distinction of European or Asiatic, there was also the idea of the Turk as a distinct race, however mixed he might be which differentiated him from other peoples in Anatolia.

There was a common image of the Turks of Anatolia as a mixed race. Sir Charles Wilson, author of Murray's *Handbook of Asia Minor, Transcaucasia and Persia*, expressed it as the result of intermarriage, "Osmanlis", he wrote, "between the victors and the vanquished, ... have almost entirely lost their original race characteristics." In Anatolia "every variety of type may be seen from the purest Mongolian amongst the nomads to the finest Caucasian amongst the landed gentry". He noted that many people have Greek or Armenian descent, whilst the Turks

¹⁵ Bettany (1889), vii-viii.

¹⁶ Bettany (1889), 329. See also De Leon (1876), 686-697; Trowbridge (1878, 1882).

of Constantinople are a "wonderful mixture of the East and the West". According to Wilson, Turks (a category that included Osmanlis, Seljuks, Turkomans, Yuruks and Tartars) were of Turanian descent and ethnographically belonged to the same family as the Finns, Samoyedes, Tungus and Manchus. The Turks he explained had conquered and settled in Anatolia and Europe and embraced Islam.¹⁷

D. G. Hogarth whose work was mentioned in chapter five, and who made an important contribution to ideas about the Ottoman Empire and especially about Anatolia, also reiterated the idea of the Turks as a hybrid race. Three parts of them according to him were aborigines of Anatolia, for example the descendants of the Phrygians, presumably (although he does not explain further) during the process of conquest and settlement of Anatolia. The Turk he said was probably the Yuruk or wanderer but also the settled population, a point at which his account differed to that of Bettany. Hogarth used the terminology common to other writers in this period, the generic term 'Oriental'. For Hogarth the Turk was an Oriental although "a little less effete than some other Orientals," because the Turkish upper class have been "reinvigorated" by a supply of Caucasian wives.¹⁸

Hogarth's writings were important not only for their influence on the public by virtue of his reputation as a knowledgeable traveller and writer on the Ottoman Empire, but also because they reflected the extent to which he as a scholar also used categories that were typical of more impressionistic writings of the period. Likewise typical and influential was the impressionistic 'tribes of tartars' kind of analysis that had been voiced during the Eastern crisis of 1875-8, of which Bettany, mentioned above is an example. This typology of race helped to relegate the Turk to a position below that of European races.¹⁹ In the popular account of Bettany the Turk was not really well defined as a race. He was referred to as "Mongoloid" Turk which implied Mongol or

¹⁷ Wilson has used some of the new theories of the 1890s that were specialist and had not had an impact on a wide audience about the relations of Turks to Finns, and Hungarians. He also uses an older racial classification. See Kushner (1977), 9-10 for the racial theory of Turanian. See also Freeman (1877b), 11, who uses the notion to distinguish them from other Turanian races like Hungarians. See also: Kushner (1977), 20-26, and the bibliography for writings of Orientalist L. Cahun and A. Vambery.

¹⁸ Hogarth (1896), 80-1, 100. See also Ramsay (1897).

¹⁹ For notions of racial classification see Bolt (1976); Hyam (1976), 37-47.

Tartar ancestry. Bettany also associated physical characteristics with mental attributes, which reflected the influence of biology on ethnographical studies. By implication, the Turk was a generalisable entity, and just one of the "Asiatic races", the "teeming millions of the East".²⁰

Much of the contemporary debate about non-European peoples was about the capacity of races to progress. The emphasis on and re-confirmation of the Asiatic nature of the Turks meant inevitably that they were defined as one of the lower races. J. McCoan who contributed to leading periodicals at the time of the Congress of Berlin as part of the debate about the future of "Asiatic Turkey" said of the Turks that "Physically they are the finest of these Asiatic populations; being nearly all above the middle height, powerfully built" and contrary to ill information they were "as robustly healthy as long centuries of temperance and general morality can make a race".²¹ This was in contrast to Creagh who argued that "their piety and zeal gave way to effeminacy and corruption in every way opposed to those martial qualities for which the free Arabs of the desert have ever been celebrated".²² Both perspectives reinforced an image of a race that was fundamentally different from European races. The conclusion that was most often drawn was of inferiority on account of racial characteristics.

These kinds of characterisations were typical. Writings generally produced superficial versions of the thesis of the 'survival of the fittest'. Races were discussed according to their effeteness or strength and their resulting capacity to survive in modern conditions. Older writings from earlier in the century had generally been more positive about the Turks and had represented the Ottoman Empire as a civilisation with customs and traditions which were in many ways admirable. The Turks had always been represented as inferior to Europeans. However they were not seen as inferior in the same way that they were in the period of this study influenced as it was by a new kind of racial that developed from the 1860s. The effect of racial thought was that it helped to lay the foundations for the culture of imperialism of the late nineteenth century. This later period was characterised by the lack of tolerance for and recognition of civilisations other

²⁰ Bettany (1889); Burrows (1962); Bolt (1976).

²¹ McCoan (1878), 42-44. See bibliography for other writings, which were intended to provide the public and government with a detailed account of the Anatolia, people and resources. See review of McCoan (1878c) in Amery (1899).

²² Creagh (1880), I, 34. See also Farley (1878), 198.

than European.²³ The 'mongrel' nature of the Turks was thus seen in a negative light.²⁴

In defining the Turks as a race one of the most common distinctions was that made between Turks and other Muslim races such as the Arabs in the Empire against whom they were often negatively compared. According to the writer De Leon,

"the bright picture of Eastern song and story from which we have taken our conception of Turkish character, Haroun el Rasheed, Saladin and their compeers the Moors of Spain represent people of a race and blood entirely different to the present lords of Islam and their ancestors."²⁵

Turks in contrast to Creasy's account mentioned above were often seen as inferior to Arabs, or both of them were seen alike as the 'Mussulman races'. Creagh compared the 'Turkish race' to the Semitic one of the Arab and saw it as inferior. He wrote that the Turks beginning with the Selchuks "insensibly copied the gravity and dignity of the great Semitic race" and "whose expressive and elegant language engrafted on that of the Turks, became refined into the idiom of the Sublime Porte". Thus he explained in contemptuous terms the nature of Ottoman Turks. It was clear that for this writer Turks were both unoriginal and inferior not only to the West but also to other Muslim peoples.²⁶

Support for the Arabs and admiration of them from this period would become more significant so much so that one writer can see in the 1880s the beginnings of the anti-Turkish pro-Arab policy that was followed during the First world war.²⁷ Although the Arab provinces are not the subject of this study and it is difficult to assess the exact influence of this from this earlier date, it is significant that the paradigm of the cultureless Turk had a longer life after the time of its original promulgation. It had been an important idea at the time of the Eastern Crisis of 1875-

²³ For example Milner's account written originally in the 1850's is based on a monogenesist argument. See Milner (1877), 2.

²⁴ See Bryce (1878), 349; For older authorities see Creasy (1877); Von Hammer (1827-35); Ubicini, Edited by Stanhope (1856).

²⁵ De Leon (1876), 688. See also: Arnold (1876).

²⁶ Creagh (1880), 40. See also the perceptions of writers in Chapter Three about the 'uncreativity' of the Ottomans.

²⁷ See Blunt (1880); Shukla (1973). For the development of Arab nationalism see Antonius (1938); Dawn (1973); Zeine (1966, revised edition);

8 and continued to be an influential perspective on the Turks as a whole. Whether the Turks were compared to Arabs, Christians or Europe they suffered by comparison and were depicted as copiers of the Arabs or of Europe.²⁸ British commentators acknowledged that Turks were not Arabs, but neither were they European. Turks had been part of Europe for five hundred years or as some writers would prefer to say they had encamped themselves in Europe, but had not been part of it religiously, culturally or racially. Despite European style reforms the Ottoman Empire was still represented as Eastern and unchanged and it was this representation that was significant.²⁹

According to the writer R. Davey in his much reviewed book *The Sultan and his Subjects* published in the late 1890s the Turk had no sense of patria or nationality and no attachment to the lands in which he lived. The Turk was considered a nomad. Davey even claimed that the Turk had no attachment to the capital. In fact the Turk had no home, and

"His house may be very happy, even a luxurious one, but it has none of those associations which make the poorest home, be it ever so humble, dear to us here in the West. He hasn't even a family name."³⁰

As previous chapters have shown a nationalist perspective on the Ottoman Empire was one of the dominant ways in which the Empire was understood and represented. The Empire was often depicted as a series of nations rather than an integral whole. Writers were sceptical about whether Turks could be considered as a nation. At a time of nation state building and European empire there was a declining faith, or in the case of many writers no belief at all in Ottoman attempts to weld the peoples of the Empire together. The Ottoman Empire in the popular perception was not

²⁸ See Chapter Three and the writings of W. S. Blunt and H. Salmone in bibliography.

²⁹ It is an interesting point however that the original edition of Milner's History of 1857 was 'The Ottoman Empire: The Sultans, the territory, the people, whereas the new revised Editions of 1876 and 1877 were called 'The Turkish empire'.

³⁰ Davey (1897). A book that was extensively reviewed in the press and periodicals. See also: Eliot (1900, 1908).

considered as one nation, nor capable of becoming so.³¹

Bettany's account was representative of the impressionistic definition of this post-1878 period. The future of Asia was seen through the perspective of the continuing spread of Western civilisation, which would inevitably lead to European control. Bettany compared the decline of the Ottoman Empire to that of Persia. He argued that "only the Arab appears to have sufficient energy, independence and resolution...to successfully withstand the foreigner.", and in contrast to the Ottoman Empire China and Japan with their "old and tenacious civilisations" would be able to withstand this. Japan, he said had impressively borrowed ideas from Europe unlike the Ottoman Empire.³² Perceptions of the Anatolian peasant, considered by some as the purest representative of the Turkish race, confirmed this idea of the decline and the incapacity of the Turks as a race in general to progress and live up to the standards of European civilisation.

VI.3 The Components of the Turkish Character.

The Eastern crisis of 1875-8 had provided the British public with a stereotype of the 'Turk'. The negative version of this had presented the Turk as brutal, licentious, unprogressive and incapable of ruling other populations. The positive image although it stressed the 'nobility' of the Turk also used a similar framework of racial stereotyping. The Turks were depicted as an Oriental race that although not totally unlikeable were nonetheless unprogressive. In both visions the Turk was a non-European, an Oriental and inferior. The paradigms of race and religion determined the picture. Perceptions of the Turk in Anatolia were presented within this same framework and reinforced certain ideas about the Turks, about Islam and about their inability to progress and form a nation. The following section explores dominant perceptions of the components of the Turkish character, which were the characteristics singled out by contemporaries in their understanding of the Turks in Anatolia.

³¹ For the significance of this from the Ottoman side see Kushner (1977), 22-49, which shows how consciousness of a 'Turkish' identity was a phenomenon of the late nineteenth-century. See also Mardin (1962); Lewis (1979) for Ottoman reactions to nationalism and interpretations of Ottoman identity.

³² Bettany (1889), 8-9.

VI.3.1 The 'True Turk': Perceptions of the Anatolian Peasant.

Ethnic Turks were the majority population in Anatolia. Most of the population were engaged in rural pursuits and it was therefore not surprising that many writers concentrated on the figure of the Anatolian or Turkish peasant, as he was variously called. Turks in Anatolia, except the Government were represented as simplistic, honest and uncorrupted. Racially peasants were considered as the purest form of Turk and had many admirable characteristics. Admiration for the simple peasant, not corrupted by Western civilisation was proportional to the degree of criticism for the upper classes and the administration.

Simplicity, Hospitality and Indolence

The Turks of Anatolia by which writers generally meant the Turkish peasant and not the government or its representatives, were depicted as primitive people with simple needs. Condescension often accompanied positive representations, as peasants were not only described as simple, but also 'indolent'. Ramsay described Turkish villages in Anatolia as uniform and monotonous. All villages were the same. Village Turks according to Ramsay delighted in childish pleasures such as children's' story books. He compared this "unbroken monotony of village life" to the variety and endeavour that characterised Christian villagers, who aimed to make life varied. Turks by contrast existed for military reasons only. The Turk was a soldier and when he was not a soldier he "lounges through life doing absolutely nothing, fed by the women".³³ A picture of primitivity and indolence was constructed.

There was a common image of Turkish hospitality. Simplicity and kindness to strangers were also described as general features amongst the Anatolian peasantry. The *Handbook for Asia Minor, Transcaucasia and Persia* described the typical Turk as "good natured and honest, brave and self sacrificing...His hospitality is great".³⁴ Bettany noted that Turks had distinctive customs and simple desires, such as coffee drinking and tobacco smoking. He described how Turks were in general temperate. The typical Turk, according to Bettany was monogamous, loyal to his wife and children who "are well treated; children brought up with kindness and equal rights" and even animals are well treated and "The stork perches on the roof of the Turk, and avoids that of

³³ Ramsay (1897), 21. See also Eliot (1908), 91-3.

³⁴ Wilson (1895), 56.

the Greek".³⁵ The overall picture that emerged from this was that the Turk was a strange mixture between kindness and cruelty.

Other frequently referred to characteristics were that the Turks as a people were devoted to their religion and traditions. The traveller Bigham pictured them as likeable, ignorant and credulous people who had not had much contact with foreigners. He recorded curiosity towards him as a European and the instruments that he carried with him as a traveller such as fieldglasses. Bigham noted the "apathy of the populace" in his visits to bazaars and how the sellers did not seem over anxious to sell their goods. He interpreted this as lack of commercial instinct which he attributed to the "mental dullness of the Turk", which he thought was a result of "the climate and the Koran together", which had "fostered the Turks inertia to such an extent, that with the exception of the soldiers I did not see a single man in Erzinjan who looked alive".³⁶ He called the Turkish peasant "good natured as he is lazy," with no desire to work unless absolutely necessary with the result that "a rich and fertile country is rapidly becoming waste, simply from lack of energy".³⁷ Murray's *Handbook* depicted the Turkish peasant as "brave, sober, frugal and capable of great endurance", but also as "uneducated, indolent and apathetic", with few desires, that were easily satisfied.³⁸ An image of simplicity and indolence was produced by such accounts.

