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THE COST OF NO EU-TURKEY: FOUR VIEWS

*The Cost of No EU-Turkey:
An Annual Exercise*

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The Cost of No EU-Turkey: An Annual Exercise

Hakan Altınay,

Executive Director, Open Society Foundation

We as the Open Society Foundation care deeply about EU-Turkey relations, because we strongly believe that Turkey becomes a more open society as it gets closer to the EU. We also believe that the open society values in the EU grow stronger, as the Union gets ready to admit Turkey. When Turkey is admitted as a member of the EU, the new Union will be in a much better position to project open society values in the world, which we consider equally important.

With that goal in mind, when a group of friends of the Open Society Foundation met in January 2009, we realized with considerable discomfort that the consensus in Turkey and the rest of Europe on the fundamental desirability of Turkey's accession to the European Union has evaporated. We currently have little more than committed advocates and bureaucracies on both sides which push the process along. The political commitment has withered. To remember why progressive deepening of EU-Turkey relations and eventual membership of Turkey are beneficial for all concerned, we decided to ask people whom we respect for their analytical insights and intellectual candor to articulate their perspectives on what the cost of no EU-Turkey would be. Carl Bildt, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, warns against Europe's character as being open and Europe's capacity to be a force for good in the world, being hampered if EU turns its back to Turkey. Norbert Walter, Chief Economist of Deutsche Bank, argues that Europe cannot turn itself into a museum, and calls attention to Turkey's medium term prospects for sustained growth. Paulina Lampsa, International Relations Secretary of PASOK, underlines the costs to a stable and prosperous Eastern Mediterranean. And, Hakan Yilmaz, Professor of Political Science at Bogazici University, claims that Europe will forego a vital opportunity to engage with difference, and Turkey will miss out on a crucial opportunity to re-synchronize with Europe if EU-Turkey relations fail. These answers are by no means the final word on the opportunity costs, but rather an exhilarating beginning to a revealing intellectual exercise. We encourage everyone concerned to draw up their own balance sheet.

We are grateful to Michael Lake, who has participated in and followed Turkey's journey into EU since early 1990s, for thinking and working with us on this exercise.

The timing of the exercise is not coincidental. On May 9, 1950, Robert Schuman presented his bold vision for the European Union. Since then, May 9 has become the day when those who believe in Europe take the time to review how far this unique and daring project of peace, prosperity and liberty has come, and what more needs to be done. We as the Open Society Foundation intend to repeat this exercise annually, and engage each year a different group of Turks and other Europeans who are committed to the success of the European Union, on the opportunity costs of a sub-optimal EU-Turkey relations.

Introduction

Michael Lake

Former EU Ambassador to Turkey (1991-1998) and to Hungary (1998-2001)

When the Open Society Foundation in Istanbul recently asked me to edit a small booklet of essays from European Union and Turkish experts on the opportunity costs to both sides of a failure finally to integrate Turkey with the EU, in other words recognition of an indefinite breakdown in the accession programme or even its cancellation, I was hesitant. The task of predicting anything useful in the current circumstances of severe financial and economic recession, employment retrenchment and falling investment and trade make it difficult to look ahead very far with any kind of certainty, or to predict the consequences and, perhaps more important, the unintended consequences of either success or failure.

While a great deal of technical work has been going on in the background virtually unnoticed by politicians or the media, politically Turkey's accession programme has been drifting.

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Brief reflection persuaded me that the exercise was worthwhile for a number of reasons. There is serious concern, widely expressed in both societies during the past two years, that while a great deal of technical work has been going on in the background virtually unnoticed by politicians or the media, including the spending of substantial EU pre-accession funds in Turkey, politically Turkey's accession programme has been drifting. Without much direction and with serious diplomatic and deliberate EU impediments to its progress, it has come almost to the point of inertia. At least, that is how it looks from the outside.

In these circumstances it is not only valuable but essential to maintain political and public interest in the process, not to let it die by default, but to keep reminding ourselves of a commitment by the European Union to negotiate with Turkey in good faith, and a concomitant commitment by Turkey to maintain a steady process of necessary reforms in order to meet the terms of membership. In all this the question of political and public consensus plays an important role; this double consensus is not complete by any means, neither in the EU nor in Turkey, and has indeed been weakened by the drift and delays.

