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## THOUGHTS ON THE IMAGE OF TURKS IN THE WORLD AND CULTURAL IMPERIALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CENTER-PERIPHERY DICHOTOMY

### Abstract

From the past to the present, the image of Turks in the world public opinion has generally pejorative meanings. The Turks' encounters with the Crusader armies and the resulting victories against the Crusaders led to negative images of the Turks in the eyes of Europeans. However, with the commercial privileges granted to Western merchants during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, Westerners had the opportunity to get to know the Turks closely. In this process, it is seen that Western travelers made positive statements about Turks in their works. Today, Europeans continue to have a social Darwinist understanding of Eastern peoples. For example, it is also known that one of the most important reasons for the Republic of Türkiye failure to join the European Union is the prejudiced attitudes of Europeans towards the Turkish. Cultural imperialism is a concept that emerged in the 1960s. Today, Turkish society has entered the process of Americanization through social media and cinema. While "communism" was seen as the biggest threat in the process of cultural imperialism during the Cold War period, in the current process, popular culture under the guidance of American hegemony makes people dumbed down. The aim of the study is not only to reveal how the Turkish image is perceived in the world and the reflections of cultural imperialism on Turkish society within the irreconcilable contradiction of center-periphery but also to explain that Turkish society should protect its own culture by acting within the framework of "National Awareness". Methodologically, the manifestations of the problematic of popular culture have been investigated by utilizing domestic and foreign sources.

**Keywords:** Culture, West, East, Popular Culture, National Consciousness.

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## DÜNYADA TÜRK İMAJI VE MERKEZ-ÇEVRE DİKOTOMOSİ BAĞLAMINDA KÜLTÜR EMPERYALİZMİ ÜZERİNE DÜŞÜNCELER

### Özet

Geçmişten günümüze Türklerin dünya kamuoyundaki imajında genel olarak pejoratif anlamlar vardır. Türklerin, Haçlı orduları ile karşılaşması ve neticesinde Haçlılara karşı zaferler kazanması Avrupalıların bakış açısında Türkler'e olumsuz imgeler yüklenmesine yol açmıştır. Ancak Kanuni Sultan Süleyman döneminde Batılı tüccarlara tanınan ticari imtiyazlar ile Batılılar, Türkleri yakından tanıma imkânı elde etmişlerdir. Bu proseste Batılı seyahatçilerin çalışmalarında Türklerle yönelik olumlu söylemlerinde olduğu görülmektedir. Günümüzde Avrupalıların, Doğulu halklara Sosyal Darwinist anlayışları devam etmektedir. Örneğin; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devleti'nin Avrupa Birliği'ne girememesinin en önemli sebeplerinden birisi de Avrupalıların Türklerle karşı takındığı önyargılı tutumların olduğu da bilinmektedir. Kültür emperyalizmi ise 1960'lı yıllarda ortaya çıkan bir kavramdır. Günümüzde sosyal medya ve sinema aracılığıyla Türk toplumu Amerikanlaşma sürecine girmiştir. Soğuk Savaş Dönemi'nde kültür emperyalizmi sürecinde en büyük tehdit olarak "komünizm" görülürken, şimdiki süreçte Amerikan hegemonyasının güdümünde popüler kültür insanları mankurtlaştırmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türk imajının dünyada nasıl algılandığı ve merkez-çevre uzlaşmaz çelişkisi içerisinde kültür emperyalizminin Türk toplumuna yansımalarını ortaya koyabilmektir. Çalışmadaki hedef, Türk toplumunun "Milli Şuur" çerçevesinde hareket ederek öz kültürüne sahip çıkması gerektiğini anlatabilmektir. Yöntemsel olarak yerli ve yabancı kaynaklardan faydalanarak popüler kültür sorunsalının tezahürleri araştırılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kültür, Batı, Doğu, Popüler Kültür, Milli Şuur.

