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MAPPING DYNAMICS AND TESTING SCENARIOS

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Identity Representations in the Narratives on the EU-Turkey Relations

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to situate contemporary debates on the EU-Turkey relations in a broader historical context. It argues that understanding from where current narratives come and identifying their constituents, and particularly the narrators' mutual perceptions on each other, which have endured through decades or even centuries, contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship in critical ways. The paper is based on the results of two historically oriented studies carried out within the framework of the FEUTURE project -a narrative analysis as well as an analysis of identity representations since the 19[th]century- both of which adopted a comparative approach by analysing European and Turkish sources. Among others, the paper asserts that the EU and Turkey, both historically and in the present, have been important for each other in their identity construction. It argues that one of the most defining characteristics of the narratives and identities over time is their changing nature. The paper finds that narratives and identity construction processes also intertwined also with drivers at different levels, by the respective historical and political context. From a contemporary perspective, it finds that narratives on both sides have become more conflictual and that relations are likely to be dominated by conflictual elements also in the nearer future. This is, however, coupled with a constantly present conviction of the importance of Turkey for Europe and vice versa.

ÖZET

FEUTURE projesi kapsamında tamamlanan iki ayrı nitel araştırmayı sentezleyen bu çalışma, Avrupa Birliği-Türkiye ilişkilerine dair güncel tartışmaları geniş bir çerçevede ve tarihsel bağlamda ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma, günümüz siyasi anlatılarının ve bu anlatıların geçmişi onlarca yıla dayanan bileşenlerinin -örneğin aktörlerin kendilerine ve birbirine ilişkin müşterek algılarının- araştırılmasının, söz konusu ilişkilerin bütünüyle anlaşılabilmesi için kritik öneme sahip olduğunu ileri sürmektedir. Bu kapsamda yararlanılan araştırmalardan ilki, Türkiye'den ve Avrupa Birliği'nden siyasi aktörlerin ilişkilerin resmi olarak başladığı 1959 yılından günümüze baskın anlatılarını resmi belgelere dayanan geniş bir veri setiyle ve nitel veri analizi (Qualitative Data Analysis, QDA) yöntemiyle inceleyen anlatı analizidir (Narrative Analysis). Bunun yanı sıra, çalışmada, Türkiye'den ve Avrupa'dan çeşitli aktörlerin birbirlerine ilişkin kimlik ve kültür algılarını 18. Yüzyıl sonlarından başlayarak ve ele alınan dönemin siyasi ve kültürel faktörlerine binaen irdeleyen üç bütünleyici söylev analizine (Discourse Analysis) yer verilmektedir. Bu çalışmada bir araya getirilen farklı ancak birbirini tamamlayan iki veri seti, yöntem ve sorunsal, AB-Türkiye ilişkilerindeki örüntülere siyasi anlatılar ve kimlik tasvirleri yönünden ışık tutabilecek, kapsamlı ve ender bir araştırma zemini sağlamaktadır. Çalışma kapsamında varılan temel sonuç, anlatıların her iki tarafta da giderek daha çelişkili hale geldiği ve ilişkilerin yakın gelecekte de 'çatışma' hâkimiyetinde sürmesinin olası olduğudur. Bununla birlikte, tarafların karşılıklı olarak birbirlerine atfettikleri önem ve karşılıklı dayanışmaya yaptıkları vurgu yine yakın gelecekte ilişkilerde belli bir ölçü dahilinde 'işbirliği' olacağına işaret etmektedir.

Content

1. Introduction

If the crux of the European Union (EU)[1] -Turkey relations could be defined in one term, it would be "seesawing". As we approach the 60th anniversary of the launch of the official relations, the parties are still far from reaching a conclusion on how to structure their relationship and yet, are tied by the fact that they need one in the not-so-distant future. This paper aims at contributing to the academic and political debates on the numerous ups and downs of these past 60 years from the viewpoint of the collective stories that have been told by different actors in Turkey and in Europe about the nature and future of the relations.

