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Turkish and European Identity Constructions in the 1946-1999 Period

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ABSTRACT

This FEUTURE paper focuses on Turkey’s and Europe’s perceptions of each other in identity and cultural terms between 1946 and 1999. It identifies the identity representations developed by both sides in response to key selected political and cultural drivers of this period by subjecting selected newspaper articles and editorials as well as popular journals in Europe and Turkey to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Identity representations are then discussed in relation to the pre-identified focal issues in the relationship; namely nationalism, status in international society, civilisation and state-citizen relations. The study finds that mutual identity representations in Turkey and Europe continue to be contested in this period. Yet, a growing convergence of English, French, and German representations of Turkey is observed on the European side whereas divergence of representations of Europe grows on the Turkish front. While the establishment of the conception of multiple civilizations in both Europe and Turkey as well as the rise of nationalism in both contexts make it harder to justify policies aiming at convergence throughout this period, it is observed that the rise of identity representations that focus on state-citizen relations have consistently supported convergence and that European identity representations that focus on Europe’s status in international society have generally supported cooperation with Turkey in this period. Conversely, Turkish identity representations focusing on Turkey’s status in international society have become polarized and were employed in ways that justified both conflict and cooperation/convergence with Europe.

ÖZET

FEUTURE projesi bağlamında hazırlanmış olan bu çalışma, Türkiye ve Avrupa’nın 1946-1999 yılları arasındaki dönemde birbirileri ile ilgili kimlik ve kültür algılarını irdelemektedir. Söz konusu dönemde yayınlanmış olan seçili gazete makalelerini ve popüler dergi yazılarını Eleştirel Söylem Analizi yöntemiyle ele alarak, her iki tarafın da geliştirdiği ve dönemlerin siyasi ve kültürel faktörlerine binaen seçilmiş kimlik tasvirlerini tespit etmektedir. Akabinde, elde edilen kimlik tasvirleri, daha önce tanımlanmış milliyetçilik, uluslararası toplumdaki statü, medeniyet ve devlet-vatandaş ilişkileri gibi odak meseleler ekseninde tartışılmaktadır. Çalışma, karşılıklı kimlik temsillerinin bu dönemde de çekişmeli ve tartışmalı olduğunu göstermektedir. Ancak bununla birlikte Avrupa tarafında Türkiye’ye ilişkin İngiliz, Fransız ve Alman temsillerinin benzeşmeye başladığı, Türkiye tarafında ise Avrupa’ya ilişkin temsillerin gittikçe farklılaştığını söylemek mümkündür. Gerek Avrupa gerek Türkiye’de çoklu medeniyetler anlayışının yerleşmeye başlaması ve milliyetçiliğin her iki taraftaki yükselişi bu dönemde yaklaşmayı hedefleyen politikaların gerekçelendirilmesinde zorluk yaratsa da, devlet-vatandaş ilişkilerine odaklanan kimlik temsillerinin iki taraf arasındaki yaklaşmayı ve Avrupa’nın uluslararası toplumdaki statüsüne ilişkin Avrupa kimlik temsillerinin Türkiye ile işbirliğini desteklediğini ileri sürmek mümkündür. Bunların aksine, Türkiye’nin uluslararası toplumdaki statüsüne ilişkin Türkiye kimlik temsillerinin bu dönemde kutuplaşmış olduğu ve böylece Avrupa ile hem çatışmayı hem işbirliği/yakınlaşmayı gerekçelendirmekte kullanıldığı görülmektedir.



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1. Introduction

In our first empirical deliverable (Online Paper No. 4), we had focused on Turkey’s and Europe’s perceptions of each other in identity and cultural terms between two periods: 1789-1922 and 1923-1945. In this paper, we analyse the mutual identity representations of the two sides for the period between 1946 and 1999. This period corresponds with the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, the Cold War, and the first decade which follows the end of the Cold War, ushering in substantial regional and global ramifications which also had an impact on the EU-Turkey relationship. The analyses presented below cover the identity representations incurred by the key political and cultural drivers of these periods. As in our previous paper, the concept of “driver” is used here in place of significant historical milestones that have influenced the relationship between Turkey and Europe and which have in turn shaped the mutual perceptions and representations in these given periods.

Accordingly, for the period of 1946-1999, the key political drivers around which substantive mutual identity representations were observed and analysed are Turkey’s membership to the Council of Europe in 1949, the 1960 military intervention, the release of the movie *Midnight Express* in 1978, assassination attempt at Pope Jean Paul II’s life by Turkish counter-guerilla Mehmet Ali Ağca, the arson attack against Turkish workers at Solingen in 1993 and the success of Erbakan’s Welfare Party in the December 1995 general elections and its subsequent rise to government. Additionally, we have selected two semi-drivers from the 1990s which triggered identity representations only on one side towards the other by virtue of being domestic instances of extreme violence. While the Madimak Hotel fire of 1993 in Turkey was covered by the European press as an instance of civil violence in Turkey, the Bosnian Genocide at Srebrenitsa left a deep mark on the memory of the Turkish public as an instance of European failure to live up to its ideals.

The selected texts over which identity representations were discerned included newspaper articles and editorials as well as selected popular journals in Europe and Turkey in the given period. From the Turkish press, two very popular mainstream dailies *Cumhuriyet* and *Milliyet* have been our constant sources since they were among the very few long-lasting press outlets in Turkey and allowed difference of perspectives within a wide margin spanning the mainstream left and right. In addition to these newspapers, in order to trace the emergence of Islamist representations, we have included popular Islamist journals for those drivers in the 1990s which coincide with the proliferation of Islamist publications. From the European press we have mainly focused on *The Times*, *Guardian*, *Le Monde* and *Der Spiegel*. The texts either explicitly or implicitly illustrated identity discussions on Turkey-EU relations and reflected the peculiarities of the period under scrutiny. They were selected with reference to their temporal proximity and relevance to the chosen drivers. When no/few texts were available directly pertaining to the driver in question, we have chosen other texts on Europe/Turkey published around the same time.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used in tracing and identifying identity representations in the coverage of these events in the selected texts in Europe and Turkey. A detailed discussion on methodology can be found in D7.3, and thus not repeated here. The results are discussed below



in relation to selected focal issues, namely the issues with respect to which Europe (or Turkey) constitutes its identity by comparing itself with and/or differentiating itself from its significant Other, i.e. Turkey (or Europe). The four focal issues identified are nationalism, civilization, status in international society, and state-citizen relations. These are discussed under the chronologically ordered key events as the drivers.

2. Turkey’s Membership to the Council of Europe (1949)

The Council of Europe (CoE), established in 1949, is one of the major post-war organizations to maintain peace in Europe. Acting as the pioneer of the promotion of democracy, rule of law and human rights throughout the European continent, the CoE constitutes a crucial forum with 47 active members and remains one of the most prestigious regional institutions. CoE membership became one of the key goals for Turkey along with NATO membership to fully anchor with the West against the simmering Soviet threat in the aftermath of the Second World War. Turkey and Greece were admitted together to the CoE as early as 9 August 1949, not only indicating their commitment to democracy, rule of law and human rights, but also solidifying their allegiance to the Western Alliance in the Cold War political context.

The English and French texts highlight multiple civilizations, including the Western and the Eastern locating Europe into the West, which is free, liberal and advanced. For instance, one English text specifies Europe as a community of free nations, and a school of spiritual and moral values where “the common heritage of their peoples and the true source of individual freedom, political liberty, and the rule of law” are taught (1949E1). The text evidences the CoE as a hub for achieving a greater unity among Europeans through common action in “economic, social, cultural, scientific, legal and administrative matters”.