### 1. Introduction

Opinions about the emergence of the word culture converge on the root meaning of the word related to agriculture. Linguists have stated that the word "culture" comes from the Latin word "edere-cultura", which means soil culture. The word "cultura" was translated into English as "culture" in the 15th century. Since the 16th century, the word culture has been expanded to include human development. In some writings, it is stated that the first philosophers who expanded this word to include humans were "Cicero and Horatius". The word culture is used as civilization in English and French languages (Oğuz, 2010: 15-17).

It can be said that culture is the most important factor in the emergence of nations and the continuation of their existence. Culture is a phenomenon that determines the differences between nations and makes nations a nation. The culture of each nation is unique. Language, religion, customs and behaviors create culture as a result of the fusion of nations. Ziya Gökalp stated this feature as follows: "Institutions that bind the members of a society together, that is, create solidarity between them, are cultural institutions. The collection of these institutions constitutes the culture of that society." (Gökalp, 1918; Çay, 1986: 49-66) Ziya Gökalp also said the following on this subject: "Hars is a harmonious collection of the religious, moral, legal, artistic, linguistic, economic and scientific lives of a single nation." (Çay, 1986: 49-66; Gökalp, 1970: 30 vd). Since Ziya Gökalp, it has been stated that civilization and culture are different. The fact that culture acquires international value constitutes the civilized elements of the society to which they belong. For example, Western civilization consists of Roman Law, Christianity and the physical sciences. Every nation in civilization has its own culture. Just as the French, English and Germans represent different cultures, so do the Arabs, Turks and Persians. (Çay, 1986: 49-



66). In other words, while the concept of civilization is a universal phenomenon, culture is local on a macro scale.

Every society has its own unique image in the history of civilizations. For example, the image of Turks in the world has differed in every period. The perception created by this image has been transferred from generation to generation and engraved in the memory of societies. The prejudices produced have brought along othering and racism. Europeans needed the other to define their own identity. The historical other has always been the "East" (Eravcı, 2010: 17-18; Mertoğlu, 2021: 609-629). Eurocentrism is the idea that all Western values are superior to the values of other nations. Eurocentrism also includes ethnocentrism within itself. Ethnocentrism is a racist mindset. Eurocentrism started with the Renaissance. The Renaissance was the historical roots of capitalism. Capitalism was born in the West. It can be said that the reason why capitalism did not develop in the East is that the state was strong in the East (Mertoğlu, 2021: 609-629). The development of Eurocentric thought can be traced back to the 11th century. In the process that started with the Turks' victory in the 1071 Battle of Malazgirt, the Turks' role as the protector of Islam during the Crusader Wars and the conquest of Istanbul, Europeans used pejorative images of Turks. However, after the great defeat suffered by the Ottoman Empire at the Battle of Vienna II, Europeans began to use derogatory terms against the Turks. (Mertoğlu, 2021: 609-629). This approach continued until the War of Independence.

Despite the negative attitudes of the West towards Turks, Erol Güngör criticized Türkiye for its Western-centered modernization efforts. According to Güngör, Türkiye should reconsider its modernization efforts. There must be a return to the essence. Turkish civilization is a nation with its own culture (Güngör, 1984: 143-144). Güngör is one of our intellectuals who approaches the issues of culture and modernization from a nationalist perspective.

The historical roots of the concept of cultural imperialism date back to the 1960s. This concept was not used until the 1960s, except for a few national authors. As underdeveloped countries regained their independence after the Second World War, the concept of cultural imperialism gained a different rhetoric. While "National culture" was seen as the element that would counter cultural imperialism in the nationalist-conservative side, religion came to the fore in the Islamist side. The leftist group, on the other hand, considered cultural imperialism as a variant of capitalist exploitation and saw opposing cultural imperialism as equivalent to opposing capitalism (Çelik, 2021: 629-675). While nationalist-conservative circles approached the issue from a cultural perspective, the leftist group evaluated the issue from a systemic perspective.