More specifically, it brings together two distinct empirical studies that were recently completed within the framework of the FEUTURE project[2], one of which with a focus on the predominant narratives by the political actors and the other with a focus on the identity constructions among the bureaucrats, intellectuals, and journalists as well as media representations in Turkey and Europe. It situates the contemporary narratives in a historical context, discusses the reasons why identity representations are of particular importance in narrative analysis, and explores the ways in which different actors have built shared representations about self and other(s) in their story-worlds throughout the years. Investigating the commonalities and the differences between the past and present repertoires of identities, it reports on the salient traits and issues in the descriptions of Turkey and the EU as two parts of the relationship, which are considered critical for understanding the plots of not only the current narratives but also of the future ones.

This paper starts with the assumption that the contemporary narratives emanate from the socio-political and socio-cultural contexts within which the individuals as story-tellers are embedded. Narratives are taken as the products of historical processes and interactions between agents, and, concordantly, the mutual accounts by these agents on each other and on the relationship are asserted to comprise images and experiences from the past. Furthermore, this paper asserts that the explanatory and transformative powers of the accounts in question extend into the future since they characterize the actors in certain ways and link them to particular roles prospectively, which arguably shape the future perceptions, actions, and reactions of the parties involved.

The recent literature review by Gülmez, Topal and Rumelili (2017) concludes that the issue of identity is especially important in the case of the EU-Turkey relations since "identity-based perceptions have been a key component of the relationship" (Gülmez et al., 2017: 4) between Turkey and Europe in broader terms especially from the 18th century onwards. With this in mind, this paper adopts a historical perspective to understand how the perceptions and identity constructions as manifested within contemporary Turkish and European narratives emerged and

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[1] Although the institution in question is addressed as "the European Union" throughout the paper for ease of reading, it should be noted that the text, depending on the historical period concerned, may also be referring to the European Economic Community, even though it may not be specified individually.

[2] FEUTURE is an H2020-funded, international research project that examines EU-Turkey relations and develops scenarios for the future. See www.feuture.eu for further information.

developed over time. Furthermore, it is interested in the ways these factors may play out in the future, that is to say, how they might influence expectations and aspirations in future narratives.

The academic literature on identity, perceptions, and discourse in the EU-Turkey relations is already extensive[3]. Having said that, the work presented here contributes to the deeper understanding of the mutually constitutive relationship between perception and reality over time or, the link(s) between actors' understandings/interpretations and the actual state of the relations. Covering a substantially long time-period, focusing on different groups of actors, and addressing both sides of the relationship comparatively, it proposes a progressive way to think about the EU-Turkey relations.

The paper starts with a brief description of how narratives are conceptualized within the FEUTURE's research design and why identity constructions are seen as a major constituent of narratives in Section 2. The third section revisits the identified Turkish and European narratives and elaborates on the ways in which actors' accounts of each other resemble or differ from earlier instances in the history of European-Turkish relations. Hence, it reviews the perceptions of various groups of individuals (politicians, intellectuals, bureaucrats and so on) altogether in the way of constructing collective stories and situates current debates in a trans-historical context. It asserts that Turkey and Europe not only in the present but also in the past have been of great importance for their respective identity formation. Linked to that, it also argues that Turkey's Europeanness has been a major point of discussion not only in the heated debates of today but also historically. The fourth section continues by addressing several focal issues, namely, *nationalism*, *civilization*, *status in international society*, and *state-citizen relations* in relation to which identity constructions have developed on both sides. It thereby follows the approach of Aydın-Düzgit et al. (2017, 2018) and Gülmez et al. (2017). The section finds, among others, that nationalism on both sides has grown in relevance and contributed to more conflict in the relationship. At the same time, status in international society and, more concretely, the importance attributed to Turkey, i. e. from a geostrategic perspective, remains an influential factor motivating cooperation between the parties. Based on the findings of the other chapters, the final section concludes with some reflections on the present and future.

