

HOMO OTTOMANICUS ORIENTALIS (FROM GREECE,
MOLDAVIA, WALLACHIA) VERSUS *HOMO*
OTTOMANICUS OCCIDENTALIS (FROM HUNGARY,
TRANSYLVANIA, RAGUSA): A HYPOTHESIS REGARDING
THE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT GAPS BETWEEN THE
WESTERN-CHRISTIAN (CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT)
AND EASTERN-CHRISTIAN (ORTHODOX) VASSAL
COMMUNITIES AND COUNTRIES OF THE OTTOMAN
EMPIRE

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Abstract: What is essential and highly relevant for the debate we intend to have in this article is the European and Christian (non-Muslim) side of The Sublime Porte. In our demonstration, both *homo christianus orientalis* (from Wallachia, Moldavia, Greece) and *homo christianus occidentalis* (from Hungary, Transylvania and Ragusa) are seen as civilizational subdivision of *homo ottomanicus* and subjects of the Sultan in Constantinople. In this article we are interested in explaining the massive discrepancies between the way in which *homo christianus orientalis* on one hand, and *homo christianus occidentalis* on the other, were connected to modernity. For this reason, we chose to use the phrase *homo ottomanicus orientalis* when referring to *homo christianus orientalis* from the Ottoman countries and lands with an Orthodox tradition (Wallachia, Moldavia, Greece). Subsequently, we designated the phrase *homo ottomanicus occidentalis* for *homo christianus occidentalis* from the Ottoman countries and lands with a Catholic and Protestant tradition (Hungary, Transylvania and Ragusa). The problem of the Orthodox people from Eastern Europe is not essentially that they belonged, from a political point of view, to the *homo ottomanicus* species, but rather that they belonged, from a civilizational perspective, to the *homo christianus orientalis* species. Therefore, *homo ottomanicus orientalis* proved to be structurally different from *homo ottomanicus occidentalis* because only the Catholic and Protestant people – Hungarians, Transylvanians and Ragusans –, which were under the suzerainty of The Sublime Porte went through all the stages of modernization at the same time, just as those of Western Europe. Hungarians, Transylvanians and Ragusans – even though they were *homo ottomanicus* – belonged to the civilizational subdivision of *homo christianus occidentalis*, just like the Italians, French, English, Spanish, etc. people did. Thus, the fact that Hungarians,

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Transylvanians and Ragusans belonged to the *homo ottomanicus* species had no influence on their belonging to the civilizational subdivision of *homo christianus occidentalis*, because at that time the benefits of modernity were rather transmitted through the means of religion, than through those of politics. In the end, the religious denomination (Catholic or Protestant) played a much more important role in acceding to modernity than the geopolitical integration into *pax ottomanica*. We also intend to show that the Ottoman Empire had just a small part in the underdevelopment of Oriental Europe. Their Byzantine background was far more damaging for the Eastern societies.

Keywords: *homo ottomanicus*, *homo christianus*, Orient versus Occident, Gothic style, Renaissance style, Baroque style, Ottoman Greece, Ottoman Hungary, Ottoman Moldavia, Ottoman Wallachia, Ottoman Transylvania, Ottoman Ragusa

Around the 25th of March, 2021, while Greece was celebrating 200 years since the formal beginning of the Greek War of Independence of 1821, against the Ottoman Empire¹, the Embassy of Greece in Bucharest inaugurated a photography exhibition on the very fence which surrounds its quarters in Romania. The exhibition consisted of posters that reproduced the best-known paintings dedicated to the Greek Revolution of 1821.² Thus, in the spring of 2021, people passing by the Embassy had the chance to admire the exhibition entitled *The Resonance of the Greek Revolution of 1821 across Europe – European painters draw inspiration from the sacrifices of Greeks for Liberation*.³ Among the famous paintings reproduced for this temporary exhibition there were: *A klepht* (painting by the Italian painter Ludovico Lippardini, made in 1821), *Greece expiring on the Ruins of Missolonghi* (painting by the French painter Eugène Delacroix, made in 1826), *Nikolakis Mitropoulos raises the flag with the cross at Salona on Easter day 1821* (painting by the French painter Louis Dupré, made in 1827), *The Battle of the Acropolis* (painting by the French painter Nicolas Louis François Gosse, made in 1827), *The soldier's farewell*

¹ For more information about the Ottoman concept of empire, I frequently refer to in this article, see Einar Wigen, “Ottoman Concepts of Empire”, *Contributions to the History of Concepts*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2013, p.44-66, www.jstor.org/stable/43610931 (accessed May 10, 2021).