There are many nations such as the Assyrians, Phrygians, Normans, Huns, Urartians, Berbers and Hittites who were wiped out and lost their homelands through the invasion of other cultures, religions and customs. These nations were not destroyed by actual force, but by being colonized by other cultures. These nations collapsed because they were not as sensitive about their national culture as, for example, the Greeks, Iranians and Jews. On the other hand, Greek, Iranian, Egyptian tribes were subjected to invasions of Rome, Alexander, Barbarians, Christianity, Islam, Turkishness throughout history, but they were not destroyed because they remained loyal to their national cultural identity (Kabaklı, 1975: 18). In Gökalp's words, "hars", that is, national culture, is one of the only features that make societies different from each other.

After mentioning the culture-personality relationship, multiculturalism and the contributions of the Turks to civilization, this study will emphasize how the nations of the world perceive the Turks and the socio-economic harms of cultural imperialism to society.



## 2. Culture-Personality Relationship, Multiculturalism and Turks' Contributions to Civilization

M. Mead was the first to publish on culture-personality. R. Benedict, who argued that the study of culture can be based on psychological characteristics, included psychology in the ethnography of cultures. Benedict was more inclined to the classical psychology of the last century than Freud's Depth Psychology. According to him, each culture has its own goals and motivations. Cultures choose behavior patterns appropriate to their purposes. Cultures form a whole with the behaviors they choose according to their purposes. Although cultures have similar institutions and organizations, they may not be similar to each other. The area covered by culture is different in each culture. Culture-personality analysis can be conducted by examining behaviors in each culture. The New Freudians, E. Fromm, Kardiner and Erickson considered culture as the essence of the character structure shared by most members of society. (Emiroğlu, 1977: 103-116). In other words, culture includes the behavior patterns of societies.

Although culture is a universal phenomenon as a human experience, it is also a phenomenon that can vary by region. Culture shapes human behavior, but individuals are rarely aware of it. Culture is dynamic, it is in a constant state of change. In the most general sense, culture is a way of life. Customs and traditions play a leading role in the process of acculturation. In this respect, culture can also be called a social heritage. Each nation has its own basic behavior patterns. On the other hand, cultures can undergo change. This diffusion or acculturation may be spontaneous, or it may be forced, planned or guided (Erdentuğ, 1986: 229-246). For example, the American state's efforts to change societies through popular culture can be considered as planned diffusion.

It is possible for human communities living in similar geographical conditions to find similar solutions and adopt similar customs and traditions in order to survive. This can also be called creating a common cultural heritage in a certain geographical area. It may be necessary to see cultural patterns as a cultural area because they show similarities and have common characteristics in some geographies. This cultural area can often transcend administrative and political boundaries. In cultural field studies, the boundaries of cultural fields are not clear. They vary according to the individual (Erdentuğ, 1986: 229-246). It is known that the main source of Turkish culture is Central Asia. The "Turkish culture" that exists today in the Republic of Türkiye has four origins and a quadruple component. "1- Original Turkish culture (Central Asia), 2- Islamic culture (Arab-Iranian), 3- Anatolian indigenous cultures, 4- Western (European) culture." In the face of these facts determined by geography in the course of history, it is not a scientific approach to reduce the universal culture of Turks as a Turkish-Islamic synthesis (Turan, 2000: 54). Turan's point is that Turkish culture is a mosaic. In other words, Turkish culture is too universal to be put into a certain mold.