Yet great progress has already been made during this new, young 21st Century in reconciling the differences in standards and values between the two negotiating partners; I have only to look back at the seven years when I served in Turkey during most of the Nineties to measure how much. To achieve this a huge amount of political and technical capital has already been expended by serious players, and it is incumbent on their successors, and their duty to their various publics, to maintain the commitments already made. If it takes courage, so be it.

It is interesting that of all the countries of the EU and the current list of candidates, Turkey has survived and is surviving better than most, if not all, in the current crisis. It would be folly of the most ignorant irresponsibility to undermine this and the positive role Turkey is virtually guaranteed to play in the economy of a recovering Europe, when a shortage of jobs turns, as it will, into a shortage of workers eventually to fill essential jobs and to help pay for our welfare and our pensions. Moreover Turkey's growth rate, already phenomenal during the past five years, looks set to continue, albeit less rapidly, to a point of doubling or tripling the gdp before any expected membership.

There are some gaps in this brief collection of brief essays. One is energy, the stakes for which remain very high and the narrative constantly changing. Another is the strategic and the social importance of bridge-building between a Europe increasing populated by Muslim immigrants and a Turkey which is one of the world's only Muslim democracies, and, moreover, the 17th economic power in the world.

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The essay by Hakan Yılmaz deserves careful reflection especially by EU readers. It points out that Turkey adopted European values, codes and legal systems from Europe after World War I, but when Europe changed its standards, values and laws after World War II Turkey's elite fought successfully for decades against change. Only now, driven by the prospect of EU membership, is this changing.

Turkey Will Add Vibrancy and Vitality to the European Union

Carl Bildt

Foreign Minister of Sweden

When the European Union and Turkey started accession negotiations on October 3rd 2005 it was a clear message from the members of the Union that what is written down in the Treaty of Rome from 1957 and in the Copenhagen criteria from 1993 is still valid. The European Union is open for all European countries who adopts the *acquis communautaire*. It is an open union building its strength from an ever closer cooperation between the nations states in Europe.

This has been the guiding principle for the five enlargements behind us and I am positively sure that it will be the guiding principle as well for the ongoing negotiations with Croatia and the coming process with the countries of Western Balkans. And – despite some hesitations in a number of member countries – I can't see any valid arguments not to fulfil the EU obligations to Turkey when the reform process is concluded.

In particular with regard to the reform process one should not overestimate what is sometimes said today about the accession of Turkey. When the reforms are there and with a successful implementation, we will see a country that differs a lot from today, a Turkey where individual rights has a much stronger weight and where bottom up solutions means considerably more and top down ruling much less. We will see a country where the military plays the same role as in all other democracies with a judiciary defending human rights and individual liberties. Such a Turkey will then be seen as an equal member of the European family with the same rights as everyone else to join the union.

One of the most critical questions ahead of us is doubtless the accession process with Turkey. I believe President Obama was fundamentally right when he stated in Prague as well as in the Turkish Parliament that a Turkish membership and the foregoing reforms are “good for Europe and right for Turkey”.

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Turkey is today already the second most important strategic partner to the European Union after the United States.

For the European Union it is not only the size and the strategic location of the country that is important. I would also argue that Turkey is today already the

second most important strategic partner to the European Union after the United States. This is partially due to changes within Turkey itself and its increasingly important role as a regional actor, partially due to deteriorating relations with Russia since its invasion in Georgia in August last year.

The importance for Europe as a whole of the regions of the Eastern Mediterranean and along the shores of the Black Sea is obvious. The history is telling enough, but the future relevance of South Eastern Europe is no less compelling. It is the immediate neighbourhood of the most conflict ridden area of our days and a transit region for the import of oil and natural gas from the Middle East and Central Asia.

The new modernized Turkey that will be fit for EU-membership will have great opportunities building a prosperous and free society. But it will also add vitality and vibrancy to the Union and its particular perspective will, I am sure, enrich the policies of the European Union.

Turkey's EU membership will also demonstrate that overcoming the differences of the past is the European way of building the future, and that differences in the cultural or religious traditions of our respective societies - be they Christian or Muslim - can be a source of creativity rather than of conflict.

It will definitely enrich the Common Foreign and Security Policy through the deep knowledge and engagement that exists in Turkey with regard to Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East. But it would also demonstrate that overcoming the differences of the past is the European way of building the future, and that differences in the cultural or religious traditions of our respective societies - be they Christian or Muslim - can be a source of creativity rather than - as so often in the past - of conflict.