As in perceptions of the Balkan provinces, it was common for the good features of the Empire to be seen as the product of Christian endeavour and energy, rather than Turkish. Sympathy was often expressed for the peasant, who as a result of his innocence was an object of abuse by the Government, and also by more skilful and progressive races. According to Bettany, for example Turks were not such keen businessmen as the Greeks and Armenians. As a result of this they were often cheated by them as money lenders. Turkish peasants were "fleeced by the officials more successfully than the Greeks and Armenians". They suffered from billeting, conscription and were "dejected and depressed". These peasants in Anatolia were simple and "fatalism and resignation make the Anatolians not resist;" and as a result of this "they are

³⁵ Bettany (1889), 331. See also Milner (1877), 296 where he speaks of Turkish kindness to animals.

³⁶ Bigham (1897), 48.

³⁷ Bigham (1897), 71.

³⁸ Wilson (1895), 57.

gradually being crushed"³⁹ The historical geographer Ramsay also noted that all useful trade and was performed by Christians. Ramsay represented the Turk as "a servant, a hewer of wood, and a drawer of water". He also added that, "he rarely can learn to do more".⁴⁰ Ramsay like other writers respected the simplicity of Turkish peasant life, finding peasants simple frank and dignified and interesting to study. He spoke of the charm in the "sober, measured intonation of Turkish conversation;" and "the language with its sententiousness, its entire want of relative pronouns and subordinating conjunctions was full of interest". The language in particular had a charm especially for the expression of simple stories.⁴¹ A picture of a simple people enjoying a simple life with uncomplicated social relations, typified by few shops, no cash economy and a subsistence form of life was thus constructed. Ramsay despite his praise of the Turkish language did not idealise this life. Rather the subsistence nature of life was criticised as detrimental, because "No one tries to earn; there is nothing to earn," and even if the peasant does he is at the mercy of the rapacious officials. To Ramsay the typical characteristics of the Turks were "absolutely trustworthy, strong, slow, steady, modest, quiet, perfectly well behaved," but nevertheless "perfectly useless in all the departments of work where any skill or readiness was required".⁴²

In Burnaby's well known travel account he writes that he was motivated to travel because of the bad reports that he had heard of the Turks. He represented the Turks of Anatolia as an amiable and unobjectionable people and provided a picture of greater activity than for example Ramsay. He described how he saw Turks in cafés discussing political questions and issues of wider concern. Nevertheless, he too commented on the lack of education, and how Turks "amuse themselves with gossip and eating. Their mental faculties become absorbed". He also confirmed the picture of the hospitable and simple nature of the Turk, and untypically was positive about

³⁹ Bettany (1889), 331. See also Hogarth (1896).

⁴⁰ Ramsay (1897), 22.

⁴¹ Ramsay (1897), 42-3. See also Ralston (1877), 33, who perceives a truth and simplicity about Turkish popular culture and compares Turkish and English religious stories. See also the perceptions of Eliot (1908), 95, where he spoke of the 'inability' in his view of translating the concept of 'interesting' into Turkish and that "this lacuna in the language has its counterpart in the brain".

⁴² Ramsay (1897), 45.

the ability of Turks to progress, writing that "Give the Turks a good government, and Turkey would soon take her place amidst civilised nations."⁴³ One of the most positive depictions of the Anatolian peasant was that of D. G. Hogarth whose ideas about this 'pure Turk' brought together the idea of simplicity and backwardness. Hogarth alluded to the 'poverty' prevalent in villages and the meagre wants of the Anatolian peasantry who were resigned to their position, and were fatalistic and not fanatical. These features he also significantly saw as the reason why these pleasant and inoffensive people could not progress.⁴⁴ Writers are agreed in the inability of the Turks to live up to modern standards.

Some writers were more contemptuous of the simplicity of the village Turk, such as the resident and traveller H. C. Barkley, who in addition to his account of travels in the Balkans also wrote an account of his travels in Anatolia. Barkley represented the mocking imperial voice. He spoke of the vices of drinking especially among the upper classes and argued that everything was done in reverse by the Turk even on the question of getting drunk. The idea of the Turk doing everything in reverse was an older perception. It was mentioned in the account of Milner, and the effect of this idea was to reinforce a sense of inferior difference with Europe. Barkley unlike Bettany presented a picture of widespread drunkenness throughout Anatolia especially in Eskişehir where he had heard of drunken fights and murders. From this he presented the conclusion to his readers that the end of the Turk was nearer than expected. He wrote: "With a people as indolent and lazy as the Turk, a people as incapable as children of commanding their passions, drunkenness will find a ready victim".⁴⁵

The Anatolian peasant was thus generally liked and represented as hospitable and amiable, but also as Ramsay expressed it, "perfectly useless". The death of the Anatolian peasant was often predicted. In general there was little faith in the idea that the Anatolian peasant was the material on which a nation could be built. The Oriental character of the Turk, his indolence, his fatalism, his duplicity were factors that worked against what British writers

⁴³ Burnaby (1877, 6th edition), II, 313-4. See also review in *Quarterly Review* (1878), Vol. 146, 549-594.

⁴⁴ Hogarth (1896), 96.

⁴⁵ Barkley (1891), 69; Milner (1877). See also Eliot (1908), 96-7, on indolence, "His [the Turkish peasant] idea of bliss, what he calls keif is to recline in the shade smoking and listening to the soothing murmur of running water", a perception that confirmed the idea of the 'do nothing' Turk.

projected as the ideal and necessary national characteristics. In contrast to British characterisations of other populations such as the Greeks and Armenians in Anatolia discussions of the Anatolian peasant were dismissive. The influence of racial thought meant that only those races characterised by their 'pushing' qualities could survive in the age of modern [European] Empire.⁴⁶

VI.3.2 The Turk and Islam.

The term Turk and Muslim had long been synonymous in the collective European mind and had achieved exceptionally negative connotations during the Eastern crisis of 1875-8. At that time the Turk was said to typify all that was negative about Islam. This theme continued to be influential throughout the rest of the period. The negative characteristics of Islam were represented as an essential part of the Turkish character. As R. Davey writing in the late 1890s defined it, Ottoman meant that "His nationality is not Turkish, nor even Ottoman, it is Islamic" and "Wherever the minaret rises, there is the Ottoman's home".⁴⁷ The Eastern crisis of 1875-8 had also demonstrated the strongly moralistic and Christian discourse that developed when Muslim rule over Christians was an issue. Perceptions of the Turks in Anatolia were influenced by a similar discourse. This was not surprising given the continuity of writers and writings about the Ottoman Empire in the period after the Eastern crisis.⁴⁸ The effect of older notions and assumptions about Islam can be seen particularly in the image of Turkish fanaticism and sensuality which developed.

Perceptions of Islam in general were negative in the nineteenth century. In many quarters the old Christian polemic was continued. The prophet Muhammad was depicted as an imposter and a sensualist. His sensuality was believed to have imbued the religion with falseness and immorality. These ideas in Britain were associated in particular with the influential orientalist Sir William Muir. Muir's ideas had a receptive audience in the evangelistic religious

⁴⁶ See Barkley (1891), Hogarth (1896).

⁴⁷ Davey (1897), I, 210.

⁴⁸ Such as Gladstone, MacColl, Stead amongst others.

environment of Victorian England.⁴⁹ From another angle there was a more positive account of Islam associated especially with the works of R. Bosworth Smith. He and others like him categorised Islam as one of the pure theisms, that had and could have a positive effect on primitive peoples and lift them to a higher moral plane.⁵⁰ Although this tolerant view was important reflecting as it did a strand of British religious and secular thinking it competed with the negative view. In the highly charged atmosphere that revolved around issues of Turkish Islam such tolerance was less effective against generally held prejudices. On the level of popular perceptions the negative view of Islam was more influential especially when applied to consideration of the Turk.

In addition to these basically Christian perspectives, the question of Islam in the late nineteenth century was also influenced by the contemporary debate about religion and science. Whereas Christianity especially in its Protestant forms was believed to be compatible with science and progress, Islam was regarded as incompatible and unprogressive. The famous and influential writings of E. Renan about Islam and Science and his debates with Muslim intellectuals were known in England.⁵¹ Perceptions of the Turk were affected by these ideas. The idea that Islam and people who professed it could not progress was added to the repertoire of negative characteristics that went to make up the Turkish character. In general Islam was regarded as negative in its influence on the Turk. Views of Islam conformed either to an older Christian polemic or to the modern discourse of progress in which Islam was pitted against modernity. The conclusion of both of these strands of thought was of the incompatibility of Islam with modern civilisation.⁵²

⁴⁹ For works of Muir see bibliography. For accounts of Muir see Bennet (1992), 103-7. General accounts of Islam in nineteenth-century thought see Almond (1989), Daniels (1966); Hourani (1991).

⁵⁰ For Bosworth Smith's writings see bibliography and Bennet (1992), 74-102; Hourani (1991).

⁵¹ For Renan's writings see bibliography. For the debate see Djait (1985), 42-50 ; Hourani (1962). George Washburn, for example in the *Contemporary Review* of 1893, 667, in writing of the nature of Islam makes use of Renan.

⁵² For views of Islam in the nineteenth-century see Almond (1992); Bennett (1989) and MacColl (1888) for a contemporary view. There was a lively debate amongst Islamic modernists about the compatibility of Islam with science. For this debate see: Hourani (1962).

VI.3.2i Turkish Sensuality

A review of books about Islam which included the work of Muir, Boswell Smith and Hamlin (First President of Robert College, Istanbul) T. C. Trowbridge, the head of a Missionary school in Eastern Anatolia reflected the elements of this negative image. These articles showed the extent to which ideas of progress had come to influence both a secular and religious polemic against the Turk. The perceptions of Trowbridge continued the traditional Christian polemic but also incorporated the idea of progress to produce a damning indictment of the Turk on the grounds of his religion. The essentials of this negative image of Islam were of it as a sensual, fanatical and immoral religion based on false principles. As Trowbridge expressed it, "the Turks are lustful" as a result of religion and had "gross defects of character" which according to him were acknowledged by his friends also.⁵³ Turks were a "sensual people" which he said took the form of licentiousness. Significantly, Trowbridge quoted the Orientalist Muir on Turkish concubinage with slave girls, which was said to be a product of religion. Slavery was that "degrading illicit intercourse" which was a "crime against nature ", and "derived from and nurtured" by religion and the nature of the Prophet's life. Muhammad was a "sensualist, and his religion is a sensual religion".⁵⁴

Polygamy was mentioned as an essential feature of Ottoman society. According to Trowbridge, Ottoman Sultans had as many as sixty wives, which proved that the "Turk is nursed in licentiousness". The Turk, wrote Trowbridge wanted to make the earth like the sensual paradise of the Qur'an. He spoke of the "continuous supply" of Circassian beauties for the harem of the Turk. Turkish sensuality like that of Muhammad's was "not of the kind that flaunts itself in the face of society; on the contrary it rigidly conceals itself from the gaze of the world" but "signs of immorality" were not difficult to discern.⁵⁵ The weight of evidence wrote Trowbridge had shown the sensuality of the Turk, and Christian antipathy towards the Turk was "due more to their dread of their sensual passions than to mere religious animosity." Christians he said feared to let their children mix with Turks and the Christian was "especially careful to prevent his sons remaining alone with them". This idea of the sexual depravity of the Turk had already

⁵³ Trowbridge (1882).

⁵⁴ Trowbridge (1882), 283-5. For Ottoman slavery see: Erdem (1993).

⁵⁵ Trowbridge (1882), 283-5

been greatly publicised at the time of the Eastern crisis and was therefore not new. Nor was the image of the cruel Turk, which was also attributed to Islam as it was "an essential part of the religion of the Koran to persecute Christians".⁵⁶

Trowbridge continued his characterisation of the Turk. Immorality was "universal" amongst Turks and "The masses of the Christians are virtuous; the masses of the Turks are thoroughly depraved;" Turks were "born and live in an atmosphere of vice", which was a product of religion. Trowbridge quoted Hamlin, whom he called a friend of the Turk, as saying "the fourth and worst vice of the Turks is their sensualism". Trowbridge claimed that "It is to feed Turkish sensuality that the slave trade throughout the empire and in the interior of Africa is maintained". The effect of this sensuality over centuries had been to cause the effeminisation of the Turks. Polygamy according to Muir was at "the root of Islam, the secret of its decadence" and it means a "dark future of the Turks as a people".⁵⁷

V.3.2ii Turkish Fanaticism

These ideas expressed by Trowbridge were echoed in other accounts. Islam according to popular perception had imbued the Turk with a religious zeal, generally defined as 'fanaticism'. Turks were represented as capable of atrocities and in the case of some writers fanaticism was completely synonymous with the term 'Turk'. As one writer stated it "When his fanaticism is raised," which it always is then the Turk "is as barbarous as his ancestors under Timour the Tartar". Islam was depicted as a dark force, always capable of bursting out into fanaticism against Christians. The traveller Creagh cited examples of this cruelty such as massacres of the wounded during war. According to him a fanatical Government produced a fanatical army which stirred the population up into a "blind and ferocious enthusiasm." For Creagh this antagonism was an historical reality and he had little faith in removing the animosity of centuries. By tradition and nature the Turk hated the Christian and was trying to keep them down.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Trowbridge (1882), 283-4. See also Denton (1876); Freeman (1877); MacColl (1880).

⁵⁷ Trowbridge (1882), 283-88. See also other writers influential during and after the Eastern crisis such as Farley (1876); Gallenga (1877), 2 Volumes; Gladstone (1876a, 1896); MacColl (1877, 1880).

⁵⁸ Creagh (1880), I, x-xi.