We can interpret the concept of culture in four different ways: "1-Culture is the cumulative civilization of a society or of all societies. 2. Culture is a particular society itself. 3. Culture is the composite of a series of social processes. 4. Culture is a theory of man and society." (Çüçen, 2005: 111-115; Güvenç, 1974: 95) Science and technology, which include universal values, create civilization. High culture and subculture always enter into a relationship. This relationship is not always an equal relationship; because the upper culture always forces the lower culture to change. Thus, there is conflict between the center and the periphery. Universal culture/civilization is the universal values created by people. Science, art and technology can be given as examples. National culture is the factors that distinguish a nation from others. Local culture is the value judgments such as village culture, worker culture and eastern culture shared by human communities living together in a certain period of time. The harmonious coexistence of these cultures is called multiculturalism. Multiculturalism also causes change. Individuals with different cultures can only create culture and live in peace through education (Çüçen, 2005: 111-115). Today, Eurocentric approaches pose obstacles to universal peace. In a way, it can be said that this understanding is a product of the social Darwinist understanding.



Turks are a nation that has made significant contributions to civilization from past to present. Necati Demir said the following about this issue: *“It is a misinformation that the printing press and the compass were invented by the Chinese. According to Oğuz Name, the invention of the wheel and the car was made by the Turks. The shapes on various tombs in Türkiye were actually created based on Oghuz stamps. Another contribution we made to world civilizations is our unique motifs on carpets. History was written on the carpets, but no reader was found.”* Necati Demir continued his words as follows: *“The writings written on rocks and many paintings are among the contributions of Turks to world civilization. Today's clothing can be said to be among the contributions of Turks to world civilization. It is the great Turkish nation that introduced the world to the calendar with the Turkish Calendar with twelve animals. We are the children of a great nation, and being aware of this, we should read a lot in the field of History. We must know our history very well.”* (DPÜ Haber Portalı, 2016: 1) Turks also raised important people in the field of science such as *“Cahit Arf, Aziz Sancar, Kerim Erim, İbrahim Hakkı, Kambur Vesim, Evliya Çelebi, Katip Çelebi, Ali Kuşçu, Mimar Koca Sinan, Piri Reis, Uluğ Bey, Akşemseddin, Bursalı Kadızâde Rumi, El Cezerî, Fârâbî”* (Süslü, 2015: 6-16).

### 3. The World's Great Fear: Turks

In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, many people from all walks of life in Türkiye wrote a lot about the Turks in their memoirs. Most of them were members of the merchant class. For example, Anthony Sherley, a relative of European royal families who traveled to the Middle East for trade, wrote that when he landed in Cyprus, the Turkish governor treated him with hospitality, but that in other parts of the region he experienced difficulties. To this end, he described the Turks as *“illiterate, barbaric, arrogant, cruel, savage, irreligious, alcoholic and liars”*. In 1585, Walshingham, the Queen's councillor, persuaded the British ambassador to the Sultan, William Harborne, to make a military alliance between the British and the Turks, thus balancing Spain's power. Walshingham portrayed the Spaniards and Turks as *“the arms and legs of the devil”*. English traveler Thomas Dallam, who came to Istanbul in 1599, fifteen years after Walshingham, called the Turks *“dog-like, skinnerian, and children of irreligious people.”* (Eravcı, 2010: 75-76).

As the religion of Islam spread, the Christian church described it as a religion of sin in order to prevent its community from converting to this religion. Euthymius Zygabenus, in his work *“Islamic Catechism”*, accused Muslims of *“worshiping the Star of Venus under the name Cobar”*. According to John Damascene, the Prophet Muhammad allowed polygamy to justify his own adultery. Muslims were pagans who worshiped the Kaaba stone (Servante, 2016: 31).

According to some Western writers, the homeland of the Turks is Scythia. These works used pejorative expressions about the Turks. In the works, Turks were mentioned as *“barbarians, thieves, fraudsters and unlawful”*. 16th century chroniclers attributed the origin of the Turks to the Trojans (Lanza, 2016: 88-89).

However, there were also writers who used positive expressions about the Turks. For example, Spanish novelist Vicente Blasco Ibanez stated that he loved the Turks, that they were a noble nation, good and open-hearted people. (Önalp, 2016: 262-263).