Turkey is mostly considered Eastern. The same text locates Turkey within the Eastern civilization and welcomes the establishment of closer ties between Turkey and Western Europe “in defence of national liberties”. Therefore, the text does not consider Eastern and Western civilizations as mutually exclusive but rather co-existing. Another English text goes even further by approving the inclusion of Turkey into the CoE despite its different characteristics (1949E2). The text relies on Schuman’s justification of the inclusion of Turkey in CoE on the grounds that Britain, which is also different from Europe in many respects, has been admitted.

French texts too are observed to acknowledge Turkey’s efforts to align with the West through CoE membership, despite the fact that it belongs to the Middle East (1949F1). However, this does not change the fact that Turkey must remain vigilant regarding the problems of the Middle East. Turkey’s strong interests in the Middle East would further tie Turkey to Britain, France and the US in terms of establishing stability and peace in the region, which is also in line with the Western outlook of Turkish foreign policy.

Another French text (1949F2) constitutes an exception by not necessarily locating Turkey outside the Western civilization, but rather inside it (1949F2). For instance, the text claims that the



members of the CoE including Turkey congratulate each other for achieving “some kind of European spirit above party politics”. The text, however, takes rather a security-based perspective to civilization, since its definition of “the East” is primarily informed by the Soviet threat.

Turkish texts appear to be committed to Western civilization, although with different interpretations. 1949T1 considers European civilization to be the universal standard and associates it mainly with human rights and democratic values, although recognizing that the West has not been able to uphold these values as much due to its own conflicts. It views the CoE as a positive step in that direction. By drawing a distinction between the East and the West, 1949T2 recognizes two civilizations but considers them complimentary. For instance, it attributes the universality of Goethe’s work to the inspiration he received from the Eastern literature. Although seemingly attributing essential qualities to East and West, the author still considers communication possible and even essential between the two groups.

Status in international society has been highlighted by one of the English texts (1949E1) with the claim that Turkey’s inclusion in the CoE would be a status loss for Europe. While not opposing the establishment of a partnership between Turkey and the West, the text however opposes Turkey’s CoE membership since it believes that “[t]he inclusion of Turkey raises important questions for the Council’s future development”. The text resembles the CoE to a “roomy ship, holding comfortably federalists and functionalists, west Europeans and east Europeans, democrats of many shades, and sailing no man knows whither”. The author hence believes that Turkey’s membership evidences the misguided nature of the CoE. The text further argues that, for the moment, the CoE can be welcome as a new bond uniting the West, not uniting the West with the East; and hence it claims that the CoE’s creation would only be justified if it proves instrumental in establishing peace between France and Germany.

References to status in international society are made by one Turkish text which considers Turkey a part of the Middle Eastern nations but decidedly more progressive than them (1949T3). The text, published on the wake of Turkey’s CoE membership, underscores that by committing itself to Westernization, Turkey developed and stabilized its economy and granted more rights to its citizens compared to other ME nations. Hence, Westernization is presented as a means to gaining status in international society, which in turn is associated with the improvement of state-citizen relations, particularly in economic terms.

Turkey’s membership in CoE in 1949 signified Turkey’s political commitment to belong to Western/ European institutions as well as the willingness of European states to associate with Turkey in common institutions in the aftermath of Second World War and the early stages of the Cold War. While this political driver enhanced the overall identification with Europe and its values in Turkey, it only led to a partial identification with Turkey on part of European states. Although included as a founding member in CoE, Turkey was predominantly perceived as separate and different from Europe. Thus, this driver led to cooperation rather than convergence in identity terms.



3. May 27 Military Coup in Turkey (1960)

On May 27, 1960, the Turkish Republic experienced the first of a series of military interventions in its history. A group of low rank military officers led by General Cemal Gürsel and Alparslan Türkeş operating out of the chain of command took control of the government and arrested several leaders of the Democrat Party government which had been in power since 1950. A great number of military and judiciary personnel as well as more than a hundred academics were forced to resign. Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, Minister of Foreign Affairs Fatin Rüştü Zorlu and Minister of Finance Hasan Polatkan were executed by hanging following their trial in Yassıada, while Minister of Interior Namık Gedik committed suicide. The government was run by a committee of military officers, called the Committee of National Union, until İsmet İnönü, who had served as the President of the Republic between 1938 and 1950, became the prime minister in the first elections held after the coup in 1961.

The rationale behind the coup was expressed as the increasingly authoritarian tendencies of the Menderes government and its "divisive" policies and the motivation was to "restore democracy." The military government desired a new constitution, but the subsequent constitution drafted by Sıddık Sami Onar faced much criticism. Hence, a constituent assembly was formed in order to produce the 1961 constitution which limited the authority of the executive branch and introduced a variant of checks and balances system to Turkish government. The new constitution was accepted by 60 per cent of the voters in the national referendum.

Regarding Europe-Turkey relations, the coup happened at a crucial intersection. In July 1959, Turkey had officially applied for associate membership to the European Economic Community two weeks after Greece had submitted her official application. While Greece was granted the green light to start talks in March 1960, Turkey's application was met with hesitation. After the Coup interrupted negotiations, the military government reopened the talks in September by promising to undertake all responsibilities to reach an agreement as soon as possible, only to be rejected by the Council. In early March 1961, Greece finalized negotiations for an association agreement while Turkey was presented with the choice between membership of a Customs Union following successful implementation of a five year trade agreement or a simple agreement for assistance. Turkey protested being left behind in August with a harsh memorandum to European states in August. The execution of Menderes and his leading cabinet in September 1961 in spite of serious pressure from Europe and the US led to suspension of all negotiations by Europe.

Turkish press seems to have been virtually silent regarding the negotiation process before and after the coup. While in the post-coup period this could be attributed to the censorship in order to prevent the dissemination of the negative image of Turkey, lack of coverage before the coup implies that domestic politics had overshadowed foreign relations.

Status in international society has been particularly highlighted in the European texts. The main point highlighted in both English and French texts is that the coup did not necessarily damage Turkey's international image as a steadfast ally of the West (1960E1, 1960F1, 1960F2). 1960E1, for instance, states that Turkey's alignment with the West has never been in question throughout



the coup. The text considers a civil strife in Turkey much more troubling than the coup; since the strife destabilizes the country and thus compromises the safety of NATO, while the coup reassures the internal security of Turkey as well as that of the Western alliance. 1960F1 and 1960F2 focus on Selim Sarper, the Turkish Foreign Minister appointed by the military government who guaranteed to the Western allies that the coup would not change the course of Turkish foreign policy. Since Sarper was predominantly viewed as trustworthy and friendly by the officials of the Atlantic Alliance, his word was taken seriously and hence "NATO showed no anxiety at the change of regime that had just occurred" and NATO members confirmed to Mr. Sarper that they "trust the new government fully" (1960F1). 1960F2 too confirms that Sarper's appointment was considered by NATO members as a sufficient guarantee that Turkish foreign policy would remain as it was. 1960F1 also stresses that even the Shah of Iran "fully endorsed the successful action of the Turkish armed forces" approving the coup as a "salutary change for the Turkish people".

Where the English and French texts seriously differ is that the English texts genuinely believe the coup could be considered as a real chance for Turkey to increase its international status, while the French underline the concern that the coup might eventually compromise the international status of the West. The English texts in particular intriguingly consider the coup as a real chance for Turkey to establish a liberal democracy in the absence of the authoritarian Democratic Party regime. Both 1960E1 and 1960E2 emphasize that the Menderes government had just used the army cadets to intimidate the opposition by barring the way of the opposition leader, İnönü, on his political tour seven weeks before the coup. This incident according to the texts had already signaled the dictatorial path Menderes took. 1960E2 argues that the Turkish army has always been the liberal and progressive force of Turkey and believes that the army once again joined forces firmly with "the intellectual elite to destroy an abortive attempt at dictatorship".