Writers differentiated between types of Turks. Wilson expressed the idea that in general the mass of the Turkish population were "not naturally fanatical", unless "excited by religious teaching", and in general the Turkish peasant was "kindly disposed to his Christian neighbours".⁵⁹ Or as Milner depicted them, Turks were not generally "prone to anger; but when thoroughly roused their passions are terrible and their cruelty remorseless".⁶⁰ Turks were nevertheless represented as potential fanatics and some writers adhered to the view that they were permanent fanatics.⁶¹ Ramsay also contrasted town and village Turks representing them as different in their degree of tolerance. He wrote that "New Style Turks, provided a grudging hospitality, whilst "detesting Europeans and all their ways", which he explained in the following contemptuous way: "It is when he is most conscious and natural that the Turk is cordial and charming. When he begins to try to think he becomes disagreeable".⁶² Wilson in the *Handbook* also differentiated between towns and country areas, explaining that most of the Turks in towns were officials, and the townsmen were "less liberal and more fanatical than the peasant" and the reasons for this were generally defined in racial and cultural terms.⁶³

VI.3.2iii 'Tolerance and Nobility': The Minority View

In contrast to those writers mentioned above who saw Islam as only negative in its effects on the Turkish character, there was in addition a smaller group of writers who were more positive in their views, and presented a contrary vision of tolerance. Gambier who was a writer on Ottoman subjects, for example in an article entitled *The Turkish Question in its Religious Aspect* explained that he wanted to explore whether Islam was as bad as it had been represented. He also wanted to assess the question of whether any nation could live under Islam, both of which were issues of great topicality when he was writing in the 1890s. The points that were significant to him conformed to the tradition of writings in the nineteenth century which were influenced in part

⁵⁹ Wilson (1895), 57.

⁶⁰ Milner (1877), 294.

⁶¹ MacColl (1877, a, b, 1880). See also Landau (1990), on Pan-Islam.

⁶² Ramsay (1897), 39.

⁶³ Wilson (1895), 57.

by Orientalists such as Bosworth Smith, which were more positive and relativistic in their view of Islam.⁶⁴

According to Gambier, Islam was not lacking in morality, but had a moral code that was simply different to that of Christianity. Islam, Gambier wrote was more earthly than Christianity and good was considered attainable on earth. Islam could not be defeated on the grounds of truth and he said that Moses was no more plausible than Muhammad, and that both Muhammad and Jesus were fighting corruption and evil. In part these ideas were based on the notion that Islam suited Oriental peoples such as Turks and Arabs. Gambier wrote that the Muslim heaven was more suited to the Oriental character of the peoples. Arabs, for example would not have been wooed by the idea of promises in the future: "One can conceive a robust minded Arab preferring a Houri even if one cannot sympathise with him".⁶⁵

Furthermore he wrote that the religiosity of Muslims could not be criticised. Muslim charity was practical unlike the unattainable socialistic charity of the Christian, and his conclusion was that there was nothing in Islam which made it incompatible with good government. Acts of fanaticism such as attacks on Armenians in the Eastern provinces were attributable to race not religion, but more to the Sultan, the "trembling coward in Yildiz Kiosk".⁶⁶ Gambier argued against intolerance saying, that "The religion of Mahomet is perfectly suited to the Oriental" and more likely to produce peace and goodwill in the Ottoman Empire than Christianity, which was represented as divisive. He warned his readers not to forget the Christian wars of religion and "To say that the Turk as a Turk must be rooted out being unfit for Civilisation is just one of those terrible religious war cries that filled France with the blood of the Huguenots". On the contrary he wrote the Turk was "distinctly a law abiding man, an excellent father, a sober laborious husband", who believes more sincerely in the after life than the Christian. He added "to really believe in a future state is a good deal towards being a respectable member of society". Islam was thus appreciated as a religion that was moral and uplifting argued within an essentially nineteenth-century discourse of Islam as a religion suitable to a certain kind

⁶⁴ Gambier (1896), 521-535. For the ideas of Boswell Smith see Bennet (1989)

⁶⁵ Gambier (1896), 531.

⁶⁶ Gambier (1896), 532. For views of Abdülhamid see Pears (1917), Salt (1992) and the articles signed 'Old Resident', see bibliography.

of people.⁶⁷ The influence of racial thinking was strong.

The commentator McCoan admired Islam for its doctrinal simplicity. This was, he claimed the reason for the good of the mass of provincial Muslims. Islam was described as a pure theism with no priesthood and the Qur'an was regarded as a code of secular and religious law. The Ottoman Government was not intolerant according to McCoan and he spoke of the "truth, honesty, temperance and sexual morality" of the country Muslim who followed his faith and

"fanatical he may be though in my experience the fact is much exaggerated in popular Western opinion but it is a fanaticism born of an honest pride in a simple faith and a purer moral code."

than the religions around him.⁶⁸ Campbell echoed this view. He wrote:

"Mahomedan religion was radically a much lower religion than true Christianity but that in practice it is at least as good as perhaps better than the corrupt forms of Christianity so long prevalent and which were so overlaid by Roman mythology and Greek Metaphysics that the essentials of religion are greatly lost in practice."⁶⁹

Some writers compared Islam to Eastern Christianity and positive views of the Turk were often accompanied by negative views of the Christian populations of Anatolia, as they had been in the Balkans. D. G. Hogarth also disagreed with the idea of Turkish intolerance. The religion of the Turk in Anatolia, he wrote was not aggressive. He represented the Turkish peasantry, as "men of peace, needing no military force to coerce them...observing a Pax Anatolica for religions sake,".⁷⁰

In his book on the Eastern Question, Campbell spoke of Turks in both Europe and Anatolia. According to him the religion of the Turks was comparable to the "easy going religion" of England. It was not fanatical in his opinion, but he pointed out that it did not restrain the

⁶⁷ Gambier (1878), 533-5. See also Hourani (1989) for nineteenth-century views of Islam.

⁶⁸ McCoan (1878), 133. For a contrary view on the question of temperance see Barkley (1891), 69-70.

⁶⁹ Campbell (1876), 36-7.

⁷⁰ Hogarth (1896), 173.

human disposition to kill in battle and showed no mercy especially to women and children. Campbell compared conditions in Anatolia to conditions in England before Christianity and the implications of this comparison were clear. Underpinning this relatively positive view was the ideas of the superiority of Christianity to Islam. The latter lacked the humility, mercy and charity of the former.⁷¹

The religious character of the Turk was considered important by most writers and was generally given as one of the main causes of the problems of the Ottoman Empire: It was most often given as the reason for the believed cruelty of the Turk and was considered one of the reasons for his perceived unprogressive nature. In addition, it was given as the reason for the inability of the Turk to amalgamate with the Christian races, and also the Turks' inability to form a nation either of all peoples in the Empire or even amongst his own people. Subjective and impressionistic as these assumptions often were, they nevertheless formed an essential part of contemporary British understanding. Increasingly after 1878 ideas about the Islamic character of the Turk were negative. Islam was represented as incompatible with modern conditions. This perception stemmed partly from the debate about Islam and science, but also from the general context of imperial expansion. Non-European societies and peoples were judged by their ability to progress, defined in economic, political and cultural terms against a standard of European development. Views of the Islamic nature of the Turk thus had negative consequences for the overall picture of them as a people.⁷² As Campbell expressed it, Islam was not incompatible with civilisation "judged by standards of 1,000 years ago".⁷³

VI.3.3 The Turk and Civilisation.

What characterised the debate about the Ottoman Empire in this period was the way in which a standard of modernity was the yardstick against which the Empire was measured. During the reign of Abdülhamid there was a general belief that the Turks could not meet the challenges of modern Civilisation. They were considered as a race of the past and such progress that had

⁷¹ Campbell (1876), 36-7.

⁷² For the nineteenth-century debate about Islam and Science see Djait (1985), Hourani (1991).

⁷³ Campbell (1876), 38.

occurred, was a mere distorted form of development and most often due to the efforts of Christian populations.⁷⁴ This perception reflected the basic contradiction of the Western vision which to earlier sympathetic writers such as Slade and Urquhart had been evident. The question had presented itself to them in the 1830s and 1840s of whether an 'Oriental' state like the Ottoman Empire could change itself in a Western style direction. Slade had argued against Westernising reforms and the loss of the traditional character of Ottoman society. Urquhart in another way had appreciated the traditional nature of Ottoman society and was aware of the problems of change. In the late nineteenth century similar ideas were put forward, with the difference that in this later period the belief that Oriental societies could change was little believed. The contrast between societies in and outside Europe (at least the Western and Northern regions of Europe) was great and comparisons nearly always resulted in a negative image.⁷⁵

Mis-adaptation

The most common perception was of false adaptation which was touched upon in chapters two and three in perceptions of Ottoman government in the Balkans. This theme of false adaptation was also applied to the Turks in Anatolia. It was a perception that was particularly evident at the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 and frequently reiterated in later decades. McCoan writing about the peoples of Anatolia at the time of the Congress of Berlin described the upper classes as false copiers of things Western. They had imbibed a false Western education, which he called the "baser adulteration" of Pera, (European quarter of Istanbul). Of this adulterated French speaking Turk he wrote that he had ceased to be a Turk and had "become ashamed of his own creed, and recognises the moral restraints neither of it nor any other". In this period the effects of Western civilisation were generally perceived as negative in their influence on the Turk. Writers however made a clear distinction between the Turkish peasant who they often liked and their rulers. As McCoan expressed it "by the Turk I mean the honest, uncontaminated Osmanli of the provinces not his degenerate hemsherry of the capital and least of all the official cast".⁷⁶

⁷⁴ See: Arnold (1876); Pears in *Nineteenth Century* (1880), vii, 1020-39

⁷⁵ Slade (1832); Urquhart (1839).

⁷⁶ McCoan (1878b), 30-9. The word 'hemsherry' used here by McCoan is an Anglicisation of the Turkish word *hemşeri* meaning fellow countryman or compatriot. See Redhouse (1986), 474. See

Davey also differentiated between Turks of the 'Old School' and Turks of the 'New School'. The latter he regarded as adversely affected by Western civilisation. They were 'Frenchified' unlike the "fine qualities" of the lower orders of Turk characterised by "courtesy, frugality, sobriety, patience, industry, kindness to animals and children." But he noted that when Turks came into contact with Western civilisation they became cheaters like Greeks and Armenians. Turks according to Davey were a fine people qualified by their fanaticism. Davey made his position clear: the Ottoman Empire, except for a few thousand men which he placed in the category of 'Old Turk' was "in much the same intellectual condition as that which prevailed in England during the eleventh century".⁷⁷

Writers objected to what did not fit into their picture of what the Empire should be like. They complained about the Islamic character of the Ottoman Empire yet they also complained when this traditional character disappeared. Often the common object of blame was the Turk, who was criticised for what he appeared to be and also for what he appeared not to be. Both perceptions were produced by a culture that believed itself to be superior. As R. Davey expressed it, "So long as the Turk wore his Oriental robes, he was intelligible" and could be understood as an Asiatic whose cruelty and mistakes were even understandable. He was "an Asiatic who had come too close to Europe." The British at least and probably other European powers knew where they and he stood. However, "Once the present masquerade began confusion fell on the Turk and Giaour alike." Davey's perceptions illustrated the point referred to above about Western views. The underlying idea was that when the Turk tried to be Western he became unlikeable.⁷⁸

The question for Davey and other writers was thus defined as a question of Civilisation and as Davey expressed it, the Turkish "nation is neither educated nor civilised". This was often presented as a decline from a better situation in the past when they were more 'civilised' and had their own traditions. 'Old Turks' he said were more prejudiced against Christians but in proportion to this they had better manners, "The older fashioned, the more prejudiced the Turkish

also Ramsay (1897), For the changed intellectual climate see Kedourie (1987), 20-8.

⁷⁷ Davey (1896), I, 215. See also anonymous article, *The Mysteries of Administration in Turkey* (1880), 362.

⁷⁸ Davey (1897), I, expresses this contradiction in his liking for the Old Turk and criticism of the new.

gentleman, the finer are his manners," and "in the good old times before Abdülhamid" the Old Turks' hospitality was "splendid or simple according to his means but always hearty".⁷⁹ According to Davey Turks had been adversely affected by contact with the West which had made them copy Western civilisation with the result that a perverse form of civilisation had been produced. This was similar to the view expressed by Creasy at the beginning of the chapter that there had once been an Ottoman civilisation, which had now been lost. It also represented the eurocentric idea that in the 1890s when Davey was writing there was only one civilisation, that of Europe.

Western commentators used a eurocentric language to express these changes. Davey, for example was critical of the changes of the Tanzimat period (1839-76). He was critical of the education system, or rather what he described as a lack of an education system, which he said had produced atheistic Turks. Education in the medresses, the traditional establishments had according to him produced parrot learners. They had not combatted superstition. Davey compared them to the progressive nature of Christian education i.e. at Robert College in the capital. Ideas about the nature of education could quickly become the cultural/racial explanation based on the 'nature' of the Turk argument. Trowbridge, for example wrote that

"Turkish gentlemen, rich owners of real estate, local governors, and high officials, attend the examinations of such schools and gaze and listen in silent wonder at the evidence of progress and then go home to sink down again into their habitual lethargy."⁸⁰

The "habitual lethargy" of the Turk, the "indolence" of the Turk were the conclusions that many writers drew from an examination of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks were pictured as a people that were behind Europe in every sense. Burnaby who considered himself a friend of the Turk, described them as pigheaded, and wrote that "They will not advance with the times in which they live; if they adopt European inventions, they copy them blindly, and without adapting to circumstances", or the Turk "lives for the present" and his typical characteristics are procrastination summed up for the writer by "Not today, tomorrow". Burnaby's optimism about the changes that could result from good government was representative of an old and diminishing

⁷⁹ Davey (1897), I, 212.