² Despite previous events – the first anti-Ottoman rebellion was started, on March 6, 1821, by the Greeks from Wallachia (province then under the Phanariot rule), and it was continued by the Greeks from the Peloponnese, who started the revolution on March 17, 1821 – however, the official start of the revolution was proclaimed, on March 25, 1821, at the monastery of Agia Lavra, by Metropolitan Germanos III of Old Patras, who blessed the Greek battle flag. That is why March 25 was set as the official anniversary of the Revolution of 1821 and is celebrated as the National Day of Greece. After more than a decade of armed confrontations and diplomatic negotiations (1821-1832), with the involvement of the great powers, Greece was finally recognized as an independent nation in May 1832. At the same time, to consolidate Greek statehood, the kingdom was proclaimed, and German Prince Otto Friedrich Ludwig von Bayern became King Otto I of Greece.

³ For more information about the paintings presented in this exhibition, see the official Facebook page of the Greek Embassy in Bucharest, <https://www.facebook.com/1867604610209839/posts/2580264918943801/?d=n> (accessed April 16, 2021).

(painting said to have been made by the English painter Philip Francis Stephanoff, undated), *Holocaust of Samothraki* (painting by the French painter François-Auguste Vinson, undated), *Greek Freedom Fighter with two Young Women and a Child* (painting by the Dutch-French painter Ary Scheffer, undated), *Scene from the Greek War of Independence* (painting by Henri-Léopold Lévy, undated), and a few others. Of course, these artworks represent nothing but a small selection made by the Greek diplomatic mission in Romania out of the paintings made by Western artists for the Greek Revolution of 1821.⁴

All these wonderful paintings and many others, which illustrate different chapters of the Greek War of Independence, fought by Greece against the Ottoman Empire (1821-1832), have in common the fact that academic realism is the style of painting and that they are painted by European painters. The essential question that must be asked is why the Greeks haven't created an artistic representation (not until the 19th century), of the greatest political accomplishment of their country in the modern age: the conquest of its independence. How can it be that until 1850, none of the Greeks painted the Revolution of 1821, the revolution the entire nation fought for with unimaginable heroism, for which, during The Second Siege of Missolonghi⁵, Lord Byron himself died?⁶ How can we explain the fact that the Greeks' golden dream (after the fall of Constantinople in 1453), which was regaining their independence and freedom from the Ottoman rule, after almost four centuries, is not represented by any painting made by a Greek painter until the first half of the 19th century? How can we explain the fact that the first paintings dedicated to their War of Independence were created as late as the 1850s?

⁴ Instead of the paintings selected by the Greek Embassy in Bucharest, previously named, other paintings, just as famous, could have been chosen just as well. For instance: *The Massacre at Chios* (painting by the French painter Eugène Delacroix, made in 1824), *The Combat of the Giaour and Hassan* (painting by the French painter Eugène Delacroix, made in 1826), *The Battle of Navarino* (painting by the French painter Ambroise Louis Garneray, made in 1827), *Greek boy defending his wounded father* (painting by the French-Dutch painter Ary Scheffer, made in 1827), *Episode of the Siege of Missolonghi* (painting by the French painter François-Émile de Lansac, made in 1827), *Alexander Ypsilantis crosses the Pruth* (painting by German painter Peter von Hess, made in 1827), *The Souliote Women* (painting by French-Dutch painter Ary Scheffer, made in 1827), *The Entry of King Othon of Greece in Athens* (painting by German painter Peter von Hess, made in 1839), *Death of Markos Botsaris* (painting by Italian painter Ludovico Lipparini, made in 1841) and many more.

⁵ For more information, see *The Second Siege of Missolonghi*, <https://historyweblog.com/2020/05/the-second-siege-of-missolonghi> (accessed April 15, 2021). In this article, one can also admire the famous painting *The Reception of Lord Byron at Missolonghi*, painted in 1861 by Theodoros Vryzakis on display at The National Art Gallery – Alexandros Soutzos Museum from Athens, <https://www.nationalgallery.gr/en/painting-permanent-exhibition/painting/the-years-of-othon-s-reign/history-painting/the-reception-of-lord-byron-at-missolonghi.html> (accessed April 15, 2021).

⁶ The death of Lord Byron at Missolonghi was artistically represented in 1826, by Flemish painter Joseph-Denis Odevaere, in the painting *Lord Byron on his Deathbed*, <https://www.artrenewal.org/artworks/lord-byron-on-his-death-and-173bed/joseph-denis-odevaere/25390> (accessed April 15, 2021). For more information, see *Lord Byron: The Romantic Poet Who Died for Greece*, <https://greekreporter.com/2018/04/19/lord-byron-the-romantic-poet-who-died-for-greece> (accessed April 15, 2021).