1960E1 is still unclear whether the coup will "do good to Turkey" which is largely dependent on whether General Cemal Gürsel remains loyal to his promise of free elections followed by the withdrawal of the military government. Nevertheless, the text views the coup as a "brave experiment of making use of an authoritarian regime to create a liberal one". Similarly, 1960E2 warns that the coup must be governed carefully in order not to jeopardise Turkey's membership in the Council of Europe. The text emphasizes that Europe was the path taken by Atatürk: "[t]o quit Europe would be to deny Kemal Atatürk".

The only strong reservation about the international impact of the coup is raised by 1960F2 which reflects the fear of losing Turkey to the enemy, i.e. the Soviet Union. The text claims that the new generation of Turkish army officers is geared towards a more independent foreign policy, which includes improving relations with the Soviets. The text refers the words of a young officer about the Soviet Union: "We have always had friendly relations with the Russians We are well disposed towards them, and we have no aggressive plan for them". The text also indicates the rising anti-Americanism within the Turkish public. It expresses the concern that the coup might call into question the role of "the sentinel of the West" that Turkey has played since the beginning of the Cold War. It could thus be inferred from the text that the author is concerned over the



political costs of the coup on the international status of the Western alliance, since the coup reveals the possibility of Turkey approaching the Soviets and drawing away from the US at the expense of the West.

Turkish texts present diverging opinions regarding the status of Turkey in international society. 1960T1, for instance, notes the emergence of Euro alliance as an alternative to Anglo-American and Russian rivalry and urges Turkish policy makers to make a choice without being too caught up in domestic disputes. Although, Turkish accession to the EEC is not discussed much probably due to censorship, 1960T4 vehemently argues that Turkey has proven itself fit to be a part of Europe since Atatürk when Turkey had claimed the legacy of Western civilization. The author even argues that the recent coup was carried out as part of the right to resist oppression and hence it is justified. Since Turkey is doing its best to normalize its politics, it should be admitted to the EEC. Overall, despite reservations over the extent of its success, the coup is considered especially by the English texts as a real chance for Turkey to increase its international status by using an authoritarian method to dismiss an authoritarian government and establish democracy. Among the French texts, 1960F2 stands out as the one highlighting the concern that the international status of the Western Alliance might be compromised after the coup, since the young army officers are more geared towards pursuing an independent foreign policy seeking reconciliation with the Soviets.

Whereas French and English sources are generally discussing the geopolitical implications of the coup, German newspaper articles are more interested in the role political leaders of Turkey had been playing, such as Atatürk, Menderes, or Gürsel. 1960G2 argues that the protest against Menderes' authoritarian style of government is justified. However, the criticism shouldn't be based on wishing back Atatürk or Atatürk's heritage. Menderes' authoritarianism is regarded as similar to Atatürk's dictatorship and both are a threat to a democratic republic. German articles also invoke the focal issue of civilization albeit with racist and heavily essentialist undertones. For instance, 1960G1 compares Cemal Gürsel with Middle Eastern leaders and implies that these countries are intrinsically having difficulties in adopting a democratic political system - “coloured peoples” often do understand dictatorships or one-party states better than the complicated democratic political system in Western societies. In “tropical climes”, democracy often degenerates and becomes corrupted or violent. The Turks took their “underdeveloped democracy” too seriously so that they started to fight each other.

While issues of civilization and nationalism are not touched upon in the Turkish texts, the coup is presented as a matter of state-citizen relations. 1960T2 argues that the multi-party democracy which had been initiated a decade ago had gone corrupt. The government had started to exercise all three powers of the state on its own and by censoring the press had deprived the people of their ability to be informed about their elected government. The army, as a hero of the people, saved the nation from this situation in which even the most basic principles of law had been suspended. 1960T3, on the other hand, complains about the weakness of institutions and opportunist people who appear at every turn to exploit these weaknesses. The coup is an opportunity to rebuild the state amending these weaknesses.



The 1960 military coup in Turkey is a political event that marks political turmoil and deviation from European values in Turkey. However, in the Cold War context where European states and Turkey are united against a common enemy, this event does not trigger oppositional identity constructions that drive conflict. In Turkey, the coup drives identity representations that re-assert Turkey's commitment to European values. In Europe, the fear of 'losing Turkey' to Soviets overrides value-based differentiation. Thus, this driver does not lead to a deviation from cooperation.

4. The Release of the Movie *Midnight Express* (1978)

Directed by Alan Parker and released in 1978, the movie *Midnight Express* was adapted from the real story of Billy Hayes who spent some time in a Turkish prison for drug charges and later escaped. The movie depicted the Turkish prisons as a particularly violent environment with occasional torture and rape scenes. The fact that the revenues of the opening night of the film in Britain was donated to British branch of Amnesty International, contributed to the reception of the movie as factual and representing the truth. Although both the author and the director later apologized and confessed that the movie was not exactly faithful to the real story of Billy Hayes and the violence was exaggerated, the movie became a commercial success, won two Academy awards and became a pop culture reference in the following decades tarnishing the image of Turkey for a long time (see Mutlu 2005). Turkey protested the movie when it was released and the Turkish press covered the reception of the movie widely throughout the fall of 1978, reporting the positive and negative reactions. When the movie was released, Turkey was still under a weapons embargo due to the Cyprus issue and was also internally divided politically between left and right wing groups due to Cold War issues.

State-citizen relations have been overwhelmingly emphasized in the European texts with reference to severe prison conditions in Turkey where torture was deemed a common practice. 1978F2, for instance, highlights that the director depicts Turkish prisons as “the infernal prison of a country of savages”. 10978E1 refers to the report of Amnesty International, which offers a detailed account of a “nasty, brutish and long” prison life in Turkey and talks about “hundreds of allegations of torture from Turkey mostly in the form of detailed statements written by prisoners themselves”. The text also refers to the report of an English lawyer, Mr Muir Hunter according to whom “there was a strong prima facie case for investigating the allegations for torture, brutality and threats in the treatment of prisoners in Turkey”. The text emphasizes that prison conditions have been slightly improved for political prisoners after a social democratic government took over, but there is still no evidence of improved prison life for non-political prisoners. Regarding the movie, the text argues that the Turkish government only based its condemnation of the movie on the fact that it did not show any “nice Turks”, while failing to respond to “the more general feeling that it is no picnic behind bars in Turkey”.

Another important focal issue is “civilization”. German and French articles seem to agree on the fact that the movie *Midnight Express* has misrepresented Turkey and the Turks. Turks are depicted



as "as repugnant, corrupt, brutal and vicious individuals" (1978F1), and Turkey as "the country of savages" (1978F2). 1978G1 finds the movie "fascist and pornographic". French and German articles also concur with the conclusion that the film has narrated the deficiencies of prisons as if they were an intrinsic feature of the Turkish national character. Whereas French and German articles agree on the false representation of Turks and Turkey in the movie, English sources like 1978E1 do not condemn the movie as racist, but consider it as a "factoid film" having relevance for the "nasty, brutish and long" prison life in Turkey.

1978E2 on the other hand focuses on "nationalism" claiming that the movie will instill xenophobia in Turkey especially against Anglo-Saxons, "who will find their own worst and most fearful xenophobia reinforced". The text offers evidence from the father of Billy Hayes, who complained that he would be poisoned by the local food in Istanbul.