⁸⁰ Trowbridge (1882), 290.

view.⁸¹

Some writers saw the problems of the Ottoman Empire as problems of adjustment to Western dominance and were sympathetic like the traveller and writer James Baker. He believed that an injustice had been done to the Turks by which he meant the peasant of Anatolia and not the government or its representatives to whom he was not sympathetic. Change in Turkey he said had been quick and there had been no time to adjust. He reflected that Europe should think back to its own history when it criticised the Turk, and think what it would be like if "the experiment had been attempted of suddenly forcing upon them a complete change in their social and religious customs." It was he said a society that was trying to cope with rapid change.⁸² Most writers in this period were less willing to give the Turk the benefit of the doubt. Views of change in non-European societies, which is the way that the Ottoman Empire was defined, were in general less tolerant and narrower than in earlier periods. As the writer De Leon expressed it the Turk "ever has been and still is only an animal, a magnificent animal once, an inferior one now" and he is "as incapable of adopting our Western Civilisation as the African Negro in the Eastern and the Indian savages in the Western Hemisphere".⁸³

What writers were recording in their perceptions of Ottoman society was the result of over fifty years of reform and change that was largely an attempt to adapt to European predominance. By the late nineteenth-century the contradictions of change in the Ottoman Empire were evident to both Ottoman and British commentators. Some British writers complained about a loss of traditional values, but the whole focus of British diplomatic attention had been to change the character of Ottoman society.⁸⁴ This was the contradiction of British and Western views in general. J. Bryce, for example amongst other writers bemoaned the passing of the picturesque in Constantinople fast being replaced by the modern chimney and railway, yet when writers like him saw the 'original' and 'authentic' they were likewise condescending and

⁸¹ Burnaby (1877, sixth edition), I, 303, II, 141.

⁸² Baker (1877), 137.

⁸³ De Leon (1878), 690, see also Farley (1876, 1878).

⁸⁴ See Hyam (1976), 62-69 on the Palmerstonian vision of the Ottoman Empire.

their conclusion was that the 'East cannot change'.⁸⁵

This period 1876-1908 has been considered by historians as a period in which the contradictions and mistakes of the Tanzimat period were most evident. It was a period in which there had been many significant changes in the civil and military administration of the Ottoman Empire. These changes had meant that different systems and jurisdictions had developed alongside one another. There was also a situation in which significant elements of the upper classes had been Western educated whilst the mass of people had not. These changes thus appeared to be based on a society that had been affected unevenly by the same process of change. The Ottoman Empire suffered more than it gained from its relationship to Europe economically and politically but yet could not escape this relationship as it was so deeply involved with Europe.⁸⁶

VI.4 The Death of the Fearful Turk.

The modern Turk according to one writer was "fair, fat, and florid" originally of Tartar lineage who came with "fire and sword" who "has small regular features", dressed in European costume, a compromise between a "policeman's uniform and a head waiters". The Turk "resembled outwardly a shabby genteel European" who was no longer imposing as he had once been in his 'flowing robes'. Soldiers with bowed legs fitted the new style even less and the "creative faculty of the Turk has been a dull and dead thing".⁸⁷ This writer believed that the Sultan now in comparison to Amurath needed to throw off the cloak of glamour that had surrounded the sketch of the Turk. Previous images of the Turk by which he meant pre-1876 were "invested with a romantic image" and yet at the same time he was unfairly painted "much blacker in manners and morals than there was any fair warrant for" at the time of the Crimean war. There should, he said be a middle view as there was "no more unsentimental and unimaginative being of the human family than your Turk has been or ever will be". The Turk was "the human incarnation of animality", he was a "sensualist by nature and by training his wants and wishes are of the

⁸⁵ Bryce (1876), 337-52.

⁸⁶ See Berkes (1964); Blaisdell (1938); Earle (1929), Lewis (1973).

⁸⁷ De Leon (1876), 687-8.

earth".⁸⁸ According to another writer, present day Turks in comparison to their ancestors were a sad reflection of a now lost greatness. Modern Turks were of an "effeminate type". Turkish women were small in stature" and of "sickly complexion easily fatigued by slight exertion", which the writer compared negatively to the strength and physique of a sixty five year old English woman. Worse than that "great numbers of them are intellectually stupid" and "many of them even the young men have the vacant look which borders close on the idiotic state". This writer attributed it to religion but also to racial character, and population decline was represented as evidence of a much wider moral decline.⁸⁹

Over this period as a whole the Turk was demoted in the British imagination from an object of fear to an object of ridicule, pity or hatred. Some writers still spoke of the 'martial qualities of the Turk' once so famous, but the general view was that these qualities belonged to the past. Turks were represented as a racial and cultural puzzle and the British did not really know what to make of them. They were seen to have come from nowhere risen to great importance and then begun this slow decline. According to one writer, from the time when they made their first appearance they "seem to have closely resembled a horde of Koords at the present day", which then grew into a military empire and became one of the most "fanatical and illiberal despotisms". The maxims of Turkish power according to him had been blind obedience to authority and "individuality was completely crushed out of the nation", and this "cruel discipline" became the basis of the national character" which he added made them the "finest soldiers in the world".⁹⁰ The Turkish soldier and the fighting capacity of the Empire could still capture the imagination of the British Public, as for example the defence of Plevna during the Russo-Turkish War in 1877, but the general view was that the Empire and the Turk were a declined substance.⁹¹

Yet this perception of decline, whether that was of the Turkish race, or of the Empire as

⁸⁸ De Leon (1876), 688. De Leon was a friend of Ahmad Riza and other Young Turks in exile. For the Young Turks see Ahmad (1969).

⁸⁹ Trowbridge (1882), 286-9.

⁹⁰ Creagh (1880), I, x, 60-1. Such features on the other hand are precisely those qualities admired by other writers such as Creasy. See Creasy (1877), 96-8.

⁹¹ For an account of the effect of Plevna on public opinion see: Anderson (1968).

a whole also contained many contradictions. Often British writers ignored Ottoman attempts to prevent the process of decline. They also neglected to consider the effects of the actions of European powers to hasten Ottoman 'decline'. This was a reminder of the words of Frederick Harrison one commentator on the Eastern Question, that British writers spoke as if the Ottoman Empire did not exist, quite forgetting that "However rotten the empire may be, it has still some fight left in it, some cohesion, some energy".⁹² The position of many writers was not to recognise this and the Turk was represented as an object to be removed, an element in a question, and an irritant to be expunged "bag and baggage" as Gladstone had described it in 1876, or controlled which was the favoured post-1878 solution. This was how the Turk was generally represented and the Turk as a type also provoked a strong response, as an obstacle to a true religion, or to the revival of the East which for some was a major European imperial objective.⁹³

Harrison also represented Ottoman rule as negative and corrupt (although he thought it no worse than other 'Asiatic Governments'), but in addition pointed out that, although writers may try to ignore the Turk as an element of the Eastern question they could not.⁹⁴ Harrison showed awareness of a very important aspect of negative British perceptions. He indicated the politically interested nature of ideas about the Ottoman Empire. He also pointed to the general British desire to overlook both the views of Ottomans, and to reshape the reality of the Ottoman world in a way that the Turks and the Sultan as ruler were not willing to accept.⁹⁵ Harrison was writing in reaction to the Eastern crisis of 1875-8, but the significance of his view applied to later periods, in particular to the Armenian 'question' of the 1890s, in which the Ottomans vigorously reacted to attempts by European states to split up the empire once again. Perceptions after the

⁹² Harrison (1876), 712.

⁹³ See Farley (1878); Blunt (1880), Salmone (1895) for ideas in this period about, the regressive effect of the Turk in Anatolia and the spurious claim as they saw it of the Ottoman Sultan's claim to the Caliphate.

⁹⁴ Harrison (1876), 715.

⁹⁵ Negative views of the Sultan Abdülhamid, see: Ramsay (1897) and the various articles by the Old Resident, see bibliography, were attributable in part to the belief that he was obstructive. Some like Ramsay called him 'un-Turkish', a surprising assertion given the general negativity of views about Turks in general. This perception was more a reaction to the perceived 'independent' policy of Abdülhamid, seen as pro-German and anti-British, which meant that he did not fit into British images of previous more accommodating Sultans.

occupation of Egypt 1882 in particular reflected this contradiction between reality, ideas and the interested nature of views.⁹⁶

It was also significant and ironic that the very race that the British outlined in such strong terms and dismissed as a declined and effete race had the opposite effect to that believed and intended. Not only were perceptions culturally blind, subjective, and at times malicious and inaccurate, but they were also ultimately self defeating. Negative images of the Turk had a direct contribution to what later became Turkish nationalism, based on the desire to prove the worth, the uniqueness and the contribution of the Turks to Civilisation, combined with a vigorous response to any attempted destruction of it. As Lane-Poole reflected in the 1908 edition of his book *Turkey*,

"The policy of the European powers towards the Porte has been uniformly selfish; and the policy has reacted upon themselves: for the Turks are keen witted, and will do nothing for those who do nothing for them. We can hardly expect Turkey to don every European habit we cut for her when we never court a lance beside her except for our own benefit."

The British it seems had in part created their own monster, 'the unspeakable Turk' and the 'sick man' who contrary to their expectations would not die.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ See Kedourie (1987), 20-8. Many British commentators claimed to not understand why the Ottomans were against the British occupation of Egypt.

⁹⁷ For Ottoman reactions to negative views see Kushner (1978), 27-49. See Lane-Poole (1908), 343, 365, who pointed to the surprising strength of the Turks despite the belief in the 'sick man'. Salt (1993), 143-50, for Ottoman reactions to accusations of massacre in 1894-6.

Chapter 7 Ottoman Anatolia. Peoples II: the Armenians

VII.1 British interest in the Armenians.

The Ottoman Empire formed a puzzle for many British commentators. It was puzzling how an empire that was economically backward could survive and how it did not simply fall apart from its internal divisions caused by a complex religious and racial mixture of populations. To many writers it was not one society, but several societies with little in common with one another and little loyalty towards a Government which was regarded as oppressive, inefficient and decadent.¹ Differences between rulers and ruled in an empire could be tolerated, and in fact they were perceived as natural, but Ottoman society was not seen in this way. The Ottoman Empire in contrast to how the British thought of their own was considered to rest on force or on the sufferance of the European powers alone. It was seldom believed to rest on the loyalty of its subjects. Anatolia was most generally represented as a boiling cauldron of racial and religious antagonism ready to explode at any moment as it had done in 1875-8 in the Balkans.²

There had been a minority interest in the Armenians since 1878 but this had produced only a small literature. The majority of writings about Armenians were produced at the time of the crisis in the Eastern provinces of Anatolia 1984-6. There were both similarities and differences in the kind of views that were produced at this time to that of the crisis twenty years earlier in Bulgaria. The Armenians came into public view (as the Bulgarians had in 1876) as a result of crisis and an outcry against alleged crimes committed against them. This interest in their position in the Ottoman Empire was comparable in nature but not in size to the outcry in 1876 on behalf of the Bulgarians. Many of the agitators from the crisis of 1875-8 re-emerged to take up the 'cause of Armenia' providing a continuity of personnel and image.³

There was a range of perceptions. British perceptions of Anatolia whether they were

¹ See Bell (1907).

² For studies of Ottoman population see Haddad (1970); Karpas (1985); Lane-Poole (1908); McCarthy (1983).

³ Such as Gladstone, MacColl, Stead, see bibliography for writings.

supportive or critical of Ottoman rule, saw it as an area composed of distinct races. On the one hand were the Christian races with their own characteristics and, on the other, the Turkish or Muslim races each with their own characteristics. In general all races were compared unfavourably to Europe and writers differed only in the degree of sympathy that they expressed for different races respectively. Writers who saw Anatolia as an area consisting of distinct races generally supported nationalism amongst the Christian communities, especially the Armenians. By contrast, writers who departed from this nationalist perspective were more inclined to represent Anatolia as a complex racial admixture, not of warring and hostile races, but races that had coexisted for centuries. These writers saw nationalism as an import from outside in a similar way to how they defined the insurrection in the Balkans in 1875-8 as caused by Russian interference.

Amongst writings about Anatolia were the negative views of travellers who regarded Armenians as superstitious and Oriental. They represented Armenians as 'cheaters' of an 'honest' Turkish peasantry, and particularly disliked the wealthy Armenians of the capital. Other writers saw Armenians as yet another oppressed minority in the Ottoman Empire that were deserving of the sympathy and support of Europe in their aspirations for nationhood. Some of the fault lines of support for Armenians were similar to 1876 and there was a continuity of personnel. In addition there was a continuity in discourse of Christianity versus Islam, civilised versus uncivilised, progressive versus unprogressive, and brutality versus innocence. At the same time negative views like those at the time of the Eastern crisis ran along similar lines of liking for the Turk and hatred in differing degrees of Eastern Christians, or to seeing all the people as Oriental and inferior.

Although the comparison between Bulgaria and Armenia was valid for the similar discourse and ideas that the two crises provoked about the nature of Turkish rule, about the Armenians as oppressed peoples and about Eastern Christians in general the comparison ends there. As one writer has expressed it "Humanity and Imperial Interest came adrift" during the Armenian question unlike during the Bulgarian crisis of 1876. Ideas about the Armenians as an oppressed nation did not have the same impact as ideas expressed twenty years earlier in relation to the Eastern crisis had experienced. British diplomatic imperatives had changed, Russia was no longer the chief enemy (and was itself hostile to Armenian national claims). Britain was more concerned about the expansion of German interests in the Ottoman Empire and wanted peace and

stability. As the title of one book about Ottoman Armenians suggests, Armenians were the *Victims of Great Power Diplomacy*.⁴

The only way in which ideas worked to affect the crisis was in the reverse way to 1876. The negative representation of Armenians was of them as a troublesome, dislikeable, Oriental race with little claim to nationhood. The positive representation was of Armenians as an oppressed nation. The former view was more in line with the imperial spirit of the period. At a time of competition amongst European empires for territory and control in Asia and Africa there was little support for the claims of minorities who could potentially upset the balance of power. Consequentially there was much less support for Armenians claims than there had been for Balkan claims for autonomy. At the time of the Eastern crisis events had escalated to the point when change had to be made, but in 1894-6 European states colluded in preventing a crisis on this scale developing in Anatolia. The negative representation was much more in tune with this way of thinking and supported a policy aimed at preventing further threats to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Negative ideas were the product of a culture of imperialism that was intolerant both to the claims of minorities, but also to the claims of the old Empires. Views reflected the real material power that had been achieved by European states.