It would also send a powerful message to the rest of the world about the nature of our open Europe - and of our deep wish to be a force for overcoming the conflicts of the past and the confrontations of the present in order to build a future based on dialogue, respect and understanding.

The question of admitting Turkey or not will boil down to whether we are to build a Europe truly open for cooperation with countries of other cultures or traditions - as well as to give them inspiration for the future - or whether we will risk sliding into a long-term confrontation of cultures and - eventually - countries.

And it should be crystal clear that we have a profound strategic interest as well as a moral commitment in the eventual membership of Turkey in the European Union.

If we fail in our task preserving our inclusive Union we will soon in the destructive and dangerous process of defining the borders of Europe

Drawing big lines on big maps of the East of Europe is a process that put at risk many of the historic gains since the Treaty of Rome. Such a process will have profound effects in those areas or nations that fear ending up on the other side of those lines.

We could easily see forces of atavistic nationalism or submission to other masters taking over when the light of European integration - however faint or distant - is put out.

If that happens, the lines on the maps will certainly not protect us from the consequences of what happens beyond them. Open Europe will then gradually transform itself to Fortress Europe and the soft power of today's Union will lose its relevance.

How the pending enlargements is handled in the years to come will therefore have profound implications for the future of Europe. In my opinion, we have a moral obligation to seek the European integration of the countries of the Western Balkans, and although conditionality remains the key to progress, we must do our utmost to help them meet those conditions.

And it should be crystal clear that we have a profound strategic interest as well as a moral commitment in the eventual membership of Turkey in the European Union.

It would be the culmination of a long process of European modernisation for the country, and it would have a decisively positive impact on the prospects for stability in the entire region of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

Few issues are of greater strategic significance for the future of our Union than this.

Turkey's Accession to the EU: A Matter Of Conviction?

Norbert Walter

Chief Economist, Deutsche Bank Group

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In the enlightened societies of the Western world, there is a stubborn belief that it is possible to persuade people to change their minds on an issue by putting forward good arguments of one's own. What else could be the motivation for intellectuals with a Western university education? Well it's true, even dozens of talk shows live off this mistaken belief: at the end of a show a position which is legitimised by arguments is thought to be at least more convincing. The fact that this is usually not the case, does not reduce the belief in the power of arguments in any way. There is no denying that this misconception is driven by self-deceit, however small: we firmly believe that our views are based on facts and knowledge. The reality is different, however: in most cases, opinions do not follow the argument but the argument follows the opinion. The idea is not new; back in 1940 the Austrian-born American Paul F. Lazarsfeld, who made an important contribution to communication research, stated in his paper "The People's Choice" that voters are mainly interested in information that supports their political convictions. Since Jürgen Habermas at the latest, the relationship between knowledge and interest has been an integral part of sociological theory.

Conservative hardliners are afraid of another Turkish march on Vienna and fear the decline of the West. They feel like warriors in the final battle to save Western civilization.

Hiding preconceived opinions behind arguments becomes most obvious when issues of principle are under debate. For example family policy, socialism or capitalism, nuclear energy – and Turkey's accession to the European Union. Especially with regard to the issue of Turkey, some kind of religious war has started to unfold which only at first glance resembles a debate. A closer look reveals that on both sides committed dogmatists are struggling who have collected evidence only to support their conviction. The "Old Left" sees a chance to implement the Multicultural Project on a European scale. They want to snuggle up to each other. Conservative hardliners are afraid of another Turkish march on Vienna and fear the decline of the West. They feel like

warriors in the final battle to save Western civilization. Both positions fail to understand the importance of the accession process. The chief motivation to support Turkish EU membership is not just to make the EU more colourful or add to its variety. We cannot afford to maintain the status quo at any price and turn Europe into a museum while the world around us changes ever faster. Moreover, taking a stand on behalf of the “Christian” occident, which has ceased to exist, cannot be our motivation. Rather, we have to explore and possibly accept the potential challenges of a historic opportunity being offered, an opportunity to imbue the EU with greater political and economic power, open up new markets and win new allies, give fresh impetus and maintain it.

We can not afford to maintain the status quo at any price and turn Europe into a museum while the world around us changes ever faster.