The Turkish texts reflect both the growing alienation of Turkey from international society after Cyprus and also the rising anti-imperialism as a result of the Cold War context which had created a serious divide between far right and far left in Turkey. Hence, issues of status in international society and civilization are particularly intertwined in this period. All the texts invariably invoke the topos of ancient history, presenting a grim picture of past relations and representations between Turkey and the West (1978T1, 1978T2, 1978T3, 1978T4).

By equating the movie's depiction of the Turks as reducing all the Turks to animals and labeling this as racism, 1978T1 implies that Turks are not considered civilized races by the West. The author also argues that this is due to the unyielding policy of Turkey in the Cyprus issue. He also reminds that the West has not considered Turks as part of humanity since the crusades. 1978T2 also invokes the issue of racism and additionally blames the Greeks for the negative representation.

1978T3 and 1978T4 both published in Cumhuriyet which adopted a pro-left stance in the 1970s, emphasize imperialism of the West and economic exploitation of Turkey. Formerly a staunchly pro-Western newspaper since the early republican period, Cumhuriyet's transformation reveals the changing political atmosphere in Turkey due to the Cold War.

1978T3 argues that Turkey is a nation who has proved itself independent and capable of setting its own agenda. Hence, once again, Turkey should set himself free of the imperialist forces and rely on its own sources for development and independence. 1978T4 emphasizes the economic exploitation even more, mentioning the sanctions exercised by the Common Market on Turkey regarding textiles and increasing loans. The author, hence defines Westernization as becoming a slave to the Western economy. According to the author, not only the West but also Westernized politicians in Turkey (Batılı politikacılar) are also to blame, since they have been making concessions to the West since Tanzimat. The author differentiates between Westernization and modernization (çağdaşlaşma). Turkey has always opted for Westernization whereas it should have focused on modernization. Westernization means being colonized whereas modernization means gaining independence (Batılılaşma, sömürgeleşme demek, çağdaşlaşma, bağımsızlaşma demek.) Modernization also means personal freedoms but a person cannot be free in a dependent state. Thus becoming a valuable member of international society is argued to be dependent on not



Westernization but on becoming independent of the West which is associated with imperialism and exploitation.

The release of the movie *Midnight Express* in 1978 is a cultural event that marks the culmination of a significant rupture in identity representations on the Turkish side, starting in the 1970s. The negative representation of Turks and Turkey in this American movie has triggered homogenizing constructions of Europe and the West as undermining the dignity of Turkey and exploiting Turkey economically and politically. On the European side, it has paradoxically triggered more positive identity representations of Turkey that counter the negative images in the movie. Overall, this driver has triggered oppositional identity constructions and conflict.

5. Assassination Attempt at Pope Jean Paul II by Mehmet Ali Ağca (1981)

On May 13, 1981, during a ceremony in Vatican city, a Turkish assassin named Mehmet Ali Ağca shot Pope Ioannes Paulus II three times, wounding the Pope and being captured immediately. Mehmet Ali Ağca was associated with the Turkish nationalist far right and had formerly assassinated prominent Turkish journalist Abdi İpekçi in February 1979. He had been captured and put into prison only to escape and flee the country six months later. Investigation into the assassination and Ağca’s questioning had not yielded tangible results with Ağca giving changing and conflicting accounts of the event each time and presenting signs of mental disturbance and delusions. Ağca had formerly written a letter stating his intentions to assassinate the Pope, which had been circulated in the Turkish Press. In the letter, Ağca declared that he considered the Pope as an instrument of Western imperialists who feared an alliance of Muslim countries. Although the incident was mostly written off as an individual act of a single delusional man, the fact that a Muslim Turkish man had shot the Pope created much controversy and triggered lots of reactions and negative identity representations.

“State-citizen relations” has been highlighted by some of the texts, focusing on the authoritarian measures taken by the military regime which came to power with the 1980 coup (1981E1, 1981E2). For instance, 1981E states that the regime sometimes resorts to violent and undemocratic methods such as torture to “eradicate violence” and adds; “No one knows just how many people are now detained in Turkish jails”. Nevertheless, the text admits that the Ağca case might change the Western European attitude towards Turkish authoritarianism since the assassination attempt made the Western public realize “the scale and nature of the terrorist threat they confront”. Therefore, 1981E1 claims that the Western public opinion will become “more sympathetic to the generals’ problems” on the condition that Turkey promises to respect civil liberties in its fight against terrorism. 1981E2 refers to the Turkish President Evren who blamed Europe for failing to support the military regime in its fight against terrorism and claims that the assassination attempt will reveal the true dimension which international terrorism has reached: “I hope some of our misguided European friends will come to their senses after the incident”.



This event also evokes the concept of civilization in European texts (1981E2, 1981F1, 1981F2). 1981E2 denotes that "Muslim Turkey" and Christian Europe belong to different civilizations. Stressing that the Turkish press expressed "little sorrow" for the assassination attempt against the Pope and showed little understanding of Western perception of the assassination, the text claims: "Muslim Turkey has long made it clear that it has little sympathy for Western Christianity in general and the Pope in particular". Similarly, French texts draw an explicit line between the East and the West claiming that Muslim world's and the third world's views of the past and present are diametrically opposed to that of the West. 1981F1 particularly argues that each civilization blames the other for continued aggression over centuries and claims that both were alternately or simultaneously the aggressor and the assaulted. The text, therefore, urges the West to try to empathize with the East, although it is easier to blame and criticize.

Nationalism is another focal point highlighted by the European texts in their coverage of this event (1981E2, 1981F1, 1981F2). 1981E2 discusses the far-right nationalist MHP and its symbol the Grey Wolves to emphasize rising nationalism in Turkey. The text also stresses that Ağca, the Pope's assailant, was a member of the MHP. Similarly, 1981F1 contends that far-right political parties in Turkey including Ağca's party, the MHP, refer to the grandeur of Muslim civilization and that of Turkish race, announcing that they were "first Turkish and secondly Muslim". Finally, 1981F2 claims that the assassination attempt directly resonates with the rising ultra-nationalism in Turkey exacerbated by the MHP leader Türkeş who uses both radical nationalism and pan-Islamism to justify his points against the Christian West.

Turkish texts approach the assassination attempt mainly through the issues of civilization, status in international society and nationalism. All the texts emphasize that the incident, though apparently carried out by a nationalist, will damage the Turkish state and tarnish its image (1981T1, 1981T2, 1981T3, 1981T4). 1981T1 and 1981T4 both underline how the incident will invoke the image of the Turks as barbarians. 1981T1 brings up the historical representations of the Turks and argues that assassination of the Pope will bring to surface ancient images of the Turks as a barbarian nation. 1981T4 particularly points out that together with the other issues that have been piling up in the last decade such as the Armenian issue, Cyprus conflict and the military coup, this incident will further tarnish the image of the Turkish state and thus weaken its status in international society.

1981T2 and 1981T3 both focus on the dangers of nationalist ideology. Although Ağca is coded as a deranged man, a lunatic and a psychological case, both texts nonetheless point out the dangerous ideological framework within which Ağca acted. While dangers of ultra-nationalism is thus discussed, 1981T4 also argues that this incident may help attract attention to rising nationalism and violence in Turkey, thus allowing fairer considerations in the Council of Europe against Turkey and its security concerns, giving Turkey more leeway in international society.

Ağca's attempt to assassinate the Pope in 1981 is a cultural driver which appears to have provoked ancient identity divides of Islam vs Christianity, barbarism vs civilization and east vs west in Europe and Turkey. Following the 1980 military coup, this event strengthened representations of Turkey's



difference in Europe, while fueling shame and concerns about the country's negative image in Turkey. Overall, this driver has strengthened oppositional identity constructions in Turkey, while softening them in Europe and led to conflict.