VII.2 The 'Europeans' of Asia: Positive Perceptions of Armenians.

The population of the Ottoman Empire, as previous discussions have shown, were discussed in terms of the racial, linguistic and national features and whether or not races were 'progressive'. The capacity for nationhood was generally considered as a feature peculiar to European races and was a concept defined in religious and racial terms. Thus it did not include the Turks, who were considered as lacking a history (beyond a military) record, uncivilised and unprogressive. Views that were sympathetic to the Armenians on nationalistic grounds (which was not all of these writers) stressed features which distinguished the Armenians as a people capable for nationhood.⁵

There were various positive images of the Armenians conceptualised within a similar language of race and progress ranging from: the idealisation of the Armenians as Christian innocents, subject to the butchery of the Muslim Turk, to less idealised versions that represented

⁴For British see Kedourie (1987), 9-28; Salt (1992), Sönyel (1987)

⁵For views of the Turk see: chapters three and six.

Armenians as a people capable of progress, yet not without their faults. As in perceptions of the Turks discussed in the previous chapter there was an emphasis on race as the determinant of character and on characteristics peculiar to the Armenians. An image of the Armenians as a distinct people and nation developed. Often views were underpinned by antagonism towards them as Eastern Christians.⁶

VII.2.1 Racial and National characteristics

Some writers emphasised the religion of the Armenians and others stressed their race and long history and the sense of themselves as a nation. The Armenians, wrote E. J. Dillon, the special correspondent of the Daily Telegraph, were a people little known but who had a "glorious history". Dillon claimed to know the people well as a result of a prolonged intercourse with them: He had studied their language, history and literature and they were an ancient people. "Armenia", he explained with a certainty not shared by all was divided between Turkey, Persia, and Russia, but despite this the Armenians had retained their "wild spirit of independence". This spirit was represented as an admirable feature of the Armenians as a race.⁷ Another writer in outlining the reasons why England should be sympathetic to their cause, spoke of their "glorious record" in which "for sixteen hundred years their Church and nation have stood as a bulwark of Christianity against the barbarism of the Mohammedan East", which were "powerful credentials" to gain the support of "European Christians".⁸

In support of nationalist claims writers outlined Armenian historical descent from Haik, the grandson of Japhet. It was explained how in the following centuries of oppression [i. e. under Ottoman rule] Armenians had tenaciously hung onto their faith and national identity. The Armenian editor of *Haiasdan*, for example understandably represented them as one of the "oldest nations of the world" and "of the great Aryan race". He emphasised their important role played "against Islam in the crusades, hand in hand with their brethren of the West, for the triumph and

⁶ This is a very old view of Eastern Christians. See: Grabrill (1971); Palgrave (1872); Thompson (1875 edition),

⁷ Dillon (1890), 3-5.

⁸ Coon (1893), 207.

cause of Christian Civilisation".⁹ In other accounts Armenians were often idealised in a similar way to which there had been an idealisation of Balkan Christians and of the Slavic world.¹⁰

An ambiguity was also present in ideas about Armenians. This was because Armenians did not really conform to the stereotype that some writers were trying to promote, of the Armenians, as the 'Europeans' of the East. Bent for example spoke of the religious divisions between Armenians and how they were more easily converted than the Jews and Greeks. He said that Armenians lacked unity, which had prevented a united front against "the Mussulmans", in contrast to the Greeks who had "preserved the unity of Hellenism through the centuries of Mussulman rule".¹¹ Despite pointing out these negative aspects of Armenian society, Bent was also full of admiration. He described his travels amongst Armenians in the Tarsus area and how he had found traditional Armenian communities who maintained their legends and traditions. At Sis, for example, the Armenians at one school "sang us a song in Armenian, which we were told was a lament over the departed glory of their country, and inspired courage for the future". This he recorded had provoked empathy amongst him and his fellow travellers. These perceptions were reminiscent of the idealisation of Slav customs in the Balkans. Simplicity, rather than being a negative feature as it was in depictions of the Turks was admired and moved the observer and provoked sympathy.¹²

There were also less positive conceptualisations of the Armenians, which ironically were still supportive of nationalist claims. The traveller and writer J. Creagh was, he stated basically sympathetic but the image he produced also contained negative elements as Armenians were compared with European races. Creagh had spent nearly one year amongst the Armenians and in his book *Armenians Koords and Turks*, spoke about the Armenians as an Oriental race. He distinguished them from European races, and represented this difference as "peculiar modes of thought so different from ours". As a race, he wrote, the Armenians were "a hybrid race of the poorest Caucasian type" who "display symptoms of a steadily increasing vitality" which is

⁹ Sivezlian (1889), 307.

¹⁰ See Chapter four.

¹¹ Bent (1896), 695.

¹² Bent (1896), 700-1. For the Balkans see Evans (1877).

"marvellous" given the years of oppression. Armenia had he said been the battlefield of the world, but Armenians were racially pure and "the melancholy and hook nosed Armenian is unaltered and uncontaminated". It was in such terms, which are by no means entirely flattering, that Armenians were praised. Such conceptualisations reflected the impressionistic nature of racial classifications in this period.¹³

Prejudice and dislike of Eastern Christianity also formed an element of views. Ramsay considered that the Armenian had been "nursed in the most debased form of religion to which Christianity has ever sunk and bred for generations to slavery and insult, tempered only by cunning and bribery". However, according to him, Armenians were persecuted not for their bad qualities but rather for their "improvement", caused by the work of American missionaries. The Ottoman government had acted against them precisely because of this work, as it made them realise that the Armenians could have a better life. The image of Turkish jealousy towards Christians which had emerged at the time of the Eastern crisis (1875-8) also formed part of the conceptualisation of relations between Turks and Armenians.¹⁴ Sympathy towards them as oppressed Christians was also important. Positive conceptualisations of the Armenians as a race ranged from the very idealised account of them as a people, to one that was more reserved in its judgement and which saw them as an Oriental race and as representatives of a debased Christianity, whilst maintaining sympathy for them as an 'oppressed Christian people' whatever their faults. In the heated debate created by the Armenian question this was probably the factor that was ultimately more influential in producing a positive image of them and a negative image of Turks.

In delineating the Armenian question the same dichotomy that was seen in views of the Balkan provinces between progressive and unprogressive races was evident. Bent likened the Armenians to Jews, as they too possessed a commercial and money making instinct. They were, he wrote "almost ubiquitous as the Jews, and equally crafty in getting a livelihood".¹⁵ This characteristic was not negatively depicted, rather it was seen as an attribute of them as a nation. In another article signed by *An Eastern Statesman*, (thought to be George Washburn, the well

¹³ Creagh (1880), I, vi.

¹⁴ Ramsay (1896), 446. See also Ramsay (1897), 191-240; Barkley (1876, 1877).

¹⁵ Bent (1896), 695.

known second president of Robert College in Istanbul), the Armenians were represented as distinguished by their role as merchants. Contrary to other writers, he was not critical of their money making activities. On the contrary, Armenians had

"all the good qualities necessary to make them the leaders of civilisation in Asia. There is no other Asiatic race so capable of European support and sympathy. Their honesty and industry are proverbial and almost all the wealth of Constantinople is protected at night by those Armenian hamals who, during the day, are the wonder and admiration of travellers."¹⁶

The image of the progressive Armenian was generally accompanied by the image of the unprogressive Turk. The picture of the Anatolian Turk, touched upon in the previous chapter as simple, pure, likeable but indolent and lazy emphasised the virtues of the Armenians by contrast. The assumption was that the Anatolian Turk was incapable of moving with the times and was useless. The idea that the Christian peoples of the Ottoman Empire were progressive had by its frequent reiteration become almost a truism. It was certainly one of the most widely expressed notions and fitted in with the general assumption of Christian superiority evident in British writings.¹⁷

In general, writers who supported Armenian claims presented them in positive light. The writer who signed himself as *An Eastern Statesman* was aware of the negative reputation that the Armenians had gained in their role as money lenders and wanted to rectify what he saw as a mistaken picture. Armenian bankers and usurers belonged to the past, he argued, and their presumed rapaciousness was a feature not unique to them but to money lenders in general.¹⁸ Bent also differentiated Armenians in Eastern Anatolia from "the cringing courtiers of their race at Constantinople, and the Armenian merchant class at Smyrna". Both of these were disreputable in the opinion of the writer and the latter occupation especially caused the Armenian to develop

¹⁶ *Eastern Statesman* (1880), 537. The stereotype of Armenians as usurers was frequently reiterated. See: Bettany (1889); Burnaby (1877, 6th edition); Stevenson (1880).

¹⁷ Although no study has been done of the bases of support for the Armenians as for Balkan Christians, it is far to assume given the continuity of personnel in agitation on their behalf that it was similarly Protestant rather than Catholic and non-conformist more than Anglican, largely because these were 'Eastern' or 'Oriental' Christians. Protestants believed they could reform them, whereas Latin Christians were openly antagonistic.

¹⁸ *Eastern Statesman* (1880), 537. For the Armenian Amira class see: Krikorian (1963).

"a subtlety and sharpness which put into shade both Jew and Greek".¹⁹ An image of the Armenians in Eastern Anatolia as a virtuous people in contrast to those in the capital was constructed.

Other points of importance mentioned by the *Eastern Statesman* were that the Armenians were "thoroughly hospitable" and had a high tone of morality in family life, which was a point of some importance in Victorian society in general. The Turk by contrast lacked virtue.²⁰ This was especially important for writers who saw the Ottoman Empire through Christian spectacles. As the previous chapter showed, the views of the American missionary Trowbridge who was known in England both for his work and writings, and whose ideas were typical of this Christian perspective, posited a fundamental distinction between the purity of Christianity and the Christian message, and the lack of purity in Islam which took as its model the supposed and believed licentiousness of Muhammad. This distinction between Islam and Christianity was thus an important dimension of British representations of the Armenian question. Armenians were considered to be a very religious people who had maintained the Church against persecution. Even though there was a general dislike of Eastern Christianity, this was presented as forgivable and reformable unlike Islam which was wholly negative as a religion.²¹

The Turk was blamed for any negative characteristics. The resident and traveller Barkley who tended to see all peoples in the Ottoman Empire as 'Orientals' of whom certain negative things should be expected argued, that the faults were shared by the Christian populations as well as by Muslim. He spoke about how it seemed that the Christians accepted as a custom "to be misgoverned by the Turks, and so they put up with it, and look upon it as their natural condition". He also typically spoke of the hundreds of years of oppression that had made the

¹⁹ Bent (1896), 702.

²⁰ *Eastern Statesman* (1880), 537.

²¹ *Eastern Statesman* (1880). The idea of the reformability of Eastern Christianity which was generally seen as debased and superstitious perverting the truth of the gospels was a much older idea. See Thompson (1875). See also Ramsay on the work of American missionaries in lifting the Armenians out of their debased Christianity. (1896), 446, (1897), 220-39.

Christians "a fit people for slavery" they can only "cheat" and "outwit".²² Writings about the Armenians as for Balkan Christians were thus strongly comparative in approach to the different races of Anatolia. The intellectual capacity of Turks and Armenians was compared to the detriment of the former. The intellectual ability of the Armenians was represented as notable. One writer wrote that they "far surpass the Turks" and are "naturally disputatious".²³ The Eastern statesman considered Armenians more intelligent than the Turks, but not quite so quick and brilliant as the Greeks. Armenians were said to have a strong conviction to the Church, but over the last few years as a result of life at the capital, French education and the vices of European civilisation, the church had attracted people for political rather than religious interests. Churches, the Eastern Statesman wrote, were more political, a factor which he attributed to the "peculiar organisation" of the Turkish empire.²⁴

VII.2.2 'The Four Hundred Years of Slavery'

Literature about the Armenians also reiterated the idea that was so frequently expressed at the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 about the 'four hundred years of slavery' caused by Ottoman rule. The tenacity and endurance of this thesis which was kept alive by the negative representations of anti-Turkish writers had become almost an established truth. As a consequence it was little believed that Christians could ever be contented to live in the Ottoman Empire. The idea that was projected was that Christians lived in a state of perpetual persecution and slavery. Writers like M. MacColl and W. T. Stead who had been leading figures at the time of the Bulgarian massacres once again figured in the 1890s at the time of the Armenian question and reproduced the same sort of horror stories. Stead whose own article was entitled *The Haunting Horror of Armenia or Who Will be Damned* quoted from the much discussed article by the correspondent Dillon in the Contemporary Review of December 1895, that

"In Armenia, a wretched heart broken mother, wrung to frenzy by her soul-searing anguish, accounted to her neighbours the horrors that were spread over her people and her country by the

²² Barkley (1891), 139. See also Ramsay (1896), 446.

²³ Eastern Statesman (1880), 537.

²⁴ Eastern Statesman (1880), 538.

startling theory that God himself had gone mad, and that maniacs and demons incarnate are stalking about the world."