Like any opportunity, Turkey’s accession is subject to risks, which have to be weighed up against the opportunities. Whoever rejects accession by pointing to current events – such as a lack of tolerance towards Christians – deliberately ignores that the development of Europe has again and again been fuelled by the integration process itself (such as democracy and pluralism in Portugal and Spain). The same logic holds true for the often mentioned cost that arise from Turkey’s EU accession in terms of structural and agricultural transfers. But of course, there are also the costs of non-integration which would go beyond budgetary items and include political and security costs.

We have to explore and possibly accept the potential challenges of a historic opportunity being offered, an opportunity to imbue the EU with greater political and economic power, open up new markets and win new allies, give fresh impetus and maintain it.

In a paper published some months ago, I spoke out in favour of Turkey’s EU accession, as, among other considerations, Turkey stands good chances of achieving an impressive trend growth. Certainly, this enthusiasm has been dampened by the depths of the economic and financial crisis – at least in the short-term. The mid-term prospects for Turkey, however, remain intact. If the political situation in Turkey remains stable – and the prospects of EU accession

are an important anchor for this – Turkey’s economic potential opens the way for continued strong growth. Are these prospects sufficient to regard the issue of accession as a “causa finita”? No, an open debate on Turkey’s EU accession must be possible and is indispensable. But maybe a less ideological approach would benefit the debate. A somewhat more relaxed attitude on both sides, a better feeling for change in the air and the willingness to adapt one’s own view to changes in the environment. Today’s Turkey is as different from Turkey back in the 1950s as is Germany after unification from Germany in the Adenauer era. It would be very helpful for Turkey and the EU if the mutual economic and cultural relationship were recognised more actively. I am grateful to the Turkish companies in Turkey and especially in Germany; they ensure the visibility of the cooperation that already exists by launching plenty of initiatives.

Rejection of Turkey’s accession to the European Union is currently based on two main arguments: First, only 5 percent of the Turkish land mass lies in Europe. This fact is simply irrefutable. However, to base important decisions for the economic and political future of our community on an arbitrary border is questionable. Much of our history and culture has benefited from this border being crossed: Homer, Alexander the Great and the Roman emperors are the evidence of this. The second argument is that the EU allegedly is currently not politically able to accept more members. This notion cannot be denied given the institutional lethargy – e.g. stand still with respect to the EU Treaty. This is not so much a Turkish problem, it is an EU problem. If the debate on Turkish accession contributes to make Europe more adaptable, flexible and easier to govern, Europe’s relative weight in the world is set to gain strongly. The chances of success are good. If the EU stays on course and Turkey remains committed to its reform course, it could join the European Union within 15 years.

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The decision of France post facto to block the opening of several chapters because they would lead to accession runs counter to long-established and reliable international code of conduct.

The EU and Turkey have achieved a lot together since the 1960s. We should not foolishly squander the opportunity fully to exploit the potential of this relationship. All those with an ideological approach who are seeking arguments should take inspiration from Horst Köhler’s position according to which it is part of our European culture of the rule that contracts must be fulfilled. Pacta sunt servanda. In the case of Turkey, this means that the heads of European states and governments agreed to Turkey’s EU accession talks. The accession negotiations are under way. The best thing for Europe and Turkey to do is to

cooperate, learn from each other, and advance together; this is on my wish list for the new Europe. The decision of France post facto to block the opening of several chapters because they would lead to accession runs counter to this long-established and reliable international code of conduct.

A Stable Eastern Mediterranean

Paulina Lampsas

International Relations Secretary of PASOK, Member of the Greek-Turkish Forum

Over the last ten years or so it has become obvious that the continuation of the Greek-Turkish rivalry and the Cyprus problem have been real obstacles for Turkey's European aspirations. Many European decision makers underline that without a resolution of the Cyprus problem and real progress in normalizing Greek-Turkish relations, Turkey is unlikely to fulfill its goal for membership into the EU. These assumptions, of course, sometimes hide other agendas of European governments which are very skeptical in regards to the prospects of Turkey's full accession into the EU. Nevertheless, it is more than certain that, given the opportunity, some European governments may use Greek-Turkish relations and Cyprus to block enlargement.

In this context, it is more than relevant to remember that it is the December 1999 historic decision of the European Council in Helsinki that provided the real opening for Turkey's accession in the EU. It was a major step forward which provided an impetus for the development of EU-Turkey relations. This Council brought an end to Greece's traditional "veto policies" regarding Turkey and the EU. This was possible because the Helsinki decision created a linkage between Turkey's European prospects, the normalization of Greek-Turkish relations and the resolution of the Cyprus problem. As a result, Turkey's progress towards EU membership became closely connected to the progress on the Greek-Turkish relations and Cyprus.