6. Arson Attack towards Turkish Migrants at Solingen (1993)

On the night of May 28-29, 1993, a group of young Germans with neo-Nazi affiliations set fire to a house inhabited by an extended family of Turkish immigrants in the town of Solingen, Germany. As a result of the fire, five women died and fourteen other family members were injured; there were children both among the dead and the injured. The arson attack was the most serious and severe of a series of xenophobic attacks in Germany directed against immigrants in the early 1990s. Less than a year before, in November 1992, another arson attack had killed three Turks in the town of Mölln, and just one week after the Solingen incident, an attack on a Turkish residence with 34 people was prevented before it took place.

The Solingen incident stood at the intersection of many issues such as integration of Turkish immigrants in German society, rising xenophobia in Europe and plans for the structural transformation of the European Union. At the time Germany was rife with both xenophobic sentiments as well as protests against xenophobia in the wake of the unification. Immigrants and particularly asylum seekers were hotly debated issues both across the public and in the parliament. The Solingen incident was widely covered in both Turkish and international press and thus stood out among other incidents as a symbol of xenophobic violence.

State-citizen relations has been overwhelmingly emphasized in the English, the French and the Turkish texts whereby (Turkish) immigrants are perceived to be segregated and excluded by Europe and Germany in particular (1993E1, 1993E2, 1993F1,1993F2, 1993T1,1993T2, 1993T3, 1993T4, 1993T5). Especially 1993E1 contends that the German state turned a blind eye to the hate crimes perpetrated by neo-Nazi groups against the Turks. The text highlights the common sentiment among the Turks that the state authorities could have prevented such an incident as the Solingen murders, but they instead "abandoned or neglected their duty to protect the Turks". The text also emphasizes that the Turkish immigrants had no trust over the German authorities and hence called upon "the United Nations" to protect them. Similarly, 1993F2 discusses the public protests against the Solingen murders and the German government's failure to protect the Turkish community with a particular reference to a banner carried by Turkish protesters: "Born here, burned here". 1993F1 criticizes Germany's nationality policy and urges Germany to revise its code of nationality based on jus sanguinis (right of blood) that segregates (Turkish) immigrants already settled in Germany and nurtures local hatred against immigrants. It urges Germany to embrace the liberal values that most European countries share. All Turkish texts emphasize the negligence and leniency of German authorities in the growth of xenophobia. While 1993T1 and 1993T2 focus solely on Germany, other texts present it as a general problem of Europe whereby anti-immigration laws are introduced and Europe closes to foreign nationals. 1993T5 also accuses German authorities for using such crimes as a pretext to further restricting immigrant flow.



1993E2 goes beyond Germany and criticizes Europe for taking restrictive measures against immigration instead of solving the root causes of immigration. The text claims that the restrictions taken by the EC and the German government in particular against a possible mass refugee flow due to the dissolution of Yugoslavia have been justified as necessary precautions to "prevent further racial tension". However, this has not only restricted the entry of refugees into Europe, but also restricted the rights and liberties of immigrants already residing in Europe. The text hence argues that the restrictions were far from diminishing racial hatred in Germany as well as other parts of Europe. This hatred is directed to "a long-established Turkish minority which contributed so much to the German economy". Overall, the text emphasizes "a collective Europe failure" which can neither find a solution to the root causes of the immigration problem, nor prevent racial attacks on immigrants already settled in Europe.

In the German texts, 1993G2 and 1993G1 highlight the need to readjust state-citizen relations with regards to Turks living in Germany. Especially the notion of a double citizenship seems to be a favourable idea in order to improve the legal situation of foreigners in Germany. Due to the fact that most of the Turks in Germany are without rights, they have become the victims of an apartheid system. 1993G1 thus suggests granting citizenship rights to non-Germans if they fulfil certain qualifications: "Let them become Germans!". The author of the article is convinced that the alleviation of the legal discrimination would lead to a better integration of the Turks.

Another highlighted focal issue is nationalism which resonates strongly in both German and Turkish communities. Both English and French texts emphasize immigration as an important factor behind the rising neo-Nazi extremism in Germany; while they also highlight the nationalist reaction among Turkish immigrants against the rising hate crimes against them. For instance, Edmund Stoiber is quoted by 1993F1 to denounce the danger of a "racial mix" threatening Germany; while 1993F2 refers to the nationalist protests by Turkish immigrants in the streets of Germany shouting "Turkey is the greatest". The text also stresses the violent clashes between dozens of young Turks and German "skinheads" in Bremen. German articles tend to imply that the German majority society does not have a problem with foreigners or Turkish immigrants. However, xenophobia is mainly coming from the extreme-right scenes, namely neo-Nazis or skinheads (1993G1, 1993G2).

Turkish texts complain about German and European nationalism but the problem of nationalism among Turkish workers is not discussed (1993T1, 1993T2, 1993T3, 1993T4). Only 1993T5 mentions growing Turkish nationalism among workers as a misplaced reaction to xenophobia and problems created by capitalism. The author proposes Islam as an alternative to nationalism and the global system of oppression.

Overall in the Turkish texts, we observe a clear sense of the decline of Europe. 1993T2, 1993T3 and 1993T4 all compare the previous optimism in Europe with the contemporary problems and argue for a decline of the European system. Although words like civilization or East and West are rarely used, frequent comparisons of Europe, US and Japan imply an East-West dichotomy in which the West is thought to be in decline. 1993T5 from an Islamist press also explicitly refers to



capitalism as “the monster called civilization” thus associating the ills of Western society with capitalism. Hence, anti-Westernism in Turkish Islamism is combined with anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism. This combination of anti-imperialism and a high degree of skepticism towards the West was a defining characteristic of Islamist discourse which was on the rise in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The Solingen tragedy is a cultural driver, which represented the hiatus of the racial prejudice Turkish immigrants’ encounter in Europe. It strengthened anti-European nationalist attitudes in Turkey and homogenizing representations of Europe as racist and xenophobic. In Europe, it led France and Britain to differentiate themselves from Germany, and prompted self-criticism on state-citizen relations. Overall, the driver strengthened oppositional identity constructions in Turkey, while softening them in Europe, and drove conflict.

7. Madımak Hotel Fire (1993)

On July 2, 1993, during one of the most gruesome manifestations of cultural and religious schism in Turkey, 33 people most of whom were Alevis died in a fire in Sivas. On the invitation of the mayor of Sivas, several dozen prominent Alevi figures, including the famous author and a vocal atheist Aziz Nesin, had gathered in the Madımak Hotel to celebrate Pir Sultan Abdal, one of the famous Sufi figures of medieval Anatolia. Local conservative Sunni groups were not happy with an Alevi celebration and particularly provoked by the existence, among them, of Aziz Nesin who had recently attracted negative publicity when he published Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* in his newspaper. A large group of protestors amounting to several thousands gathered in front of the hotel and eventually set fire to it which led to the death of 33 hotel guests and several bystanders. The prime minister of the time Tansu Çiller and president Süleyman Demirel dismissed the event as a consequence of serious provocation, almost blaming it on the victims and refused to see it as a symptom of religious and cultural intolerance in Turkey. The trial of the perpetrators who incited the crowd has dragged on for years being passed on between different courts eventually to be shelved due to the statute of limitations. Madımak Hotel fire is still marked and commemorated by both Alevis and the Turkish left as a watershed event in modern Turkish history. Since Turks saw it primarily as a domestic matter, we have chosen to cover Madımak Fire as a half-driver to cover only the European reactions to it.