Or the story related by Stead himself that at Sasun "At least ten thousand men, women and children had been exterminated like rats in a pit.", to which he added for the edification of the audience (if they had not already guessed on the basis of wisdom developed from previous 'experience' of the nature of the Turk), "and their exterminators had been decorated by the Sultan, and enriched with the loot of their victims."²⁵ At the time of the disturbances in the Eastern provinces, stories were related back and given full publicity in the press. Periodicals, pamphlets and books reiterated the themes of twenty years earlier, of rape, pillage, and torture which were encouraged and planned by the Sultan. The latter was said to have hired the 1890s version of the 1870s Bashi Bazouks (irregulars) represented as the bloodthirsty Kurds. Even Gladstone re-emerged to put pen to paper in a pamphlet on Armenia and agitated on their behalf.²⁶

The comparison with Bulgaria was ever present in writings. The Eastern Statesman for example compared the position of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire to that of the Bulgarians twenty years earlier. He wrote that there had "been for many years a deliberate attempt to exterminate them" and since 1877 there had been great suffering and oppression caused by Kurds and Circassians, the police courts of justice and by Turkish Beys and officials, "These wild nomads [kurds] are alternately repressed and let loose" on Armenians, who lived in a state of oppression and injustice, in which Christian witness in courts was not accepted, and the people had to live under Islamic law. Armenians according to him had a comparable position to "Negroes in the Southern states of America" under a "Mohammedan supremacy" and attacks against them were unprovoked.²⁷ Many writers promoted this view that the Armenians were oppressed on account of their faith and that this was their 'normal condition'. The idea of persecution thus continued to be an enduring theme.²⁸

²⁵ Stead (1896), 1. See also Gladstone (1877), which put forward the thesis of official encouragement.

²⁶ Gladstone (1895). For Gladstone's involvement see: Salt (1992), 123-132.

²⁷ Eastern Statesman (1880), 539.

²⁸ See also Baker (1877), who had written at that time that the Armenians were like the helots of Sparta, but who also had a positive view about future harmony of races. His fellow writers like

Like in 1875-8, Christianity, Civilisation and progress came together in the representation of Armenians as a progressive, but oppressed race. Ramsay considered the massacres as a deliberate plan of extermination without parallel in history. He spoke of their "effect in degrading the whole of Christendom, and in retarding the progress of the civilised world". Ramsay compared the situation to the Roman emperors' massacre of Christians in AD 303, and how the intentions of the Roman emperors were comparable to those of the Ottomans. They were massacres that had been carried out as a warning to future Christian troublemakers. He also compared methods and the 'deliberate' and officially sponsored nature of events.

"At the present time the same situation has recurred as in 303 AD. The Government, or rather, the despotic monarch acting against the advice of his responsible advisers under the instigation of private favourites, resolved to exterminate what was probably the most energetic section of the population."²⁹

The reaction of the Ottoman government to disturbances was he wrote, a policy chosen for reasons of state (though religious bigotry was a contributory cause). This policy had been to encourage and then use "Mohammedan fanaticism" and the Government had "armed and trained the most barbarous elements in the country against the most peaceful and industrious," using the Kurds against the Armenians.³⁰

The idea of an Ottoman plan of extermination was widely reiterated. Like the Eastern Statesman, the writer E. J. Dillon in the well known and much referred to article of 1895, *The Condition of Armenia*, compared the position of Armenians to that of Negro slavery in the Southern states. Dillon divided the periods of Turkish rule in 'Armenia' into two periods, that of "shameful misgovernment" from 1847-91, and that of "frank extermination" from 1992-4. He stated that the *Hamidiye* regiment was established by the Government for the purpose of extermination. He depicted the government as fearful in the face of European pressure for reforms and potential Christian disloyalty from Armenians living on the Russian border. The

MacColl did not share this view of future conciliation in either 1875 or 1895. MacColl (1895, 1896).

²⁹ Ramsay (1896), 445.

³⁰ Ramsay (1896), 445. See also Dillon (1896); Stevenson (1893) for the idea of a well orchestrated plan of extermination.

plan, he said, was to drive the Armenians out of the borderlands and replace them with Muslims, so that their numbers would be reduced and then there would be no need for reforms. The Ottoman 'plan' had been to enlist the Kurds who were let loose in a reign of terror on innocent populations. It was, he wrote, a rule of "organised brigandage, legalised murder and meritorious immorality". Dillon represented Ottoman Government as cruel and cold blooded.³¹

F. S. Stevenson, the president of the Anglo-Armenian society in London, in an article entitled *Armenia*, that was central to contemporary debate, explained how reforms since 1878 had done nothing to protect the Armenians from Kurds and Circassians. He said that he wanted to point out fallacies about the representation of events in 1894-5 and show that the disturbances in Sasun in 1894 were not isolated events. He pointed to Parliamentary Blue books and Papers referring to misdeeds before the 1890s and described how the organisation of the Kurdish *Hamidiye* regiment had worsened the situation and "has rendered them more powerful for evil and more and more difficult to restrain". The whole country, he wrote was "under a reign of terror" and the judicial administration offered no redress, "whilst the ravages of the Kurds are conducted with impunity, and the rapacity of the Turkish officials remains unchecked".³² Stevenson claimed that he was not attacking Islam as such, but merely the action of the government. Muslims themselves he wrote, although not massacred or outraged, also had grievances and that the agitation for redress of grievances and reforms was for all populations, not just the Armenians. He noted that "Mahommedanism" had many achievements to its credit and referred to the cultural achievements of the Moors in Spain and the Baghdad Caliphate. He also qualified this by saying that people would "however, also remember that the Arabic influence which reigned at Baghdad and at Cordova has now disappeared" to be replaced by that of the Ottoman Turks whose rule rests on force. His conclusion was that "to compare them to the Haroun al-Raschids of the Abdrabrahmans of the past is to confuse distinct races, and to pervert the teaching of history".³³ The image of the Turk as the worst kind of Muslim, and the worst kind

³¹ Dillon (1895), 157. See also 153-189.

³² Stevenson (1895), 202-3.

³³ Stevenson (1895), 206. See also Bryce (1876), 341; De Leon (1876), who reiterated the same thesis.

of fanatic that had been voiced previously in 1875-8 was again reiterated.³⁴

Another point of similarity with the Eastern crisis of 1875-8 was that the Armenians were considered to be a 'nation', and writers often pictured a distinct area called Armenia, as they had pictured definable national entities such as Bulgaria and Montenegro in the past. The difference between the situation in the Balkans and that in Anatolia was that Armenians were not the majority population in any of the *vilayets* in the East.³⁵ Writers however argued that the Armenians, contrary to Turkish claims, were a majority in the area. This claim was central for Armenian nationalists and their supporters alike.³⁶ Some commentators like the Eastern Statesman presumed that Ottoman rule would continue and accepted that Armenians were not a majority. He disagreed that Armenians should all go to one area, as this would mean Turkish supremacy and would make them "entirely removed from Christian influence, and without any motive for self improvement". Furthermore he said it would mean a loss of property by the Armenians, and remove all hope of ever achieving their former prominence. Armenians according to him wanted a general decentralisation, but not emigration to a state of Armenia.³⁷ The Eastern Statesman reflected in his perceptions some of the complexities of the issue, which were lost to other commentators who looked at the issue in black and white terms of good and evil, innocence and oppression. In general he was more cautious in his view of the possibilities for the creation of an autonomous Armenian state. Unlike these more qualified views, Armenians like the Bulgarians twenty years earlier were most often represented as a similar case of the bondage of Christian peoples under the cruel rule of the Turk. They were depicted as a nation that have been enslaved since their original conquest by the Turks. Bent in *Travels amongst the Armenians* wrote that the Armenians were one of the oldest nationalities of the world and have "now known bondage for many centuries." According to him they had a fixed geographical area between the Araxis and lake Urumia and a divided population and country between Russia,

³⁴ See Gladstone (1876a), who reiterated the same theme about the Turks as not like other Muslims at the time of crisis in Bulgaria. See also Denton (1876).

³⁵ For population see: Karpas (1978, 1985); McCarthy (1982); Shaw and Shaw (1987), II, 205.

³⁶ For the question of population see Salt (1992), endnotes 2-3, 164-5.

³⁷ Eastern Statesman (1880), 542-537.

Turkey and Persia. They became a scattered people because of Byzantine policy which was continued also by the Turks.³⁸

Bent compared the situation of Armenia to that of Poland. Turkish Armenia he wrote "is in the last stage of squalor and decay" unlike Persian Armenia which was better. Russian Armenia was like another world. Erivan in Russian Armenia was a "thoroughly Western town". The question of support for the Armenians and their advance was represented as a question of progress versus unprogressiveness, represented by Turkish and Russian rule respectively. He asked in reference to Russia, "Is it right to check the advance of a Power which has done so much to civilise the East?", and favoured the extension of Russian control. He made a contrast between Russia and those areas still under "the yoke of Islam" areas with "good roads, handsome houses and an air of prosperity" and

"the statesmen of Western Europe could be made to take a journey through Turkish and Persian Armenia, and then find themselves comfortably housed in a good hotel in Russian Armenia, I think there would be no further talk of bolstering up Mohammedan countries."³⁹

Not all writers who were supportive of Armenians were willing to state with the specificity that some commentators did the 'exact' figures of population. E. M. Bliss who represented missionary interests in Anatolia, and who might have been expected to have presented such a representation did not. In contrast to those writers who were more inclined to 'state' the population figures for the area, he spoke of the inaccuracy of population statistics. The tax returns he said were not a good guide for estimating the figures of respective populations. There were he wrote different races in the Asiatic and European provinces, and although the purest races were the Christian and Muslim, amongst the latter could be found former Christians. He spoke of a "general mingling of races" where the dress and habits were similar and were regulated by climate and physical conditions not by arbitrary government or society. This was an important difference from those writers who represented Ottoman society as oppressive precisely because they believed that there was a dividing line between Christian and Muslim. He did say however that in Anatolia Christians and Muslims could be distinguished from one

³⁸ Bent (1896), 704.

³⁹ Bent (1896), 704-5. On the issue of population see Salt (1992).

another.⁴⁰

Not all ideas about the Armenians reflected the blind sympathy of people like MacColl and Stead. H. F. B. Lynch who was another prominent figure in the debate about Armenians in the Ottoman Empire developed his ideas partly on the basis of scholarly study and travel to the area. He likewise said that correct population figures in Turkey were difficult to obtain. Like Bliss he argued that taxation records were not a good guide. He described the impossibility of extending the Berlin treaty clause to all areas inhabited by Armenians as they are scattered throughout Anatolia. The Armenian question he wrote was a question of "proper government" of the provinces inhabited by Armenians.⁴¹

In some accounts of the Armenian question it was the Kurds rather than the Turks who were represented negatively. Lynch in an article of 1896, entitled *The Armenian Question Europe or Russia* presented a picture of total lack of order in the eastern provinces, and argued that the Armenian question was really a question of Armenian/Kurdish/Turkish relations. The Kurds were represented as the main problem both for Armenians and Turks.⁴² The Armenian question for Lynch in contrast to most of the writers already mentioned was not about improving the position of Armenians, but about improving the position of all populations there Christian and Muslim who were "overrun by the lawless Kurdish tribes". He disagreed that Armenians wanted an independent state and even that they did not want measures to redress inequality between Muslim and Christian. They wanted he said security for their life and property and

"it is the spectacle of an unarmed Christian population exposed to an organised system of outrage and exaction on the part of armed Kurdish tribes that arrest the travellers interest."

The problem for Lynch was the Kurds.⁴³ Whether Lynch's analysis, which went against the popular idea of the Turk as persecutor of Christians, was accepted is debatable. It can be argued

⁴⁰ Bliss (1896), 42-3. See also Ramsay (1897), 216, who although supportive of the Armenians sees many similarities between them and Kurds and it is clear that for him their 'Oriental' nature that is the important factor.

⁴¹ Lynch (1894), 440, 451-3. See also Salt (1992), 55-56, 91, for the role of Lynch.

⁴² Lynch (1896), 271.

⁴³ Lynch (1896), 274.

that it did very little to remove the image of the Turk as cruel oppressor or as the main cause of incidents against Armenians. Ramsay in mocking and contemptuous tones presented a picture demonstrating the nature of the Kurds. He said that he had no dislike for them, rather "they are a race of considerable capacity and promise", and claimed that they were in many cases more "pleasant in intercourse than the Armenians". However he then produced an anecdote to show the 'nature' of the kurd, which fully expressed the sense of superiority common to other British writers in their representations of Eastern races. He recounted the story of a young Kurdish Bey in a village in Eastern Anatolia, who concluded his promise to protect Ramsay and his fellow travellers with the words "All our people are thieves; but if you lose anything, come to me, and I'll get it back for you" to which Ramsay retorted, "The force of hospitality could go no further". The underlying assumption was of a wild people and wild conditions and it was in the context of such expressions that the British public was left to make up its mind about the nature of the Armenians, the Turks and the Kurds.⁴⁴

By the 1890s the idea of the jealousy of the Turk towards Christians in the Empire was more or less fixed and was part of the way in which the action of Turks and the Ottoman Government were represented. The whole discourse about the Turk was in terms of his inability to change and his intransigence in the face of progress. Both in the Balkans and Anatolia the Turk was represented as negative in his effects on the people and the country. The belief that massacre was a normal instrument of government was believed by important sections of British public despite the attempts of some sympathetic writers to dispel this picture. The general perception was, that as a result of jealousy towards Christian populations the Turk massacred them, and that unable to progress himself he was unwilling to see other races progress at his expense.

VII.2.3 Armenian nationhood or European Control: Prescriptions for the Armenian Question

In the solutions advocated for the Armenian question there was also a range of opinion which was revealing of underlying ideas about the peoples of Anatolia. Lynch for example represented the Armenian question as the product of "Western civilisation passing eastwards into Asia". The

⁴⁴ Ramsay (1896), 445.

solution he proposed was to encourage this process by supporting the redress of grievances for Armenians and Muslims alike. This he said would prevent the former falling into the arms of Russia, which he depicted as a retrogression for them and for Civilisation in general. Furthermore he reiterated the long standing suspicion of Russian intentions in the Mediterranean.⁴⁵ Lynch therefore argued for a solution that would not lead to greater Russian power in the area, which was based on the idea of the beneficial effects of the spread of Western civilisation envisioned as,

"European enterprise developing their resources, European commerce spreading over them her net of peace, the healthy rivalry of Germans and Belgians, and Englishmen in a field which is open to all, America foremost in the van of nations, sowing broadcast the seeds of religion and culture...such are the better signs of the present times in the countries between India and the Mediterranean."