2. Relationship Status: It´s Complicated – The Role of Identity in the Making of Narratives

The official relations between the EU and Turkey started with Turkey's application for association to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1959, only two years after the Community's establishment. Signed in 1963, the Ankara Agreement envisaged Turkey's association and aimed at creating a customs union in three phases. That being said, from the outset, hopes have been pinned on the agreement since it, as stated by the Turkish Ministry of

[3] See, for example, Aydin-Düzgit et al. 2018; Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017; Aydın-Düzgit, 2017; Aydın-Düzgit 2015; Aydın-Düzgit, 2012; Casanova, 2006; Cautres/Monceau 2011; Çağatay-Tekin, 2010; Eralp/Torun, 2015; Ergin, 2010; Gülmez et al., 2017 Köroğlu, 2014; Levin, 2011; Lindgaard et al., 2018; Lundgreen 2006; Macmillan, 2013; Wimmel, 2009; Müftüler-Baç/Süleymanoglu-Kürüm, 2015; Müftüler-Baç/Taşkın, 2007; Nas, 2001; Rumelili, 2008; Rumelili, 2011; Schneeberger, 2009; Yılmaz, 2016.

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Foreign Affairs, "aimed at securing Turkey's full membership in the EEC through the establishment in three phases of a customs union which would serve as an instrument to bring about integration between the EEC and Turkey" (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n. a.). At the same time, political figures in the EU also repeatedly stressed the goal of Turkey becoming a member of the Community in the future (see e.g. Hauge et al, 2019: 12).

Over the years, many of the steps that were laid out in the Agreement and even more have been realized, although some of them decades later than had been anticipated in the 1960s. About 30 years after the signature of the association agreement, Turkey completed the progressive establishment of the Customs Union in 1996. Having applied for full membership in 1987, Turkey became accession candidate in 1999 and started the accession negotiations in 2005. From a rather macro-historical perspective, one could thus argue that, albeit at a very slow pace, progress has been continuous. However, the faith in and support for the Turkish membership to the EU have been waning both in Turkey (Şenyuva, 2018) and in the EU (Lindgaard, 2018). Overall, it would be safe to conclude that, in this relationship, phases of estrangement have largely superseded phases of rapprochement. Currently, the outlook is even gloomier because, as Tocci points out, "[n]ever has Turkey's European aspiration been so vacuous and the EU's distancing so acute" (Tocci, 2018: 4).

But, why does the relationship stand at a historic low despite the hard facts that arguably should motivate the parties to align with other and longstanding endeavours from both sides? Considerable progress has been made in improving Turkey's administrative and institutional capacity to meet the EU standards, and the "[w]ork on the harmonization of Turkish legislation with the acquis also continues unabated (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n. a.). Economically speaking, Turkey and the EU, linked by a functioning (although problematic) Customs Union, remain crucial trade partners. In geostrategic terms, partnerships and joint actions such as the EU-Turkey Statement and Action Plan (on Migration) or the High-Level Political and Energy Dialogues demonstrate the close cooperation between the parties on a variety of issues. The mutual concerns and interests of these neighbours in the face of the regional and global turmoil are often pronounced by different actors unfalteringly (Hauge et al., 2019).

It is known that, over the previous couple of years, the relationship has been particularly challenged due to numerous domestic developments in Turkey (i.e. the constitutional change, economic difficulties, discussions on the re-introduction of the death penalty, and cross-border operations in Syria) as well as in the EU (i.e. the Brexit process, rising populism and radicalism, authoritarian tendencies in some member states). As expected, these arguably worrisome developments heated the already existing debates, not only on the future of the relationship (alongside the future of the EU itself) but also, correspondingly, on the very entity of Turkey, that is to say, whether Turkey could be considered a European country. This kind of discussion on Turkey's Europeanness had been particularly prevalent around the milestone decisions of 1999 and when Turkey first became an official candidate in 2005. But also in more recent years, we have seen this question being addressed from both cultural and institutional aspects in the

statements of certain party leaders, in discussions at plenary sessions at the national and European parliaments, and campaigns for referendums and elections[4].