The civilizational divide between the West and the East is particularly highlighted by the English texts depicting the West as secular and modern and the East as Islamic and violent as exemplified in the Madımak killings (1993E1, 1993E2). The English texts are also puzzled over how to categorize Turkey. 1993E2 depicts Turkey as “secular, but mainly Muslim”. Similarly, 1993E1 claims that Turkey has long been a scene for a constant political struggle between the Secular West and the Islamic East. It refers to the reactions of the people of Sivas, which could be viewed both pro-European/Western and anti-Western at the same time. Accordingly, the local people, the text claims, “don’t understand why Turkey isn’t allowed into the EC, why Turkish workers in Germany are burnt to death, why Turkish airbases are used by the Americans to bomb Iraq and



why their country is so impotent in the face of aggression against Muslims in Azerbaijan and Bosnia”. 1993E1 also blames the West for failing to prevent the suffering of Muslims and this plays into the hands of the fundamentalists. German texts (1994G1, 1993G2) emphasize the fact that civilizational achievements such as fundamental rights and human rights are not yet sustainably guaranteed in Turkey. For 1994G1, the Madımak hotel incident can be regarded as a symptom of the overall worsening situation in Turkey: The war against the Kurds in the country weakens the social cohesion in society and because of the economic crisis, Turkey is now on the brink of collapse. The article also underlines that Atatürk’s top down reforms were implemented too hastily. The level of secularism in Turkey has not yet reached a very high level and thus that there is the danger for Turkey to slide back into Ottoman medievalism. In this context, German articles praise Aziz Nesin as an advocate of human rights and fundamental values. According to 1994G1, he is the “speaking and writing and conscience of Turkey”. 1993G1 also positively highlights Nesin’s long-lasting “fight against political and religious obscurantism.”

State-citizen relations is also discussed as are also a crucial component of the Madımak events. For instance, 1993F2 states that the security forces have been furiously criticized by the secular segment of the society for its tardy involvement. Besides, it is mentioned that the court decision persecuting around 86 suspects (out of 15000) pleased neither secularists nor Islamists (1993F2). In Europe, the Madımak incident fostered representations of Turkey as a heterogenous, internally divided, and unstable country. The binary opposition and incompatibility between Europe, universal values, and modernity on the one hand and Islam on the other is employed not in describing Turkey-EU relations but in representing an internal conflict within Turkey.

8. Bosnian Genocide at Srebrenica (1995)

The ethnic conflict in former Yugoslavia, particularly between the Serbs and Bosnians was followed very closely by the Turkish press and the public. Feeling a cultural and historical bond with the Bosnian Muslims, Turks felt enraged at the UN’s failure to solve the conflict or prevent the deaths of Bosnian Muslims who were clearly disadvantaged against armed and organized Serbian militia. Over the course of the conflict, huge amounts of financial and other kinds of material aid was collected in Turkey to support Bosnians and hundreds of Turkish Islamists slipped to Bosnia to fight against the Serbs. Since the failure of the UN and the USA to prevent crimes of humanity evoked widespread resentment across the Turkish public, we chose the Srebrenica Massacres (as the peak of the conflict) as a semi-driver to analyse Turkish identity representations of Europe at a time of perceived European indifference to the Bosnian suffering.

We have chosen five texts from the Turkish press: two articles from the daily Milliyet and one from the daily Cumhuriyet from mid-July during the height of Srebrenica crisis, one article from the August 1995 issue of the radical Islamist monthly Haksöz and one article from the mainstream Islamist monthly İzlenim published about a year before the Srebrenica massacre.



All the texts invariably argue that the West's indifference to what is happening in Bosnia and particularly Srebrenica is cowardly at best and willful at worst. Similarly, all the texts are in agreement on the reason for this negligence being religious: The West is standing aside because Bosnians are Muslims. Turkey needs to stand with the Bosnians in the face of Western indifference. Atrocities in Bosnia seem to have incited a deep mistrust and distaste of Western civilization and international organizations (particularly UN) in Turkish public and media. There is not one single positive or even apologetic evaluation of the Western powers to be found in the Turkish press regardless of ideological divides.

In the texts analysed, the Srebrenica genocide is mainly tied to the issue of civilization. Almost all of the texts see the problem as an issue of the West vs Islam (1995T2, 1995T3, 1995T5) and invariably all the texts attack Western civilization for being hypocritical, disloyal to its own values and betraying humanity. 1995T1 blames Europe for not paying enough attention to a crime against humanity being committed within its civilizational boundaries (uygarlık sınırları). 1995T3 presents the conflict as a war between humanity and barbarism, but argues that the UN, NATO and EU are all pawns to the imperial powers since they are indifferent and hypocritical against Bosnian suffering. The cause of humanity is not fought by these institutions but by independent groups. 1995T4 criticizes Turkish authorities for both becoming an accessory to the evils of imperialism and harboring its own civilizational dreams which they reveal in their willful embrace of Huntington's civilization theses. What some Turks desire is simply to extend their influence to formerly Ottoman lands. 1995T5 proposes the conflict to be mainly geo-cultural rather than geo-political. The author accuses Western civilization to be both hypocritical and monopolistic; it claims universality in all things. Quoting Wallerstein he argues that the Western civilization has an issue of openness and inclusivity; it needs to apply its principles outside of its boundaries. However, he concludes that Europe is not able to apply these principles even within its own borders.

The Bosnian crisis also reveals certain issues concerning Turkish national identity. Bosnian Muslims are considered a part of Turkish identity either through religion or through history. 1995T3 brings up the issue of Ottoman sovereignty over Bosnians and their Muslimness as a cause of European indifference and also as a reason for possible Turkish involvement. 1995T5 sees the conflict as religious in nature: between Orthodox Serbs and Muslim Bosnians. 1995T4 however, as cited above, questions the motivation of Turkish authorities in the Bosnian issue for being imperialist and exclusive rather than just and universal. Turkey should embrace Bosnians simply because they are oppressed. Whatever the motivation, the atrocities in Bosnia triggered the same identity representation vis-a-vis Europe in all camps of Turkish society be it Islamists, the mainstream right or the left: "Europe/the West as an exclusive civilisational club with a hypocritical agenda which ignores the injustice done to outsiders."

Overall, therefore, the Bosnian crisis drove homogenizing constructions of Europe as in opposition and antagonistic towards Turkey across all ideological groupings in Turkey. This set of meanings provided the basis for conflict in EU-Turkey relations.



9. Erbakan’s Presidency and the Initiation of D8

The mid 1990s saw the rise of Islamist politics in Turkey. The National Outlook (*Milli Görüş*) movement had emerged in the 1970s with Erbakan in the lead and had claimed to represent pious constituencies. Following the 1980 coup, Erbakan had been banned from politics together with other leading actors of the era, but were all allowed back into politics after a referendum in the late 1980s. Erbakan established the Welfare Party (RP) which made a significant comeback particularly in the 1994 local elections winning a considerable number of municipalities. In the December 1995 general elections, WP emerged as the leading party with 21 percent of the votes and formed a coalition with the True Path Party of Tansu Çiller. The coalition stayed in power until February 28, 1997 when the military forced Erbakan to resign amidst allegations of radical Islamization.

Besides emphasizing religious and culturally conservative policies, Erbakan also followed an alternative foreign policy path which envisioned stronger ties with Muslim nations in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. The most notable manifestation of this policy was the agreement between several Muslim nations (Developing Eight or D8) to take steps to foster economic and political ties and establish a common market in the future. Such policies triggered a lot of domestic and international reactions by challenging the established parameters of Turkish national identity and attempting to change its status in international society. Although the Erbakan government was abdicated, a group within the party moved on to establish what was to be the Justice and Development Party (AKP) which would come back to power with a sweeping electoral victory in 2002. Hence we chose Erbakan’s short term in power as a driver which would reveal how the Islamic identity of the nation was contested by both sides during this period.