In his view, "no better race is fitted than is the Armenian to be the intermediary between West and East".⁴⁶ The old question of the East and the West thus reemerged as the essential paradigm, and the healthy development of Civilisation defined as the spread of Western civilisation was advocated.

After the Congress of Berlin of 1878, Washburn (*The Eastern Statesman*) advocated decentralisation of the administration as promised by the Ottoman constitution of 1877.⁴⁷ He wrote that "The only hope of the empire lies in decentralisation and secularisation". By the 1890s he had lost hope in the Turks' ability to do this, and saw no hope for a common Ottoman nation, as this idea "is merged and lost in the devotion to Islam". The author represented this 'devotion' as a common feature of Turks both reformers and non-reformers alike. Equal rights for Christians could he wrote, only be achieved by force and a partial occupation of Anatolia. The question of

⁴⁵ Lynch (1896), 272.

⁴⁶ Lynch (1896), 276.

⁴⁷ For the Ottoman Constitution see Devereux (1961) and the essay by Findley in Braude and Lewis (1982), I, 339-68. See also the views of Campbell (1876); Gallenga (1877), II about the impossibility of welding races together and also the inappropriate nature of constitutional governments in an Oriental state.

autonomy was represented as a question of English or Russian control of the area.⁴⁸ Stevenson as a central figure in support of Armenian national claims also outlined a solution based on European control and supervision. His views expressed the common lack of faith in the Ottoman Government to reform and also show how the crisis in the Eastern provinces was considered a pretext for European intervention.

Stevenson proposed the appointment of a Governor General for the Armenian provinces, appointed by the Sultan with the consent of the powers. This would create a more centralised system; a mixed gendarmerie and some European commanders. The Kurds, he stated should also be liable for military service under European officers and the reforms should be under European supervision, and Armenians should be allowed into the army.⁴⁹ Ramsay likewise saw no hope for political change in which the wishes of all subjects could be respected. He argued that it was beyond the power of man to have a constitution which held in balance the opposing races of Anatolia. What was needed was a Government that would maintain order and compel obedience to the principles of peace. The problem for Ramsay, as for others was the nature of Ottoman Government and society.⁵⁰

The solutions proposed reflected different variations on the question of how to define the puzzle of Ottoman society. In some versions the different races could live together and in others they could not. These were interpretations about the nature of Ottoman society, and how different writers perceived the *millet* structure, and relations between the different races and religions. They related to whether the Empire was perceived and represented as tolerant, and whether it was believed that Christians could ever live in a Muslim state. Whatever the proposed solution was, it was one in which the Turk did not figure unless under European control. Writers differed about the degree of European influence or force required, but even the mild and reasonable Washburn advocated force. Western development of the economy of Anatolia, Western control of the finances of the Empire (1881 Ottoman Public Debt Administration), Western control of political development, such was the position of the Ottoman Empire. These changed conditions of power between Britain and the Ottoman Empire were fully reflected in British perceptions. Perceptions

⁴⁸ Eastern Statesman (1880), 542. See Washburn's other articles in bibliography.

⁴⁹ Stevenson (1895), 207-8.

⁵⁰ Ramsay (1896), 446-47.

formed a mirror of the reality of the position of the Ottoman Empire as a weak power, but not as a finished power, however much some commentators desired this.⁵¹

VII.4 'Asia's Oriental Christians': Negative Perceptions of Armenians.

Mark Sykes who travelled in the Ottoman Empire in the late 1890s and early twentieth century and who later became one of the most influential figures during the First World War in negotiations about the ending of the Ottoman Empire and the division of its territories, encapsulated the most extreme anti-Armenian view when he wrote that

"The Armenian inspires one with feelings of contempt and hatred which the most unprejudiced would find hard to crush. His cowardice, his senseless untruthfulness, the depth of his intrigue, even in the most trivial matters, his habit of hoarding, his lack of manly virtue, his helplessness in danger, his natural and instinctive treachery together form so vile a character that pity is stifled and judgement unbalanced."⁵²

Although this was one of the most extreme expressions, the elements that made up this perception were echoed in similar ways by other writers. Negative perceptions were based on several factors of which the traditional contempt and dislike of Eastern Christians played a part, as well as negative ideas about Armenians considered an inferior Oriental race. In some cases negative representations were coupled with a liking for the Turks, and in other cases both races were dismissed as mere Orientals. As a race, some writers considered the Armenians as cringing and servile, features that were depicted as less the result of Turkish 'oppression', but more the result of the natural character of the Armenian.

The Armenian question was of interest in part because it was the occasion for the publicity of Ottoman views about the situation in some of the major British journals of the day like the *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review*. Partly in response to support for Armenian nationalists in Britain and other European countries Ottoman writers wanted to negate these 'mis-

⁵¹ For contemporary criticism see Clayden (1898), which spoke of British inaction and compares Salisbury to Disraeli in 1875-6. Clayden considers that the Armenians were given back to the 'assassin' in 1878 and that it was an immoral foreign policy to not support the Armenians. For policy see Salt (1992), 81-110, 136-42.

⁵² Sykes (1895), 80. For details about Sykes see Kedourie (1987), 29-87.

perceptions'.⁵³ On the question of the position of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, for example, they argued against the idea that Armenians were in any sense persecuted. Rassam, the Ottoman Commissioner sent to investigate disturbances in the provinces in 1894 wrote in response to MacColl's pamphlet on Armenia. MacColl had painted the Armenian position in the blackest terms. Rassam on the other hand wrote that the Armenians were "the most affluent and possess greater influence and power under the Ottoman Government than any others excepting the Greeks". He argued that they had been "pampered" by the Ottoman Government for generations and he pointed to prominent figures such as Nubar Pasha in the Administration in Egypt.⁵⁴ In addition he reprinted in one of his articles an appendix signed by an *Ex-Diplomatist*, who was recorded as saying that the Armenians were "more Turks than the Turks themselves, and the survival of whose ecclesiastical autonomy during centuries of Turkish rule is alone a strong testimony in Ottoman favour".⁵⁵

Rassam argued against the idea that Armenians were oppressed as a result of their faith. He represented the area as one in which all peoples suffered from general conditions of insecurity caused in part by Kurdish tribesmen. If anyone was to blame he wrote, it was the Kurds, and secondly the Ottoman Government for not controlling them. The conclusion was clear: the Armenians were not a persecuted group in the Ottoman Empire, but they did suffer as a result of what he termed 'mismanagement'. This writer even had a sympathetic tone towards the Armenians whom he described as "the most industrious, the best educated and worthy to attain to a high position. It is deplorable that such an ancient people should live in constant turmoil".⁵⁶

In even more defensive tones and producing a very negative representation of the Armenians was that of another Ottoman, Sadik Effendi. He disclaimed that the Armenians were massacred at all, and described for example the disturbances at Bitlis as "nothing more than a petty quarrel". His view was that if there were problems of order then they were created by the

⁵³ See references for *The Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review* 1895-7'.

⁵⁴ Rassam (1895b), 57. See also Lynch (1894), 453, who wrote that 'the tolerance of the Sultan is active throughout the empire'.

⁵⁵ Rassam (1895a). Appendix. This question also arose during the Eastern crisis in the 1870s. See Chapter Four.

⁵⁶ Rassam (1895a), 47.

Armenians themselves, especially by Armenian bandits. He wrote that the Armenians had perpetuated one of their "implacable vendettas" against the Kurds which were "one of the chief characteristics of the Armenian people in Asia Minor".⁵⁷ According to Sadik Effendi, he had an inside knowledge of the Ottoman government. He also claimed knowledge of the views of European Consuls who themselves spoke of the Ottoman Government's attempts to keep order. Consuls, he claimed, had spoken only of 'isolated incidents' against Armenians. He complained that the *Bashi Bazouks* (irregulars) were "once more trotted out for the delectation of the British public".⁵⁸ (*Bashi Bazouks*, he reminded his audience had not been around since 1877). He represented Ottoman society as tolerant and stressed the good will of Sultan Abdülhamid, whom he described as "a most enlightened sovereign, completely free from religious prejudice and bigotry". Christians were not persecuted as Christians contrary to the prevailing view but because of "political agitation under the specious guise of a religious movement".⁵⁹

This idea that Armenians were supported from outside was a common perception and echoed by many other writers such as D. G. Hogarth, who wrote that "The Armenian, for all his ineffaceable nationalism, his passion for plotting, and his fanatical intolerance, would be a negligible thorn in the Ottoman side did he stand alone".⁶⁰ Hogarth who was critical of support for the Armenians in England, represented the problem as a vicious circle between the Ottomans, the Armenians and foreign powers in which "The Turk begins to repress because we sympathise, and we sympathise the more because he represses, and so the vicious cycle revolves".⁶¹ Underlying the reasoning of Hogarth in part, was his conceptualisation of the area and the peoples as different, as Oriental and as non-European. He expressed an idea that had also been used at the time of the Eastern crisis of 1875-8. This idea was based on the assumption that nothing should be expected from Orientals except Oriental behaviour of which oppression and

⁵⁷ Sadik Effendi (1893), 457, 458.

⁵⁸ Sadik Effendi (1893), 458-9.

⁵⁹ Sadik Effendi (1893), 460, 461. See also Collett (1895), 53-4 which emphasises the tolerance of the Ottomans.

⁶⁰ Hogarth (1896), 147.

⁶¹ Hogarth (1896), 148. See also Collett (1895), 53 for criticism of the attempt to "reproduce the Agitation of 1876."

violence were part. Hogarth could therefore expect a degree of brutality from peoples who lived in a wild area. He ended by saying that the "Turk ruled by right" of five hundred years, and as a result he claims a right to "remain dominant by all means not outrageous".⁶²

In contrast to positive perceptions of Armenians these writers argued that the demands of Armenians were not nationalist demands. Sadik Effendi in discussing the position of Armenians pointed out that the demand for autonomy was the voice of a small group of nationalists, and not all the Armenian people who for three hundred years of "amalgamation with" the Ottoman Empire were very much part of it. He pointed out that in no area were they the majority. In the five districts in which they lived they were at the most in a one to two ratio with Muslims and elsewhere in Anatolia ten to one. He ended on the point that "to raise the spirit of discord...for the sake of the imaginary wrongs of Asiatic Armenians is neither the duty nor the policy of England."⁶³

The traveller Burnaby saw little sympathy from Turks towards Christians in his travels, and wrote: "Throughout my journey, I found Armenians and Greeks equally despised by the Mohammedans". However, he was not totally unsympathetic to this, as he regarded Eastern Christians with contempt. Eastern Christians had, he wrote, "brought the only pure religion into so great a disrepute". As this quotation suggested, Eastern Christianity was often represented in negative terms, and the contempt of the Turk towards these people was presented as understandable. Burnaby even went so far as to say that in his experience relations between Muslim and Christians were good, despite Muslim contempt for them. "Great harmony existed between the Turks and Christians whenever I dined with an Armenian there were always Mohammedans present". He claimed that on his travels he began to disbelieve stories of mistreatment. He in fact regarded the Armenians as intolerant and the Turks as tolerant, which reflected antipathy to the non-Muslim populations of the East. The Ottomans were thus often seen as having a sort of contemptuous tolerance for Christians in Anatolia, they did not persecute rather they ignored, and Turks were recorded as being amazed at Christians who were antagonistic amongst themselves.⁶⁴ The image of Ottoman rule as a stabilising force over warring

⁶² Hogarth (1896), 149-50.

⁶³ Sadik Effendi (1893), 462-3, 465.

⁶⁴ Burnaby (1877, 6th ed.), I, 76, 132, 148, 193, 305, II, 10, 243, 313-4.

racess in Anatolia was reinforced.

Leading politicians of the time such as Salisbury and Rosebery saw the Armenian question as an issue of stability in the area. They recognised the inability of England to act alone without Russian support and inclined to the view that the question should be left to the Sultan, and the issue not be allowed to disturb European peace. As a consequence of this, the Armenian question was left in abeyance. The concern for stability in the region overrode all others. The imperial status quo amongst the powers of Europe was more important. In this sense, negative perceptions were part of a wider imperial vision and policy, which on this occasion was successful.⁶⁵

VII. 5 Conclusion: The 'Peculiarities' of Ottoman society.

The traveller and writer G. Bell in *The Desert and the Sown* represented Ottoman society in the following way,

"We in Europe, who speak of Turkey as though it were an homogenous whole might as well when we speak of England intend the word to include India, the Shah states, Hong Kong and Uganda. In the sense of a land inhabited mainly by Turks there is not such a country as Turkey."⁶⁶

There were two main representations of Ottoman society and peoples in Anatolia. One represented Anatolia as mixture of religions and races in which peoples over many centuries since the Ottoman conquest and settlement had absorbed and mixed with the existing Anatolian races. As a result of this process, the area defied a neat categorisation into zones of racial purity and races and to some extent religions were mixed and co-existed with one another. The other representation was of Ottoman society and peoples as a society of separate races and religions, who were hostile to one another. This was a vision of Ottoman society as a divided society consisting of potential nation states..

Despite these different strands of thought there were also several things that united them. One was the importance given to race as a means of understanding the past and present history

⁶⁵ See Salt (1992), 136-142.

Bell (1907), 139-40. See also chapters three and five, for the thesis of 'encampment' and lack of assimilation, the unnaturalness of Ottoman society. Farley (1876), Stead (1895). ⁶⁵

of the area. This reflected an ethnographical approach characteristic of nineteenth-century thought, in which peoples were categorised according to notions of types. The other common idea was that of 'Oriental' which embodied many preconceived notions about the people of Anatolia. Turks and other races in Anatolia were depicted as Orientals or Easterners which immediately distinguished them from European races. Even Christian peoples were represented as 'Easterners' which was a definition that implied more than the fact that these were Eastern Christians that belonged to the Orthodox faith as opposed to Latin Christianity as of old. The term Oriental referred to more than simply religion. It referred to believed inherent characteristics, most often represented as negative characteristics of the populations of Anatolia.

