HARD-WIRED OBSTINACY

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Editorial, 17 January 2016

There was a time not long ago--especially in fiction (think of Romeo in “Romeo and Juliet”)--when serenading below the balcony of the beloved, making oneself a nuisance idling near the house of the loved one, and writing unwanted love letters and bad poetry was considered romantic. Those days are gone. Such behaviour (nowadays telephone calls, texting, emails, etc.) is now considered stalking when the affection is not reciprocated. It’s a criminal offense. While men--yes, the offenders are mostly male--are finally learning that unwanted attention isn’t a coyly disguised “Yes”, there remains an obdurate an entity which refuses to understand that “No” means “No” and that it is not a disguised “*naz*” or “*jilva*”.

That obstinate entity is the Republic of Turkey. The government of that country must be the oldest stalker in the universe. Take Turkey’s courting of the European Union—please. Ankara has been trying, since 1959, to become a member of the European Union (EU), then called the European Economic Community. Despite countless rejections from the EU, the heads of European governments and European polls, Turkey keeps knocking on the doors of Berlin, Paris, Brussels, London... and offering ingratiating smiles like that of Istanbul’s Kapali Carsi’s haggling rug merchants. It also knocks on the doors of Vienna... but the Viennese haven’t forgotten the last two times (1529 and 1683) the Turks came knocking.

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Due to pressure by the United States—which likes to have a second fifth column (after the UK) in the EU—the Europeans have allowed alien Turkey membership in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Organization for Security & Co-operation in Europe, associate membership in the Western European Union part of the Western Group, and other sweeteners to satisfy Uncle Sam. But no matter how much pressure Washington brings to bear, the Europeans refuse to grant Turkey accession to the EU.

Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany has made it clear Germany—which already has 3 million Turks—will not approve Turkey's membership in the EU. Former French President Nicola Sarkozy (Jan. 2007) said: "…enlarging Europe with no limits will destroy the European political union, and that I do not accept…I want to say that Europe must give itself borders, that not all countries have a vocation to become members of Europe, beginning with Turkey which has no place inside the European Union." EU President Jean-Claude Juncker of Germany has also spoken against the admission of Turkey.

Poll after poll has demonstrated that the European public is against Turkey's admission. A Eurobarometer poll in 2013—two years before the increased European fears that the continent was being flooded by Muslims—indicated that most Europeans don't want Turkey in the EU. Some polls have shown 81% of the public (Austria) is against Turkey's accession. The "most pro" was Romania with 60% against.

Europeans have a long list of reasons why they don't want Turkey in the EU.

- Turkey is not democratic. In fact, it is becoming more authoritarian every day under Erdogan's inimitable leadership, pacem Adolf Hitler.
- Turkey is not secular, despite its protestations.
- Turkish "culture" is alien to Europeans.
- Turkey is Muslim and veering towards fundamentalism.
- Turkey illegally occupies northern Cyprus.
- Turkey has poor relations with Greece.
- Article 301—the law against "insulting the Turkish nation" is still in force.
- Women's rights are in the law books but are not implemented.
- Conscientious objection to military service is not recognized in Turkey. Turkey and Azerbaijan are the sole pair–among the 47 members of the Council of Europe—which refuse to recognize conscientious objection as legal or offer alternatives to military service.
- Turkey mistreats its Kurdish and Alevi minorities and intimidates minorities which openly embrace their Christian identities.
- Europeans fear that because of its huge population (75 million and overwhelmingly young), Turkey would be entitled to the second-largest number of seats (after Germany) in the

European Parliament.

- Europeans fear Turkey might act as the Pied Piper who would bring other Muslim states—Morocco, Tunisia, etc.—into the EU further diluting the dominant Western European ethos.
- Turkish judiciary, fundamental rights, education, social policy, company law, health protection, safety standards… are all red flags to the Europeans.

Many Europeans know that they are considered infidel (gavoor) by many/most Turks.

- Turkey, which blindly thinks having a large population/market and the second-largest NATO army would be attractive to the Europeans, doesn't realize that Europeans are not eager to have their markets deluged by cheap Turkish goods, more impoverished Turks immigrating to Europe, or having in its highest council a callow boy whose favourite modus operandi is violence.

- Despite Ankara's lubricious efforts, European states are not convinced an alien Turkey would enhance EU's geostrategic position in the Middle East.

- Europeans don't trust Turkey because Ankara is an unreliable partner which switches sides without moral compunction. The most recent example of this Turkish proclivity is the brazen support of the homicidal ISIS.

- Although the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by Turkey is not a crucial condition for accession, France has said that it would bring up the issue during negotiations. Previous president of the European Parliament (Martin Schulz) has said the recognition must be a precondition for Turkey's EU accession. These are sweet-sounding words to Armenians but are of little value: they're superfluous additions to the long list of requirements the Europeans have insisted Turkey accede to before being admitted to the European club as a full member.

In an analysis, based on the World Value Survey, social scientists Arno Tausch and Almas Hesmati have concluded that a "robust measurement scale of global economic, political and social values and Turkey's place on them wields only a very qualified picture of Turkey's place on the maps of global values." This is a tortuous and academic way of saying Turkey has few values which are valued by the world.

And yet, Prime Minister Ahmet aka Smiley Davutoglu is certain Turkey will be a full member of the EU by 2023, one-hundred years after Ataturk gave birth to his bloody Republic of Turkey over the graves, property and historic rights of millions of Armenians, Greeks, Kurds, Arabs, Assyrians, Alevis…

In how many ways can Europeans tell Turkey to scram before Ankara gets the message?

What kind of government would keep chasing, for 57 years, a "beloved" which has said—in no uncertain terms—that it's not welcome and is tolerated only because of Uncle Sam's cudgel?

What kind of government?

- A government which has no pride.
- A government with no integrity.
- A government which is not embarrassed when it begs, lies and cheats, and kills. A government whose genetic code has a dominant strand of obstinacy. After all, it refuses admit committing genocides; it refuses to recognize that the corrupt Ottoman days are long over; it refuses to recognize that the only reason “their” country exists is because Europeans and the Americans want a fence against Russia.
- A government which has ordered its children to start their classes with the inane declaration “happy is the person who can say he is a Turk”.

Turkey: Frequently wrong, but never in doubt.