There was also a prejudiced attitude towards Turks in Russian literature. In Russian literary writings, the word *“Turok”* was used, which is the equivalent of our word *“Moskof”*. In the well-known Russian proverb *“An uninvited guest is worse than a Tatar”*, the word *“Tatar”* is used to criticize the Turks. In Russian TV channels, the word *“Turk”* is interpreted through the concepts of *“jealousy and violence”* (Behramoğlu, 2016: 236). In his travelogue, the traveler Francisco De Miran stated that he was well received by men in Türkiye, but did not receive the same level of kindness from women and children (Kutlu, 2016: 287-288).



Immanuel Kant, a follower of Hegel in his interpretation of the Orient, went along an enlightened and pacifist line and introduced the concept of race. According to him, Europeans were superior to both the East and Africans. The superiority of Europeans was the product of reason. Accordingly, he argued that Europeans should unite (Karagöz, 2017: 43-63). Although an English traveler Henry Blunt (1602-1682) saw the Turks as superior in innovation and initiative, his prejudice against Turks and Muslims sometimes manifested itself. For him, *"the Turkish style seemed barbaric."* (Eravcı, 2010: 77-78) Richar Knolles, in his work *"The General History of the Turks"* written in 1603, stated that he wrote this work because he saw the Turks as *"the great fear of the world"*. Eravcı gave the following information about Westerners' thoughts on the Turks: *"It can be seen in the 17th century that, due to the decline of the Ottoman Empire, adjectives such as ignorant, undeveloped, not knowing anyone but themselves and not knowing new places, not keeping the place clean, not producing, came to the fore."* (Eravcı, 2010: 83). Paul Rycout, the British envoy's clerk, also had negative remarks about the Turks. According to him, *"Turks were arrogant, insolent and had little knowledge of the power and might of other rulers"*. (Eravcı, 2010: 77).

According to Westerners, the biggest obstacle to world peace was the *"East"*. Therefore, the East had to be marginalized. One of those who came to the forefront in terms of Turkophobia was William Gladstone. Gladstone introduced the Turks to the whole world as a barbaric tribe. Gladstone also served as the Minister of Colonies. Gladstone was one of those who collaborated with the Russians in the partition of the Ottoman Empire. The misperception created by Gladstone was so strong that the whole world remained silent about the tragedy of the Turks in the Balkans. The perception of fear of the Turks in Europe until the sixteenth century evolved from fear to respect after the sixteenth century and to contempt with the decline of the Ottoman Empire. After the nineteenth century, a hostile attitude emerged. Even today, Europeans' prejudices about Turks have not changed. This perception legitimized the Crusades and actually worked in the era of cultural imperialism (Karagöz, 2017: 43-63). As a matter of fact, the problems experienced by Turkish immigrants living in Western countries are manifestations of the ethnocentric approach of Westerners.

Until recently, Western public opinion ignored Türkiye. In a survey conducted by the European Commission in 1976, Türkiye came last in the following question: *"Are there any other countries that you would like to see join the European Union in the near future? If so, which ones?"* According to a 2002 survey, even though there has been some progress in Türkiye tourism, a large proportion of Europeans still do not want to see Türkiye in the European Union. In the 15 member states of the European Union, 47% of those surveyed opposed Turkish membership (Servante, 2016: 27-28). It can be stated that the reason behind these reactions is historical Turkophobia.

#### **4. Cultural Imperialism in the Incomprehensible Opposition of Center and Periphery**

*"West"* is a concept that determines geographical relativity. However, people use this term to describe a civilization rather than a geographical word. In other words, it expresses the value judgments and worldview of European countries. The source of this civilization is not just the product of Greek civilization, as is thought. At the same time, Islamic civilization also contributed to the formation of the Western paradigm. The West, which experienced a dark period in the Middle Ages, translated and put into practice the works of Islamic science and civilization in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Today, there is more Westernization than Modernization. The new name for this is the *"European Union"*, the *"Christian club"*. There are attempts to attribute Westernization to Atatürk (the first President and Founder of Türkiye). However, Atatürk was a *"Modernizer"* rather than a *"Westernizer"*. In other words, Atatürk's main aim was to catch up with civilization (Yakıt, 2012: 250-253).