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Athens had to operate within a political culture that viewed Turkey as a major historical enemy. It took a lot of effort to rationalize Greece's foreign policy and transform the worldview of the political elite.

Which were the factors that brought about the change in Greece's policy towards EU-Turkey relations?

First, the 1996 "Imia – Kardak" crisis brought the two countries to the brink of war. This episode made very clear the outstanding dangers emanating from "open" conflictual issues. The then new PASOK government realized that

conflict management is not enough to avoid a dangerous crisis. A policy of conflict resolution was also needed.

Second, the Greek government introduced a new approach in its foreign policy. It formulated a pro-active policy within the framework of Greece's regional and European role. It favored a multilateral rather than a bi-lateral approach and it demonstrated political courage in changing attitudes and policies, especially toward Turkey. Athens had to operate within a political culture that viewed Turkey as a major historical enemy. It took a lot of effort to rationalize Greece's foreign policy and transform the worldview of the political elite.

It is more than certain that, given the opportunity, some European governments may use Greek-Turkish relations and Cyprus to block enlargement.

Third, the efforts to bring Greece into the Eurozone had positive effects on its foreign policy as well. As it was already pointed out, gradually Greece's policy became European oriented. Hence, Greece operated more within a collective, European, approach.

Fourth, it was increasingly realized, both in Athens and in Nicosia, that the Cyprus issue could only be resolved within the European framework. That is, Cyprus' European prospects could become a "catalyst" in order re-energize a process for resolving the problem.

Fifth, after the Imia crisis it became evident that there was a need for developing strong horizontal ties between different sectors of civil society in the two countries. Up to that point there was no real cooperation among any sectors on a societal level. It was the then Foreign Minister George Papandreou who was the architect of this multiple track horizontal rapprochement. He believed that only such an approach could bring a long term peaceful coexistence of the two neighboring countries. In June 1999 the foreign ministers of Greece and Turkey, George Papandreou and Ismail Cem, signed an agreement with which they promoted cooperation in sectors like the economy, tourism, environment, culture and NGOs. That provided the space for the emergence of networks of academics, journalists, business associations, women organizations, local authorities, students and second track diplomacy groups like the Greek Turkish Forum. These networks were instrumental in making what has been called "earthquake diplomacy" a real success. This, in turn, was instrumental in improving Greek-Turkish relations over the years.

What have been the results of these developments? One major outcome was the opening of a new, more promising, chapter in EU-Turkey relations which,

in turn, transformed the framework of Greek-Turkish relations. Equally importantly, it de-froze the Cyprus problem and the island's European prospects became the "engine" for the international community and the Greek and Turkish Cypriots to undertake another major effort for a comprehensive solution of the conflict. In addition, what followed the Helsinki process allowed for the transformation of mutual perceptions on a civil society level. That is, a culture of intersubjective understanding and trust increasingly developed. This, in turn, opened new ways for economic cooperation which had impressive results in the years ahead. At the same time, it allowed for the establishment of exploratory talks on the continental shelf and related issues and the formulation of a number of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs).

Only a new strategic vision for the creation of a stable and secure Eastern Mediterranean, could lead to a win-win scenario for Greece, Turkey, Cyprus and the E.U.

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Since 2004 we have seen no major developments in Greek-Turkish relations. It is a fact that the new government of Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis did not formally reject the general principles of Greek foreign policy especially towards Turkey. However, this government came to power with a much more traditional approach regarding foreign policy issues. Unlike the Simitis-Papandreou policy more emphasis was given on the bilateral rather than on the multilateral (i.e. EU and regional) levels. The pro-active policy of Simitis-Papandreou was basically abandoned and a new more passive policy of a "wait and see" approach was introduced. This policy led to a day by day management of issues rather than a comprehensive strategy of foreign policy. Hence, the Karamanlis government failed to utilize and build on the 1999 Helsinki decision in order to achieve a resolution of the outstanding Greek-Turkish issues. As a result:

1. Efforts to support the civil society at a horizontal level were basically frozen.
 2. Although exploratory talks continue, no progress seems to have been achieved.
 3. More room was given to hard-line nationalist circles to take advantage of the no progress in order to bring back to the surface the old prejudices between Greece and Turkey.
 4. Regarding the Cyprus issue, the government has been, initially, reluctant to get involved in the negotiation process. After the rejection of the Annan Plan in April 2004 by the Greek Cypriot community, the Greek government became even less pro-active on the issue.
-

This stagnation, although officially Greece is one of the most consistent supporters of Turkey's accession to the EU, could end up creating real obstacles to Ankara's membership, particularly if there is no breakthrough in the current Cyprus talks.