Needless to say, the term "European" here is not interpreted in a strictly geographical sense. Turkey's eligibility to meet the geographic criteria, one could argue, was confirmed some thirty years ago when Turkey lodged an application and was not rejected as in the Moroccan case[5]. Going further, one might argue that the underlying reason for the persistence of the said discussions is that the "criteria [are] subject to political assessment", as a Briefing of the European Parliament contends (European Parliament, 1998). According to this argumentation, the decision on Turkey's place in the EU ought to be context-bound and rely on certain collective self-understanding and identity building processes. It is the agents, who exercise the practice of "interpreting" or "assessing" and, in the end, resolve what Europeanness stands for or whether Turkey is a part of it. Through this resolution, the goals and visions for the relationship (may it indicate "full" membership or something else) are settled both for the present and the future. Consequently, identity representations appear as a key component of the processes through which the reality of the relationship is constructed and negotiated. The ways in which the actors perceive, interpret and respond to each other unfold `who is who` in the relationship and set out the qualifications, expectations, and responsibilities for each party. From a contrary perspective, however, one might argue that such processes are not a determinant but rather an outcome, or a description, of the given reality; the developments and interactions between the parties. The position that is taken here in this paper, lies in between these two interpretations and argues that identity constructions and the actual state of relations are closely interlinked and mutually constitutive of each other. As Carta and Morin (2014) argue, "discourses can be conceived as exercising framing, generative, performative and coordinative functions" (Carta/Morin, 2014: 296) in different theoretical approaches. Besides their explanatory adequacy and reconstitutive capacity as analytical prisms through which actors ponder upon their power, influence, duties, and interest; reproduce institutional reality; and interact with others; discursive practices matter independently in and of their own right. In the FEUTURE project's research, identity representations and narratives were taken up with this insight. In addition to their potential to contribute to the understanding, or even the solution, of substantial social and political puzzles, their importance as the subject of inquiry is also acknowledged.

This paper asserts that the questions on Turkey's Europeanness are unlikely to be settled once and for all because, first and foremost, identity constructions themselves have a dynamic nature: They are not static or fixed. Thus, the question of the Turkish identity in relation to Europe -and vice versa- is bound to be answered differently by different actors at different times. Further,

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[4] Some examples include the video released by Geert Wilders, a Dutch MEP and the leader of the Party for Freedom (Partij voor de Vrijheid, PVV), which addressed the Turkish citizens and stated "You are no Europeans and you will never be." (NL Times, 2015); the 'Leave' campaign rally, at where the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) leader Nigel Farage warned of a "Turkish-dominated Europe" (Huffington Post, 2016); or the debates at the European Parliament on the resolutions of 24 November 2016 (European Parliament, 2016) and 5 July 2017 (European Parliament, 2017), which called on the Commission to initiate a temporary freeze on the ongoing accession negotiations with Turkey.

[5] In 1987, Morocco lodged an application to become a Member of the Communities but the application was rejected by the Council "on the grounds that Morocco was not a European State" (Council Decision of 1 October 1987, as cited in European Parliament Briefing No 23 "Legal Questions of Enlargement", 19.05.1998).
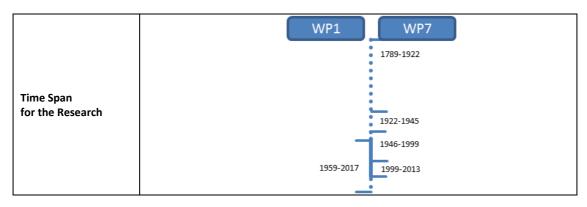
the processes of identity construction do not develop in distinct spheres. The formation of one's own identity is rather closely linked with the perception of a respective 'other'. As Browning states, "it is only through emplotting ourselves in constitutive stories differentiating the self from others that we are able to attribute meaning to the social world and to construct a sense of our own identity and interests" (2008: 11) in an ever-changing world. These processes, however, do not take place independently from past experiences. Narratives often are underpinned by historical experiences and actors interpret their history (see e.g. Patterson/Monroe, 1998: 322) and can, for example, include references to the history of a nation. Similarly, images and mutual perceptions from past decades or centuries can be transported into the present stories.