The civilization focal issue is widely referred to in the European texts which emphasize two distinct civilizations, namely the Eastern/Islamic and the Western/European. Besides, both English and French texts share the claim that Erbakan’s RP maintains an objective to fully anchor Turkey with the Eastern/Islamic civilization and view the Islamic transformation of Turkey as worrying for Europe/West. The English texts particularly highlight the divided nature of Turkey torn between the East and the West. 1996E1 stresses the identity crisis of Turkey exhibiting the features of both Western and Eastern identities in a contradictory way. The text claims that Turkey encompasses “the best and the worst of East and West” and hence predicates it as “a country of bizarre contradictions and juxtapositions” maintaining the traces of both Western modernism and Islamic fundamentalism. The author evidences this argument with reference to his observation in the streets of Turkey where young women wearing “miniskirts with tops that expose their midriffs” walk alongside women wearing “veils and long dresses”. The author claims that these multiple identities enabled Turkey to act as “the liberal face of Islam, a face of the religion barely seen or acknowledged by the West”. According to 1996E1, Turks are proud of being both Muslim and liberal at the same time: “After all, there can’t be many Muslim countries where the official day of rest is Sunday not Friday; where a cathedral stands in the middle of the capital city and Jewish cemeteries lie yards away from Muslim ones”. Therefore, the torn identity is considered as



advantageous enabling Turkey to communicate with both the Western and Eastern civilizations. However, 1996E1 claims that the pro-Islamic RP government might transform this liberal identity into Islamic fundamentalism drawing Turkey away from the Western civilization.

1996E2 on the other hand is less pessimistic. The text claims that the rise of political Islam in Turkey should be viewed with concern in the West, but it reassures the reader that this would not result in Turkey's total detachment from the West. Therefore, "fears of the fall of Constantinople are exaggerated". The Islamist discourse in Turkey does not possess the hard edge of Islam in Algeria, the text stresses, and the RP is surprisingly moderate in its post-election discourse highlighting its willingness to form coalition with any political party. However, the text contends that the secular politicians have the duty to set aside their differences, cooperate for the protection of the secular foundations of Turkey and ensure that Turkey's political Islam remains moderate. Similarly, 1996F1 offers an optimistic account for Turkey's place in civilizations despite political Islam gaining ground within Turkish society. The text admits that Erdogan calls for a unity of the Muslims of Central Asia and maintains a nostalgia for Ottoman Turkey which would eventually suck Turkey into the Islamic civilization. It nevertheless believes that Turkey would not be infested with radical Islam as in the case of Algeria thanks to its functioning democracy, relatively free press and active civil society. Similar optimism is also visible in 1996F2 which predicates Turkey as a valuable and reliable partner for Westerners. The text claims that Erdogan did not choose to break the Western alliance of Turkey, which is evidenced by the renewed authorization of Western air patrols in northern Iraq using Turkish bases. Moreover, Erdogan's consent for military cooperation with Israel is highlighted as another important determinant for Erdogan's attachment to the West.

Turkish texts have three identifiable positions with regard to the issue of civilization. 1996T1 rejects Huntington's efforts to force Turkey into the "Islamic civilization" while admitting that she may not belong with the West either. The author approaches the issue pragmatically and rejects "naively" motivated projects and thinks that Turkey should preserve secular democracy even though she may not be accepted by the West since the Muslim countries are fighting among each other anyway and a union does not seem likely. 1996T2 and 1996T3 vehemently defend Turkey's bid to become a part of the modern world which they associate with science, art, high culture, democracy and human rights. Refah and the Islamists represent the exact opposite of these values and an anti-thesis of the modern world. 1996T4 and 1996T5, the Islamist journals, on the other hand, see Western civilization as imperialist colonizers and the cause of everything wrong with the Muslim world. They have little regard for the cultural and political ideals which the West represents. The Western civilization and Islam are seen as polar opposites. In this sense, pro-Western Turks and Islamists seem to agree that the Western civilization and Islam are essentially incompatible although they have differing opinion on the issue of where Turkey belongs. This issue is also directly linked to status in international society. While pro-Western texts are highly concerned with Turkey's alienation from what they consider the modern world, Islamist texts have no regard for the international society of the West and envision an alternative society of Muslim states whose pragmatic details are not explicitly discussed although Turkey's leadership is implied.



State-citizen relations have also been highlighted by the European texts that point to the danger of a pro-Islamic government for individual rights and liberties in Turkey. For instance, according to 1996E1, many modern Turks were concerned that the RP government would ban alcohol consumption and force an Islamic way of life in Turkey. 1996E2 instead offers an argument in reverse highlighting the deteriorating state-citizen relations in the form of corruption, maladministration, the erosion of family values and the soaring inflation that resulted in the electoral success of political Islam in Turkey. 1996F1 too emphasizes “mismanagement, social injustice and economic imbalances” that provided a fertile ground for political Islam to flourish. Besides, the text emphasizes that a significant part of the Kurds has long been voting for Islamism since they have grown tired of state repression of Kurds. The text even blames Europe as well as the Kemalist elite for failing to prevent political Islam from gaining popularity in Turkey: “In the face of a constantly reluctant Europe, in the face of worm-eaten Kemalist institutions, the temptation of a conquering Islam reappears in Turkey, as a nationalist avatar, has nothing surprising”. Nevertheless, 1996F1 claims that there is no need to panic about Erbakan’s coming to power since Turkey has already detached itself from the dictatorial states of the Middle East through increased press freedom and active civil society despite the authoritarian outlook of Turkish politics. Therefore, according to 1996F1, Turkey will not become the next “Algeria” just because a political figure with Islamic inclinations comes to power thanks to protest votes.

Turkish texts are again divided on the issue of state-citizen relations. 1996T1 and 1996T3 particularly emphasize laicism and human rights as essentials of democracy and reject any alternatives. 1996T1 criticizes Huntington who suggested that Turkey may adopt a non-secular democracy. On the other hand, 1996T4 and 1996T5 envision a gap, an alienation between the state and the people. 1996T4 considers all the reformist statesmen including Atatürk as Westernizers and hence traitors to their people and attributes inequality, injustice and other ills to these Westernized statesmen. 1996T5 similarly accuses the contemporary state elite in Turkey of being pawns of Western imperialist powers and manipulating their own people through the media.

Overall, the rise of Erbakan and RP to government seems to have brought into open competing identity representations both in Europe and Turkey. In Turkey, it has strengthened the polarization in representations of Europe between the Islamists who construct Europe as a threat and the secular establishment who represent Europe as a valuable anchor for modernization. In Europe, there is consensus around the representations of Turkey as a divided society, but debate on where Turkey’s competing allegiances to Islam and Europe will lead the country.