If Ankara's accession to the EU is blocked it will certainly not help the democratization process in Turkey. It will also create a real danger of alienating Turkish society from the West and if Turkey's accession is blocked, totalitarian, fundamentalist and xenophobic movements will strengthen. Developments in Turkey like the progress noticed in recent years towards the empowerment of the political sphere, the emergence of a dynamic civil society and the public discussion over several "tabou" issues can certainly be related to the efforts to meet the EU criteria. It is, thus, difficult to ignore that a non European oriented Turkey could be a factor of instability for Western geopolitical interests.

The open ended character of the accession negotiations suggests that Turkey will not be able to become full member of the EU without having achieved the necessary steps to adapt to European standards and the acquis. But sending to Turkey negative messages prematurely concerning the outcome of the negotiations can be only counterproductive.

To de-block the actual stalemate it is necessary for all political actors involved in the process to take into account a) the regional developments especially in Southeastern Europe, the Middle East and the Caucasus and b) the strategic priorities of the EU and the Euro-Atlantic family as a whole. In this post-Helsinki era, only a new strategic vision for the creation of a stable and secure Eastern Mediterranean, could lead to a win-win scenario for Greece, Turkey, Cyprus and the EU.

This is clearly in the interest of Europe, as well and it is essential in view of the efforts to resolve other regional conflicts, as the one between the Israelis and the Palestinians. A comprehensive solution for Cyprus will be a strong indication that co-existence in multicultural societies is not only possible, but it is essential for peace and stability. For Greece and Cyprus a non European oriented Turkey could be an unpredictable and dangerous neighbour. For all the above reasons it is crucial to undertake initiatives and formulate creative policies in order to make the Greece-Turkey-Cyprus "triangle" a regional peace making laboratory that will help pave Turkey's road to Europe.

Turkey's Place in the Changing Paradigms of Europe

Hakan Yılmaz

Boğaziçi University

World War I, World War II, and the Cold War constitute the most important historical factors in determining the inclusion or exclusion of Turkey in the map of Europe. It is therefore worth having a closer look at the paradigms these wars destroyed, invalidated, and made indefensible, as well as those they established, disseminated, and made supreme. What could be said in short is that while Turkey had been able to adapt to the European paradigm (political values, attitudes and institutions) that emerged after World War I, for the most part it remained outside the realm of the European paradigm that came to the fore following World War II. The Post-Cold War period, in its part, poses a “post-modern” window of opportunity for a re-synchronization of the political regime and social culture of Turkey with that of Europe.

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At the end of World War I, and during the interwar period, Turkey experienced a more or less complete paradigmatic synchronization with Europe, but entered a period of de-synchronization following World War II, and deviated from the European paradigm. Turkey, after World War I, and as a result of the Kemalist reforms, had adapted to the politico-cultural development of the Western Europe of the time, with its state institutions, education system, legislative system, symbolism and ideology. In fact, Western authors writing on Turkey view the Turkey of Atatürk's time as the furthest point Turkey ever reached in terms of Westernization, and claim that after 1950 Turkey began to move away from Westernization with peripheral powers putting their weight on national politics, and that the political culture, institutions, and attitudes underwent a process of re-traditionalization.

Following World War I, what were the leading politico-cultural values and institutions in Western Europe? Primary among these were étatisme (construction of a modern state), nationalism (construction of a nation and a national economy by the state), republicanism (anti-monarchism), and secularism (deriving the main constitutive principles of the political community, and the major premises for knowing about and making sense of the world, not from religion but from reason). The 1920s and 1930s were the golden years of étatisme and nationalism, which reached their pinnacle via fascism and communism. During that time, development and the state were in the forefront; not democracy and the individual. Again, during that time, in terms of politico-

cultural and daily life values and institutions, synchronization had begun to be established between Kemalist Turkey and Western Europe. In its most distinct form, this synchronization made itself apparent in the fact that some basic laws were directly borrowed from Western Europe, especially the main body of the Civil Code. In fact, with regard to the area of women's rights that were put into effect within a framework reflective of the "First Wave Feminism" of the era, which was later dubbed Kemalist Feminism in Turkey, Turkey had then boasted legislation that was much more egalitarian than many European countries.