As stated in the first section, this paper draws from a strong empirical basis, namely, from two studies carried out within the FEUTURE project with a historical focus. First, it refers to the narrative analysis, which uncovered the recurring patterns as well as specific features within the identified predominant collective stories by political actors from Turkey and the EU (Hauge et al. 2019). Second, it draws on the discourse analysis carried out on the identity-related and cultural drivers and their role in the relationship (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017, 2018; see also Lindgaard et al., 2018) and a uniquely extensive literature review (see Gülmez et al., 2017).

Although conducted within the framework of the same project, these two studies have different focuses, research puzzles, and structures (Table 1). The former mainly focuses on the politicians in the governments (presidents, prime ministers, ministers of foreign affairs and EU affairs and so on) and leaders of the European institutions, and covered the time period from 1959 to the present. It is based on a qualitative data analysis of a large set of official documents, such as reports, resolutions, communications, and statements in the parliament. The latter carves out and traces identity representations since the 18th century by means of the critical discourse analysis method. It concentrates on the intellectuals, bureaucrats, journalists, and media outlets and gathers its data from a variety of sources, including newspaper articles, editorials, journals, memoirs, and letters.

Table 1: Overview of the research designs of the two empirical studies on narratives (WP1)[6]
and identity representations (WP7) carried out within of the FEUTURE Project

Research Structure		
Data Analysis Method	Narrative Analysis	Critical Discourse Analysis
Data Sources	Official Documents, statements by leaders, reports	Newspaper articles, editorials, journals, memoirs
Unit of Analysis	Politicians and leaders from governments and institutions	Bureaucrats, intellectuals, journalists, media outlets (especially newspapers)
Important Dates	**Important Dates Identified within the Framework of WP1 (Milestones)**	**Important Dates Identified within the Framework of WP7 (Drivers)**
	1959- Turkish application for the associate membership of the European Economic Community (EEC)	Proclamation of Tanzimat: Imperial Edict of 1839
	1963 - Signature of Ankara Agreement: Association Agreement between Turkey and EEC is signed	Reform Edict of 1856 and Paris Conference
	1970 - Additional Protocol and 2nd Financial Protocol to the Association Agreement are signed	Abdulaziz's Visit to Europe and Paris World Fair of 1866
	1974 - Sampson Coup & Turkish intervention in Cyprus	Cretan Insurrection of 1866-1869
	1980 - Military coup in Turkey	The Hamidian Massacres of 1894-1896
	1987 - Turkey's membership application to the EU (and rejection in 1989)	March 31 Revolt and Abdulhamid's Deposition
	1989 - End of the Cold War & collapse of the Soviet Union	Abolition of the Caliphate (3 March 1924)
	1996 - Customs Union between Turkey and the EU comes into force	The Introduction of the Latin Alphabet (1 November 1928)
	1999 - Helsinki Summit of the European Council grants candidacy status to Turkey	Keriman Halis' Miss Universe victory (1 August 1932)
	2004 - Cyprus becomes an EU member	The Twelfth Congress of the International Alliance of Women in Istanbul (18-25 April 1935)