Unlike what Tomlinson states, the concept of cultural imperialism entered our language before the 1960s. Today, there is almost no one who has not heard this word. However, the first thinker to use this concept in the 1950s was "*Osman Yüksel Serdengeçti*". Considering that each period has its own image, this concept was a concept used for the evil purposes of imperialist countries. Atatürk's efforts to free Turkish from the yoke of foreign languages and Şemsettin Günaltay's directing the nation to intellectual studies can be cited as examples. The 1960s was the period when the concept of cultural imperialism was used most intensively, because the struggle against imperialism in the underdeveloped countries that gained their independence after the Second World War resonated in Türkiye as well. Right and left cliques in Türkiye interpreted the concept of cultural imperialism in their own unique ways. The "*Yeniden Milli Mücadele (Renewed National Struggle)*" magazine, published by the left-wing Hikmet Kıvılcımlı and Mehmet Ali Aybar and the right-wing by the Strugglers, became the symbol of these searches. The left wing generally criticized capitalism through the intellectuals clustered around "*Yön (Direction)*" Magazine. These intellectuals were influenced by the Algerian war of independence. One of the right-wing thinkers who touched upon cultural imperialism the most was "*Osman Yüksel Serdengeçti*". Serdengeçti's article "*Kültür Emperyalizmi*" was modified and published in Fedai Magazine in 1963. According to Serdengeçti, it was extremely dangerous for a nation's culture to be invaded by a foreign culture. As a result of cultural imperialism, a nation could face the danger of extinction. What needed to be done was to revive the spirit of Kuva-yı Milliye. Serdengeçti criticized the Westernist aspect of the Republican revolutions without referring to names. The author emphasized Turkish-American friendship so that his comments would not be misunderstood. This alliance was necessary due to the political, economic and military conditions of the period. The author formulated it as follows: "*We love and respect Truman. We certainly don't like Santa Claus!*" (Çelik, 2021: 629-675). It can be stated that the reason why the author does not use negative expressions about America is the "*Cold War*" psychology.

Necip Fazıl Kısakürek was among those who criticized the process of Westernization that began in Tanzimat. Nurettin Topçu opposed the idea of Westernization without using the word cultural imperialism. Semiha Ayverdi, on the other hand, took a culturalist approach to the issue. She suggested that national cultural policies should be emphasized in solving Türkiye problems. In order to be successful in this war, communism should be fought and left-wing people should be removed from the field of education. (Çelik, 2021: 629-675).

In parallel with technological developments, cultural imperialism has become multidimensional. Popular culture has many indirect, if not direct, methods for its implementation in underdeveloped or developing countries. With the development of global communication, it is argued that Western powers, especially under the leadership of American-owned multinational corporations, have monopolized the national identities of underdeveloped or developing countries. According to the Marxist front, the means of communication are manipulated by technologically advanced countries to spread modern culture, create a standardized lifestyle for consumption and change people's attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, issues of cultural domination are transformed into media oppression (Sungur, 2007: iii). It can be stated that it is in the interest of the market economy that communication tools motivate people towards consumption. This situation leads to the virtualization of the contradiction between labor and capital.

Popular culture is daily life itself and produces artificial happiness. Since popular culture is generally produced by hegemonic groups, it prevents the truth from being seen. Popular culture produced by the ruling classes makes society passive. Political consequences also arise with the absorption of popular culture by societies. There is nothing to condemn in the consumption of working people, but with the emergence of a consumer society, it can be determined that consumption is not the only source of happiness. The downside of consumption is that individuals lose their sense of class and solidarity as they accumulate wealth. In addition, after eight hours of work, productive forces prefer to have fun



rather than wasting mental power. There is no oppositional line in the products broadcast on television. Thus, the masses become passive. (Sungur, 2007: 266-269). One-way broadcasts on television prevent the masses from seeing the truth.