The dominant image of Anatolia and for Ottoman society in general was of a society composed of distinct peoples with little in common with one another, under a government which did little for them. It was a picture of a society peculiar in its characteristics. How the Ottoman Empire was understood and how it was depicted was crucial in many ways to the political questions of the day concerning the Ottoman Empire. The translation of the idea of a society of separate races on the political level was support for the idea of nationalism. The picture of a mixed society represented the idea that Ottoman rule was a stabilising force (over what some saw as warring races in Anatolia and in Europe) over mixed and/or different people. This implied a policy of support for what remained of Ottoman territorial integrity in Anatolia. These different perspectives were reflected in ideas about Armenians.

Perceptions of Armenians in Anatolia reveal many contradictory ideas about the area. The dominant vision which portrayed them as Orientals with little genuine capacity for self rule seemed to be based on the idea that Ottoman society was one in which races co-existed with one another under Ottoman rule. As in the 1870s this was in part underpinned by the idea that instability was a foreign import or the work of small nationalist elements. On the other hand the positive vision of the Armenians argued that Ottoman society was held together by force and represented distinct nations and peoples.

In later years it is possible to see the impact of these respective visions. In the long term these two visions come together to produce a perspective and policy that was imperialist with nationalist undertones. During and at the end of the First World War the Ottoman Empire was broken up into territories that recognised in part the existence of different and separate peoples (the nationalist dimension of perceptions) under an overall imperial project to place these areas

under European mandatory control (the imperial dimension of perceptions) These two visions constituted the idea of the puzzle of the Ottoman Empire, which was ultimately sacrificed not only by the imperialist actions of European states but also by imperialist ideas and the basic contradictions underlying British policy.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ See: Frank (1989); Kedourie (1987).

Conclusion

In the period covered by this thesis (1876-1908) distinct images of Ottoman society were constructed. Amongst the most important were those that contributed to the idea of the Ottoman Empire and of the Turks in particular as decadent, corrupt, backward and unprogressive. The image of the Turk which had long been the negative one of cruelty and fanaticism (although earlier in the century more positive because of the close Anglo-Ottoman relationship) was reinforced and became a dominant and enduring image. Even in less negative accounts Turks were represented as a declining race, incapable of attaining the standards of Modern civilisation, equated entirely with European. In addition to images of the Turk was the creation of images about Christian peoples in the Empire. They were either depicted positively as progressive races or negatively as subjects deserving of a strong Ottoman rule. In general, the period is characterised by a change in perception of the Ottoman Empire and of the Turks in particular. The very real weakness of the Ottoman Empire in its relations with Europe enabled the kind of discourse about it which has been examined in this thesis. Underpinning British ideas were unequal relations of power. The overwhelmingly negative nature of representations were part of the general change in perceptions towards the non-European world resulting from European expansion.

This thesis has stressed the constructed nature of British perceptions, which derived from and were influenced by three main factors: 1) the material context of relations in the nineteenth century between a weak Ottoman Empire and strong British Empire, 2) by older ideas and images about the Turk and Islam, 3) and ultimately by the new intellectual context of the late nineteenth century in which a eurocentric discourse about race, civilisation and progress was central. These three aspects constituted the 'Orientalist' nature of perceptions which refers to the relationship between the historical context of unequal relations of power and ideas produced in this context. Orientalism as a body of thought and ideas about the Islamic East and in particular about the Ottoman Empire was part of a structure of unequal power between the Ottoman Empire and Britain. Societies that were defined as 'Oriental' were judged in a comparative framework with

Europe, which reinforced ideas about the superiority of the latter. Ottoman Government, for example was judged by Western norms and the peoples of the Empire were judged by the European standard of 'progress'.

From the time of the Eastern crisis in 1875 to the end of the reign of Abdülhamid, questions relating to the Ottoman Empire were conceptualised within this comparative framework. The conceptual framework was the notion of two worlds, that of Europe and the non-European world, variously described as decadent, sick, declining, unprogressive and stagnant, nearly always regarded as different and inferior to Europe. The 'otherness' of Ottoman society was reflected in British representations, which were both strongly comparative and judgemental in nature. According to these standards of race and Civilisation, Turks were considered as simplistically as 'Orientals'. Writers often relied on older ideas about the essential nature of Oriental societies, that had developed in the nineteenth century, and these preconceptions informed representations in this period of British and European ascendancy. The preconceived idea of inferior difference affected a wide range of British writers from the liberal to the conservative alike. There was a congruence of ideas about the 'Oriental' nature of the Turk. Although these different political ideologies conflicted about policy, neither expressed tolerance towards the different nature of Ottoman society. The effect of these ideas on relations was indirect and can be seen in the creation of a body of largely negative ideas which contribute to the ending of support for the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire.

The image of the Turk as racially and religiously outside of Europe was the most significant and frequently reiterated idea. In their expression of this idea, writers continued and added to older traditions of thought which had always represented the Turks as different. However, late nineteenth-century ideas incorporated generalised notions of race and a new and purely eurocentric definition of Civilisation. Thinking racially was influential on all kind of writers of many different ideological and political persuasions. Race was considered central to human history and determined the character of the society and the nature of peoples. Implicit was the idea of the superiority of European races and societies. Racial categorisations, which were implicit and often explicit in the language of description were generally impressionistic and non-scientific. The writings of a vocal anti-Turk such as the historian E. A. Freeman were not in this

sense the exception although the violence of his language is more extreme than others. The language of description that he used was widespread amongst anti-Turkish writers and especially those that identified themselves as Christians. Such negative and often offensively racist language could only be justified by the demotion of the Turk to the "anti-human specimen of humanity" as the Liberal statesman, Gladstone expressed it. The Turk, it was widely believed, lay outside of Civilisation and was a worthy object of prejudice and condemnation.¹

In the period covered by this thesis an imperialist vision of the Ottoman Empire became dominant. This developed out of the older conservative tradition which had previously supported the Ottoman Empire. In the late nineteenth century this became less tolerant and represented a break with the older policy of support. In a similar way to anti-Turkish writers, Imperialists used a common language of progress, Civilisation and race and shared a similar discourse about peoples pre-defined as non-European or Oriental. Imperialists and liberals emphasised different factors that would be the means to achieve progress. The former emphasised the effect of the spread of ideas by aggression and the latter by 'enlightened' interference in the affairs of other states to spread liberal ideas. However both ideologies were alike in their perception of the Turk as non-European and unprogressive, to whom different categories of analysis applied, and both were affected by the discourse of superior and inferior races.²

Ideas about the Ottoman Empire also expressed something older in the relationship between the Islamic world and Europe. Prior to the nineteenth century, relations in general had been based on mutual antipathy but also on a more equal position of power between the Ottoman Empire and Europe. Late nineteenth-century ideas were expressed in a different context of power, in which Europe was dominant. Writers express the idea that the decline of the Ottoman Empire was both natural and inevitable and presented this process as a vindication of the superiority of European progress and civilisation. This concept was expressed both in secular and religious

¹ Gladstone (1876a).

² See Seton-Watson (1935), which shows the different stances and policies adopted by Conservatives and Liberals towards the Ottoman Empire. This book is itself a good example of the perpetuation of a Gladstonian paradigm about the Turk and the author does not conceal his anti-Turkish standpoint.

language. The existence of the Ottoman Empire especially in Europe was neither feared nor desired and these ideas were reflected in the image of the Turk as alien to Europe. The Turk was represented as dying and retreating in the face of Western progress both in the Balkans and Anatolia. It was as if Europe had after centuries of relations with the Ottoman Empire and nineteenth-century attempts to change it by reform had reached the conclusion that the Empire was non-European and could not change. Perceptions were judgemental as if a final verdict on the Empire had been reached. At one and the same time the Turk was important for who he was i.e. an 'Oriental' and at the same time important for what he was not i.e. 'non-European'.³

There were also factors internal to Ottoman development that influenced British perceptions. Partly as a reaction against European interference and influence in the Empire there had arisen a class of rulers from 1876 who were unwilling to be simply the object of European ambitions. Abdülhamid and the people who surrounded him defended Ottoman integrity and attempted to offset attempts at dissolution. The classic example of this reaction was the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution at the Istanbul Conference in December 1876 but it was also evident in other actions and policies in later years.⁴ Although the Constitution was the product of a long reform tradition its proclamation was deliberately timed to prevent European control and intervention. Such an independent stance was deeply disliked in Britain and elsewhere.

Abdülhamid II who came to power in 1876 was increasingly regarded as a difficult statesman to work with. He was not willing to be a pliable ruler in the hands of Britain or any other power. Although his room to manoeuvre was limited, he conducted a skilful diplomacy, based on the assumption that the Ottomans would choose their own supporters rather than have European patrons proposed for them. Furthermore Abdülhamid appeared as dislikeable to European states because he posed himself as the defender of Islam against Western interference. Abdülhamid in particular was represented as a deviant from previous more accommodating rulers and was particularly despised. Negative perceptions were thus in part a response to changes in the

³ For discussions of the notion of non-European see: Baudet (1965); Daniel (1967); Djait (1985); Rodinson (1988); Said (1987).

⁴ R. Devereux (1963).

Ottoman Empire.

Ideas were also effective on relations between Britain and the Ottoman Empire. Conceptually, the Empire formed the 'Eastern' part of the Eastern Question and as this study has shown this was not an academic phrase. Rather, it formed an entire conceptual framework, in which there were pre-conceived ideas about Ottoman society. The Ottoman Empire was not considered equal to European states and the Turks were not considered a European people. These ideas exerted varying degrees of influence on the wider context of relations and images about the Ottoman Empire and the Turk became enduring and fixed notions.

The legacy of the negative image of the Ottoman Empire and the negative image of the Turk in particular was evident in later periods. Increasingly towards the end of the reign of Abdülhamid relations between the Ottoman Empire and Britain were unfriendly and even hostile at times. Consequently when the Constitution was restored in 1908 and the powers of Abdülhamid reduced and eventually removed by the Young Turks these developments were initially welcomed in Britain. Yet the British did not find in the Young Turks a Government that was willing to sacrifice its independence of action any more than the previous regime. British unwillingness to recognise this was perhaps one of the reasons for the failure of British policy to use the opportunity provided by a pro-British Young Turk Government to improve relations soured in the past.⁵

The Young Turks, like the Government of Abdülhamid were fully aware of the negative image of the Ottoman Empire that had developed in Britain. Whilst they accepted criticisms of the oppressive nature of the Hamidian regime, they reacted to the negative image of the Turks as a people. Halil Halid a 'Young Turk' exile in Britain in the early twentieth century expressed the view that,

"Although no Western power has ever played a greater part in the problems of the Ottoman Empire than great Britain yet in no other country in Western Europe is Turkey more grossly

⁵ See: Ahmad (1969); Cunningham (1992), II, 226-246; Ahmad (1992) .

misunderstood."⁶

The examination of British ideas in this thesis has confirmed the constructed nature of these ideas and has shown the types of intellectual filters, which were influential on the overall vision of the Ottoman Empire. The overtly interested and political nature of British representations has been illustrated and many of the ideas explored are recognisable as paradigms that have continued in the twentieth century. Nineteenth-century British writers created stereotypes of Ottoman society, of Ottoman rule, of the Turk and of Christian subjects, which were intimately related to different ideological, political, religious and economic interests. Representations although drawing upon aspects of the reality of Ottoman Empire reframed it according to preconceived notions and a language of race within an overall Eurocentric discourse.

In writing this thesis, it has been asked of me many times whether the negative and often racist nature of British ideas does not provoke anger. The frequent reiteration of negative themes partly has the effect of dulling a strong reaction, but my response is that these negative ideas and misrepresentations which should ultimately be dismissed, can only be rejected by understanding how and why they developed. It is this question that this thesis has sought to explore. The aim has been to show the complexity of attempts to understand and represent the Ottoman Empire and the intellectual and material framework in which ideas emerged. The constructed nature of British representations has been emphasised in the hope that the process of revision of Western ideas will continue and that some of the misunderstandings that arose in the past and continue to plague the present can be seen in a new light. False understanding and misrepresentation serve interests and it is this factor that has been and should be considered in the study of the past as much as the present.

⁶ Halid (1903),

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Blackwoods- Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine.

BQR- British Quarterly Review.

CR- Contemporary Review.

Cornhill- Cornhill Magazine.

DR- Dublin Review

Ed. New. Phil. Jnl.- Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal.

ER- Edinburgh Review.

FR- Fortnightly Review.

Frasers- Frasers Magazine.

Geog. Jnl.- Geographical Journal.

Geog. Mag. Geographical Magazine.

IAQR- Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review.

Macs- Macmillman's Magazine.

NBR- New British Review.

NQR- New Quarterly Magazine.

NR- New Review.

Nineteenth- Nineteenth Century and After.

QR- Quarterly Review.

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Glossary of Journals.

AHR- American Historical Journal.

BMGS- Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies

CHJ- Cambridge Historical Journal

CSSH- Comparative Studies in Society and History.

DUJ- Durham University Journal

Econ HR- Economic History Review

EHR- *English Historical Review*

GJ- Geographical Journal

HJ- Historical Journal.

IJMES- International Journal Of Middle Eastern Studies.

IJTS- International Journal of Turkish Studies.

IQ- Islamic Quarterly

JAS- Journal of Asian Studies

JCH- Journal of Contemporary History.

JEH- Journal of Economic History

JIH- Journal of Interdisciplinary History

JMH- Journal of Modern History.

JTS- Journal of Turkish Studies.

JWCI- Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute

JWH- Journal of World History

MEA- Middle East Affairs

MES- Middle Eastern Studies

MESJ- Middle Eastern Studies Journal.

PR-Philological Review

SEER- Slavonic and East European Review.

SS- Slavic Studies

TR- Turkish Review.

TSAB- Turkish Studies Association Bulletin.

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