10. Conclusion

The analysis above attests that mutual identity representations in Turkey and Europe continue to be contested in the aftermath of the Second World War, covering the Cold War years up until the late 1990s. Compared to the earlier periods, there is a more institutionalized and stable political and security cooperation between Turkey and the European states within the framework of NATO,



CoE, and Turkey's membership bid to the EU and intensifying cultural and people-to-people contacts through labor and refugee migration from Turkey to Europe, and the increasing numbers of European tourists in Turkey. In the context of the European integration process, a growing convergence of English, French, and German representations of Turkey, particularly in relation to their outlook on the existence of multiple civilizations and their rising focus on nationalism, can be observed. Yet, differences concerning representations on the European front are also still present, most notably concerning the varying emphasis of the states on state-citizen relations in Turkey at the expense of security inspired representations of Europe's status in international society. On the other hand, the post-1950 transition to competitive party politics, and post-1970 left-right polarization in Turkey have resulted in a growing divergence of views on Europe, and a transition from a pro-European to an anti-European nationalism supported by both the radical left and right. Similarly, economic difficulties in Europe have triggered the rise of an anti-immigrant nationalism directed mainly against the Turkish migrants in Germany. With the end of the Cold War, we also witness the rise of the 'clash of civilizations' paradigm, strengthened by the conflicts in the Balkans and the rise of political Islam in Turkey. This paradigm has strengthened the salience of the civilizational focal issue in both Turkish and European identity representations and supported the construction of the identities of 'Christian' Europe and 'Muslim' Turkey as mutually incompatible and antagonistic. In the meantime, Turkey has remained firmly anchored in Western institutions and pursued its bid for membership in the EU as a means to enhance its status in international society. Yet, when Turkey clashed with its Western partners over the Cyprus conflict in the 1970s, elites began to advocate independence from Europe and the West as a means to status and power. In the early 1990s, racist violence toward Turkish immigrants in Germany and European inaction during the Balkan conflict triggered representations of Europe as a declining power. During the Cold War, Western security interests overshadow the significance of state-citizen relations in Turkey as a focal issue in constructions of Turkey's identity. With the end of the Cold War, the issue again starts becoming a significant marker of European superiority and Turkish inferiority.

Despite the widely assumed primacy of the Cold War security dynamics in Turkey's relations with Europe in the first four decades of the analysis, the focal issue of civilization does not cease its significance in identity representations held by both sides. Departing from the notion of a single universal civilization, European representations highlight the multiplicity of civilizations and generally situate Turkey within the different, Eastern, civilization. The defining qualities of European civilization and its relation to the East are contested in European texts and are triggered by different drivers. Some emphasize a distinct Western cultural identity premised on universal values such as democracy and human rights which can be shared with the East, while others adopt an exclusivist reading of Western/European civilization that exists in an essentially conflictual relationship with the East. Generally, the former approach is triggered by events marking successful political association and cooperation between Turkey and Europe, as in Turkey's membership in CoE, while the latter approach becomes prominent in response to violent events directly linked to Islam, such as Agca's assassination attempt at the Pope or the Madımak tragedy.



The binary divide between the progressive and secular Western civilization and its Eastern Other is also reflected in Europe's binary views of Turkish society as torn between the East and the West. The rise of right-wing nationalism and political Islam in Turkey triggers this key identity representation in the 1980s and 90s. A similar view depicting Turkey as torn between modernity and tradition was observed in European representations of early Republican Turkey in our previous deliverable.

On the Turkish front, there seems to be a substantive contestation in Turkish identity representations between the conception of a single European civilization as the universal civilization which Turkey aspires to reach and two distinct civilisations of the East and the West which are at times harmonious, but mostly in conflict. As the Turkish political scene diversifies with the rise of right wing nationalism and political Islam, the essentially conflictual representation of Turkish and European identities rises, as observed in the reactions to *Midnight Express*, Srebrenica, and the rise of Erbakan to power.

As in the earlier periods in the Turkish context, the focal issue of civilization is often coupled with yet another focal issue, namely Turkey's status in international society. The status gain derived from being recognized as part of the European civilization is highly evident in Turkish representations of membership in European organizations, such as the CoE. At the same time, negative events which undermine Turkey's image and reputation in Europe, such as the release of the movie *Midnight Express* or the assassination attempt at the Pope are associated with status loss. In conceptual terms, the fear of the "perceived" lack of Western civilizational attributes by Europe feeds into the ontological insecurity of Turkey as an esteemed member of the international community. However, as will also be discussed below, in this period, this ontological insecurity also generates a growing anti-Europeanism. Calls for independence from Europe and the West are often justified with construction of Europe as in decline and unable to live up to its own standards.

In this period, nationalism becomes an important focal issue shaping identity representations on both sides. In Turkey, the pro-European nationalism of the early republican period gives way to an anti-European nationalism. The release of *Midnight Express*, the Solingen tragedy, and the European inaction in face of Srebrenica trigger representations which associate Europe and Europeanization with humiliation, injustice, hypocrisy, and exploitation. When Europe is represented as such, it becomes possible to construct closer relations with Europe as being against Turkey's 'true' national interests. In Europe, nationalism in this period thrives on negative representations of Turkish migrant communities as inherently different and unable to assimilate to European society.

While the late Ottoman Empire's relations with its non-Muslim subjects dominated European representations at the time, state-citizen relations do not seem to emerge as a prominent focal issue especially in the early decades of the Cold War. It emerges in the context of Turkey's state of human rights in the European coverage of the release of the movie, *Midnight Express*, which is about the maltreatment of an American in Turkish prisons, as well as with respect to the Madımak incident, a deadly arson attack staged by Islamists. On the other hand, neither the 1960 military



coup nor the reactions to the rise of RP entail a wide discussion of state-citizen relations in representations of Turkey in the European press. In fact, this focal issue hardly receives any attention in response to the 1960 coup, which mainly raises a contestation over Turkey's status in international society without reference to state-citizen relations in the country. In contrast, on the Turkish front, both events provide occasions for linking state-citizen relations in Turkey to issues of European identity. Both the 1960 coup and the opposition to Erbakan's government are justified with reference to European values and standards of freedom, right to resist oppression, and secularism.

While discourse and identity representations cannot be a direct cause of conflict, cooperation, or convergence in EU-Turkey relations, they support the realization of these scenarios by enhancing the political legitimacy and societal resonance of different policy options. Overall, the identity drivers analyzed in the 1945-1999 period suggest the following for the realization of the three scenarios in EU-Turkey relations. Throughout this period, the conception of multiple civilizations become ingrained in both Europe and Turkey, and this has made it overall harder to justify policies aiming at convergence. The rise of nationalism in both Europe and Turkey, starting with the 1970s-80s, has supported the realization of the conflict scenario. However, with the end of the Cold War, the growing salience of human rights and identity politics has also made state-citizen relations a more prominent aspect of EU-Turkey relations. And in both Europe and Turkey, identity representations that focus on state-citizen relations have consistently supported convergence—in order to advance human rights in Turkey and support the integration of Turkish migrants in Europe. Finally, European identity representations that focus on Europe's status in international society have generally supported cooperation with Turkey. Conversely, Turkish identity representations focusing on Turkey's status in international society have become polarized, and were employed in ways that justified both conflict and cooperation/convergence with Europe. Although it is not within the scope of this paper, our findings also point at striking parallels with present day representations that underlie the EU-Turkey relationship. This can be seen in the ways in which contemporary Turkish representations of Europe are becoming increasingly polarized on a cultural/civilizational axis and that the rise of nationalism (now increasingly referred as the upsurge of populism) in both contexts feed into debates over immigration from a cultural/civilizational point of view. In a similar fashion, it is often argued that contemporary European representations of Turkey continue to rely on binary views of the country that rest on the secular/Muslim divide. A final parallel can be sought in the ways in which security based identity representations of Turkey on the European front can be instrumentalised to gloss over issues related to state-citizen relations, as was observed to be the case for most of the Cold War period.





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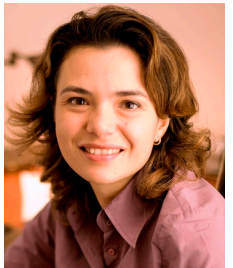
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