It is claimed that the widespread use of television has broadened the horizons of rural people. However, the information received is manipulative and it is clear that the broadcasts have enriched the world of the rural-urban working class. From another perspective, it can be stated that television has changed and transformed the lower classes. However, one should not forget the fact that the broadcasts spread the ideology of the ruling classes. Therefore, it is not possible to deny the fact that television is useful for people in rural areas to see that there are other worlds (Sungur, 2007: 269). The concept of "alienation" should also be mentioned in the ideological context of popular culture. In his book Manuscripts, Karl Marx explained the concept of "alienation" in terms of labor exploitation. According to him, life devoted to the object turned man against himself. In this way, the alienated human being became a prisoner of alienated needs. In other words, they become spontaneously acting commodities. Thus, their artificial desires are motivated in the virtual environment produced by advertising institutions. Alienated individuals pursue instant pleasures (Sungur, 2007: 272). Alienation can be expressed not only in its labor dimension but also in its intransigence towards its own culture.

After the Second World War, the intensification of American popular culture became part of America's expansionist strategy. During this period, the United States tried and succeeded in building a consumer society to strengthen its market economy. Today, the first thing that comes to mind when we think of popular culture is the American way of life. According to Sungur: "Theodore Roosevelt, then US Secretary of State, articulated the ideology of the Americanization of the world in 1898, stating that the "Americanization of the world is a destiny". Americanization usually means becoming accustomed to the clothes, styles and customs that prevail in America." (Sungur, 2007: 274). Turkish people are very familiar with names such as McDonald's, Burger King, Pizza Hut, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Mr. Sandwich, Baskin Robins, Steak House, Open Buffet, Home Center, Sauder, Leather Mode, Shopping Center/Mall, Sports Center, Disneyland. According to some thinkers, this is a sign that Türkiye has become a global village (Sungur, 2007: 277). It has been a controversial issue which countries benefit from the phenomenon of becoming a global village in underdeveloped or developing countries of the world.

Social media is preferred because it includes elements such as sexuality, sports, magazines, humor and games. The passion for sharing stimulated by popular culture leads to an increase in the use of social media. Due to social media, millions of people have the opportunity to communicate with each other. Users contribute to the development of popular culture by using social media. Considering the benefits and harms of social media, it can be concluded that it isolates people. People who use social media adopt the value judgments of the culture they interact with after a while. In this case, individuals become alienated from their own culture. Social media networks cause the formation of a new culture. In other words, social media users are exposed to a global hybrid culture. Social media plays an important role in the spread of dominant cultures. People in social media networks are dominated by the dominant culture. Social media also destroys the language of real communication. Social media damages communication between generations by instilling the idea of individualism, especially in young people. The language used in social media is aimless and fruitless. With the increasing popularity of social media, the habit of reading books is also weakening. There is also a big difference between social media and the language used in Turkish. Social media virtualizes the languages of societies (Bozdemir, 2020: 69-71). Considering that one of the most important features that distinguishes a culture from others is "language", the damages of the cultural language created by social media can be better understood.

Every cultural product that originates in the West serves imperialism to a greater or lesser extent. Hollywood movies, television broadcasts, pop music songs and computer games have their own



mechanisms of functioning. Netflix is a product of imperialism developed within the internal dynamics of US imperialism. Netflix challenges moral norms with its liberal, established and multi-layered structure. As such, it has a mission in line with its ideological and cultural goals. Foreign cultural norms have two stages. In the first stage, they affect daily practices and consumption behaviors, while in the second stage they have an impact on values. Netflix is currently in an interim period. With a coherent national policy, Netflix's influence can be broken and a total awakening can take place (Yakınca, 2020).