There exists a "post-modern" window of opportunity for a re-synchronization of the political regime and social culture of Turkey with that of Europe.

Following World War II, after fascism was defeated and the Soviet system closed upon itself after absorbing Eastern Europe, Western Europe began treading a new politico-cultural path that criticized the state, étatism, nation, and nationalism, and brought to the fore human rights, minority rights, and democracy. One of the most concrete indicators of this phase is the many declarations of "positive" rights, ratified through the 1960s and later by international organizations such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe, such as economic and social rights, cultural rights, women's rights and children's rights, which went much further beyond the concept of basic rights or "negative" rights. In short, while the concepts of state, nation, development, and republicanism as anti-monarchism came to the fore following World War I, after World War II these were replaced by suspicion toward the concept of "raison d'état" and the state in general, anti-totalitarianism (anti-fascism and anti-communism), democracy, the individual, and sub-national minorities. And the basic concept underlying the political culture of Western Europe following World War II was, without a doubt, the concept of "rights," or human rights.

It was during this phase that Turkey began to experience difficulty in adapting to Western Europe's new political culture, and the gap between the political values and institutions of Western Europe and Turkey began to widen. This de-synchronization did not make itself apparent in every area to the same extent. Yet, it was blatant especially within the area of "rights." The area of "rights" already constituted one of the most crucial dilemmas of Turkish democratization, due to the Tanzimat and Sèvres syndromes¹. The Tanzimat

1 For a conceptualization of the Tanzimat and Sèvres syndromes in Turkey see Hakan Yılmaz, "Turkish Conservatism and the Idea of Europe", in *Between Europe and the Mediterranean: The Challenges and the Fears*, ed. Thierry Fabre and Paul Sant Cassia, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007, pp. 137-161.

and Sèvres syndromes, with Cold War anti-communism added to it, made it difficult for a series of “negative” and “positive” rights, especially social and cultural rights, to be accepted by Turkish decision makers, who deemed that these rights incorporated heavy risks. Turkey’s understanding of “Europe” and “Europeanness” became fixed on the European political culture of the era prior to World War I, defined with the concepts of étatism, nationalism and “raison d’état”, and encountered difficulties in adapting to the new, post-World War II European political culture based on the concepts of “rights” and “individual.” A great contradiction made itself apparent at this point. On the one hand, there was talk to the effect that Turkey had not yet fully completed her state-building and nation-building processes, or in other words had not yet been able to resolve her pre-World War I issues, and thus embracing the post-World War II political culture would tear Turkey apart. Yet, on the other hand, it was also argued that Turkey had a historical right to enter the European Union that was being constructed precisely on these post-World War II values, which were viewed with much suspicion. The most important dimension of the process of becoming a part of the European Union, and the most crucial criterion in getting Turkey back onto the map of Europe, is re-synchronization in the area of political values. The new Civil Code, the legal reforms of August 2002 and all other subsequent reforms, dubbed “harmonization laws,” are the result of efforts toward fulfilling this said re-synchronization, at least in the area of law.

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The picture of Europe, and Turkey’s place in it, started to change for the post-Cold War generation. First of all, the good old Charlemagne Europe, which had already betrayed its original idea with the northern enlargements of the 1970s (UK, Ireland, Denmark) and the southern enlargements of the 1980s (Greece, Spain, Portugal), literally crumbled with the inclusion of the Central and Eastern European countries in 2004. Secondly, the very idea of geography started to change, geography meaning more a sense of “space” and less a sense of “place”. Instead of imagining Europe as one whole physical place made up of contiguous countries, the post-Cold War generation began to view of Europe as a patchwork of cities, regions, web sites, streets, rivers, highways, internet discussion groups, sporting competitions, film festivals, music festivals and song contests, business centres, airports, vacation resorts, friends here and there, NGOs, academic meetings, restaurants, and museums.

The almost complete overhauling of Barcelona as the quintessential “Eurocity” is a case in point.