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	2005 - Turkish accession negotiations begin	Montreux International Straits Convention (20 July 1936)
	2012 - Launch of Positive Agenda & Turkey freezes relations with EU during the Presidency of Cyprus	Anschluss (12 March 1938)
	2016 - EU-Turkey Summit (Migration Deal) & Military coup attempt in Turkey	Turkey's Membership to the Council of Europe (1949)
		May 27 Military Coup in Turkey (1960)
		The Release of the Movie Midnight Express (1878)
		Assassination Attempt at Pope Jean Paul II by Mehmet Ali Ağca (1981)
		Arson Attack towards Turkish Migrants at Solingen (1993)
		Madımak Hotel Fire (1993)
		Bosnian Genocide at Srebrenica (1995)
		Erbakan's Presidency and the Initiation of Developing Eight (D8)

Source: Compilation by Ebru Ece Özbey

It should be noted that the two studies use slightly different terminologies and coding structures. The discourse analysis identifies four focal issues, *nationalism*, *status in international society*, *civilisation* and *state-citizen relations*, in explaining the identity constructions while the focal issues are understood in broader terms in the narrative analysis due to its broader extended that covers all six thematic dimensions of the project. In addition, the discourse analysis uses the term "driver" to define the key critical junctures in the relationship and identifies twenty drivers in total within three research papers whereas the narratives analysis prefers the term "milestones" and lists thirteen different events or dates. The term "driver" is also utilized in the latter but to define any phenomena (developments, intuitions, third countries, relations), which might bring the parties closer or cause dissidence between them. Drivers, as used in this context, can be related to any of the six thematic dimensions and might, for example, include the threat posed by the Soviet Union, end of the Cold War, Syrian Refugee Crisis, TTIP negotiations, or the instability in the Middle East and Central Asia.

That being said, both bodies of studies adopt a historical approach, subscribe to a constructivist school of thought (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017, 2018; Hauge et al., 2019), focus on agencies or actors, and pay significant attention to key cultural and political events and junctures in their analyses. They are complementary in the way they tackle the similarities and differences in the perceptions and representations of actors in Turkey and in the EU with a comparative approach. By bringing them together, this paper provides a sound basis for outlining major historical and contemporary trends and patterns in EU-Turkey relations in terms of identity constructions and narratives.

Using two distinct data sets and an extended time period, it is particularly interested in the elements of continuity and change in the overarching political debates on both sides. The ups and downs of the history of the relationship since the very beginning indicate that `change` itself is the main continuous element in the case of the EU-Turkey relations. Yet, this quite dominant characteristic does mean that there are no patterns of continuity. Hence, this paper is also interested in perceptions and aspirations, which either have remained relevant for a relatively long time or re-appeared in the debates over time.

Narratives are here defined as *interpretations by political actors of the evolution, drivers, and actors, as well as the goal (or finalité) of the EU-Turkey relations* (see Hauge et al., 2019: 8)*. In this understanding, narratives told by actors in Turkey and Europe include interpretations of and arguments on certain notions, events, relations, the self and the other. In this respect, mutual identity representations in the form of a dichotomy of *Self* and *Other* are embedded in the narratives – which establish an even stronger link between the two aforementioned bodies of research of the FEUTURE project. To put it differently, identity constructions and mutual perceptions are seen as the building block of narratives, which draw strongly from the memories of the past. Narratives can also comprise accounts of the existing settings and drivers or factors of the relationship on different (domestic, regional, global) levels. In the case of EU-Turkey relations in the last decades, specifically, the goals can range from full membership on the one end of the spectrum to alienation or distancing on the other (Hauge et al., 2019: 1). The form and content, which such narratives might hold, will become clearer in the next chapter as it outlines the major narratives identified in the official history of the political debates in Europe and Turkey and analyses their historical foundations with a focus on the identity frames that underlie them.

3. Identity Perceptions and Representations in Official Turkish and European Narratives

This section provides an overview of the predominant narratives that have been present since the beginning of the official relations in 1959[7]. It summarizes the plots and goals for five Turkish narratives (*Westernization, Europeanization, Eurasianisation, Turkey as the Heir*, and *Turkey as a Great Power*) and four European narratives (*Membership, Strategic Partner, Distant Neighbour*, and *Special Case/Candidate*) respectively.[8] At the same time, it compares the identity representations manifested in these narratives with the earlier instances of rhetoric throughout the longer history since the late 18th century. It thereby situates the current debates in an encompassing, trans-historical perspective.