In the late 1960s, a new genre of music emerged in Türkiye, reflecting the aspirations of rural migrants living in slums. The music genre called Arabesque is a hybrid style in which Turkish classical and folk motifs are intertwined with Western and Egyptian elements. As a hybrid music style, arabesque underwent a turning point in the 1970s. In this process, arabesque lost its authenticity and came under the influence of neo-liberal economic reforms and new conservative ideas. The arabesque music genre became commercialized. Intellectuals opposed this music genre. "*Individuals referred to as the other*" who migrated to the city captured their identities in this music genre, but intellectuals raised the questions "*Who are we?*" and "*How should we live?*" According to the general evaluation of the intellectuals, arabesque music was an "*inferior style*". According to them, arabesque music was a source of entertainment for the semi-peasant masses. Arabesque was defined as "*the music of alienation*". Like intellectuals, bureaucrats and artists shared the view that arabesque was a vulgar and degenerate genre. Indeed, the arabesque genre meant an imitation of music. It can be stated that arabesque does not belong to our culture. A priori, the way arabesque expresses itself can also be considered as a metaphor of Turkish modernization (Özbek, 1998: 189-210). The metaphorical meaning of Turkish modernization has brought about many controversial issues such as the secular-anti-secular conflict or the irreconcilable contradiction of rural-urban culture.

## 5. Conclusion

The historical background of the negative perception of Turks in the world goes back to the Crusades. Turks, who protected the Muslim East during the Crusades, showed significant resistance against the Crusaders. With the victory of the Battle of Malazgirt in 1071 and Anatolia becoming the homeland of the Turks, the Turks were now "*ruthless and barbaric*" in the eyes of Europeans. The conquest of Istanbul in 1453 and the arrival of the Turks at the gates of Vienna consolidated the fear of the Turks. Especially during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, Europeans were granted certain commercial privileges and Western travelers had the opportunity to get to know the Turks closely. In this period, there were travelers and bureaucrats who were prejudiced against the Turks and used pejorative expressions, as well as those who had a positive (at least neutral) approach (Traveller Francisco De Miran). It can be said that the Ottoman Empire's loss in the 2nd Siege of Vienna led to the emergence of condescending expressions against the Turks in the West. The beginning of the Renaissance movements brought about the birth of capitalism. In this period, Europeans, who were able to create surplus-value, also tried to spread their culture to underdeveloped countries. While it was Britain that carried out this process until the mid-twentieth century, the United States became the practitioner of cultural imperialism after the Second World War. The Americans, who tried to achieve this through Hollywood movies, pop music, computer games and television broadcasts, achieved this goal to a certain extent. Americans wanted to create a consumer society to benefit the market economy. One of the most beneficial areas in creating a uniform individual is social media platforms. The ideologists of imperialism, who created a new culture and language in this field, have turned social media into a field of practice that harmed national culture. Television shows avant-garde broadcasts rather than questioning and critical ones. The ruling classes do not want society to think. People know as much truth as the hegemony put forward, so the internet, television and social media platforms serve as apparatuses to hide the truth. Working people in society prefer to have fun on the aforementioned



channels instead of intellectual activities and to consume instead of producing. In this way, people lose their sense of class and solidarity.

As a result, underdeveloped or developing countries need to move away from being a global village and turn towards national policies. Nations that have lost their national consciousness are in danger of being erased from the stage of history. The reason for the disappearance of Anatolian civilizations in the past should be sought in this process. However, Persians, Greeks and Arabs with a strong national consciousness managed to preserve their national identity and were not erased from the stage of history even though they were invaded many times in the past.

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### **ÇIKAR ÇATIŞMASI BEYANI**

Yazarın/Yazarların herhangi bir çikara dayalı ilişkisi bulunmamaktadır.

### **ETİK ONAY/KATILIMCI ONAMI**

Makale kapsamında katılımcı kullanılmadığı için ilgili onaya yer verilmemiştir.

### **MADDİ DESTEK**

Çalışma için herhangi bir maddi destek alınmamıştır.

### **YAZAR KATKILARI**

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