This new, post-modern European space is a Europe re-defined in the language of globalization, and it is itself a part of the emerging global space. Dramatically increased, diversified, individualized and cheaper means of communication

and transportation, from the email to SMS and easy jet, supplied the material conditions for the passage from place to space. In the old times, when Europe or any other continent was viewed primarily as a place, whether a given country was part of it or not was not so much open to debate or discussion. Either a country was “there”, lying within the recognized borders, or not. This new European space, on the other hand, is a competitive arena, with continually changing, sometimes expanding, sometimes contracting “boundaries” rather than fixed “borders”. It is competitive in the sense that how much, and for how long, a given city, event, happening, building, art form, NGO or even individual will be a part of it is not to be taken for granted but decided competitively by the “market”, i.e. by the decentralized decisions and signals of all the individuals who interact through that space. Because the insertion of something in the new European space, and its position in the ranking of Europeanness, is never guaranteed, regions, cities, universities, NGOs, museums, individuals, and others all try to increase their European value by means of imaginative ways. The almost complete overhauling of Barcelona as the quintessential “Eurocity” is a case in point.

It all depends on how much a country, a city, a university, a museum, an individual spends efforts to find a place for itself in the newly forming European space, and on how well-endowed, receptive, willing, creative, imaginative, skilful it is.

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Some cities, institutions, individuals and happenings of Turkey can certainly find their ways into this newly emerging European space. Antalya, for example, has already gained wide recognition as a favourite European summer vacation destination. Orhan Pamuk has become renowned as a leading European writer. The largely Kurdish-populated southeast Anatolian city of Diyarbakır, although it is not located in the European place in the old sense of the term, has recently become a centre of attraction for many European politicians and NGOs because it is perceived as the test case of the political Europeanization of Turkey. In other words, it all depends on how much a country, a city, a university, a museum, an individual spends efforts to find a place for itself in the newly forming European space, and on how well-endowed, receptive, willing, creative, imaginative, skilful it is.

In the effort to include Turkish cities, regions, academic institutions, political parties, art galleries, museums, labour unions, student associations and the like into the emerging European space, the following factors may act as a point of departure: The first is that European culture is a structure that is not completed,

but one still in the process of being constructed. Thus, Turkish culture should be viewed not as a foreigner who wants to move into a finished, completed building; but as a neighbour who puts forth her own ideas about a building that is still being constructed, on issues such as its cement mixture, architecture, decoration, and inhabitants. Consequently, the opinions of both Europeans and Turks, pertaining to European culture and the place of the Turkish culture within it, must not be judged as proven facts, but as subjective “narratives.” Within this context, European culture must be considered as a variable and dynamic fiction, an arena where different answers to such fundamental questions as “Where does Europe begin, and where does it end?” and “Who is a European?” compete with one another. Embarking from these views, Turkey’s contribution to European culture must be to enter this arena with “different” narratives, and participate in the formation of this fiction with her own, “authentic” narratives. This is not a process – it is too big and dynamic – for one or two political leaders to denounce or forbid.

*This is not a process – it is too big and dynamic
– for one or two political leaders to denounce or
forbid.*

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At this point, one must distinguish “different narratives” from “counter-narratives.” Especially in countries that have been influenced by European colonialism, constructing “counter-hegemonic narratives” within the post-colonial paradigm, claiming that they embody a culture that is fundamentally opposed to the hegemonic European culture and that these two cultures are by nature opposed to each other, has become common practice. The common aim of such efforts is to embark from a religion (e.g. Islam), a nationality (e.g. Arab), or a cultural geography (e.g. the Mediterranean), and create a new hegemonic narrative that will overthrow and replace the hegemony of European culture. The handicap common to these types of alternative narratives is that they secretly acknowledge and internalize the exclusionary theses concerning non-European cultures put forth by the very European orientalism they purport to reject. Therefore, post-colonial counter-hegemonic narratives usually become transformed into a mirror image of colonial hegemonic narratives, and cannot go any further than becoming “derivative narratives.” A distinct contribution Turkey, which has felt but not experienced European colonialism, would be able to make to debates on European culture is her ability to present the historical and intellectual grounds necessary to move beyond the post-colonial framework. On such grounds, it is possible to participate in debates on the foundations and boundaries of European culture with different, but not opposite, narratives. A distinct contribution of Turkey may be to deepen, diversify and truly enrich European culture.



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