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[7] See for a more detailed analysis of the narratives the FEUTURE Paper by Hauge et al. 2019.

[8] As it focuses on the most influential narratives, it does not provide insights into the critical stances or counter-narratives that challenge the above-mentioned list of narratives. It does not provide information on, for instance, the views of the Islamist/ultra-nationalist parties or the critical Marxists and the ways in which they are similar to earlier Ottoman elite or the Young Ottomans in terms of conservatism, support for a certain type of modernization, or scepticism towards Europeanization and Westernization.

Starting with the Turkish narratives, one crucial point that should initially be underlined is that all five identified influential narratives share the same goal, or *finalité* for the relationship, which is membership. The Turkish accession to the EU appears as a continuous element since the beginning of the relationship. The justification or the rationale for this goal, on the other hand, becomes different in each narrative.

The ***Westernization*** narrative considers Turkey as a crucial part of 'the West', a form of alliance that includes the EU along with other Western actors. Nourished by the insecurity and anxiety stemming from the bipolarity and nuclear armament at the height of the Cold War, this narrative places a great emphasis on cooperation, primarily with the NATO and the United States but also with Europe-based institutions such as the Council of Europe and the EU. It brings forward Turkey's democratic, secular, liberal side and underlines the geopolitical and geostrategic importance of the country. Security- and welfare-related concerns of the time lead this narrative to lay emphasis on the urbanization and industrialization of the country; processes which, just like during the mid-19th century, are considered possible through knowledge-transfer and hard work (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 3). Civilization is a merit Europe holds but not singlehandedly owns. The concept of westernization, which often amounts to progression and advancement in this discourse, is practised by different states and institutions. Turkey is not excluded in this context but believed to have room for further improvement. It is desired to align more with the West, which assigns somewhat superiority to the West not only in material but also in normative terms. That being said, Turkey is seen as an "asset" for the European integration, indicating that the Turkish membership to the EU is nothing but a rational decision that has benefits for both sides.

The Westernization narrative bears a certain resemblance to the earlier discourses during the Tanzimat and Reform Edicts. It equates "provision of fundamental rights and securities to subjects with universal moral standards" (Aydın-Düzgit, 2017: 3), characterizes the system of which the European states are part as "a state of perpetual peace" (ibid.: 3), and focuses on social and economic alignment of the country to the West, here indicating mostly Europe. Furthermore, it pays utmost attention to the maintenance of the balance of power and territorial integrity of the country, in a similar vein as the post-Paris Treaty period and in light of the consensus that had been achieved at the Congress of Vienna (ibid.:,3). Here, it can be argued that the renewed and refined approach to identity representations derive from the economic and security-relates concerns and immediate threats on regional and (partly) global levels.

The ***Europeanization*** narrative utterly emphasizes Turkey's 'rightful' place among European countries. It considers Turkey as a natural part of continental Europe for palpable geographical as well as historical reasons and asserts Turkey as a modern, civilized country that is integrated into the European economic and political system to a certain extent. According to this narrative, Turkey and the EU need each other for strategic as well as security-related causes. During the Cold War, this need mainly derives from the turbulent international environment but starting from 1990, it becomes more related to economic and political opportunities the new world order offers and the challenges the parties were facing together. Although this narrative has been shaped by the elements of causality and conditionality in the last two decades, it still

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depicts Europe as a homogeneous, superior entity to which Turkey should resemble more –a vision that has earlier instances, i.e. in the cases of the abolition of the Caliphate and the introduction of the Latin alphabet (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 12).

The Europeanization narrative advocates for a paradigm shift towards a more 'European' civilization. It does not necessarily implicate an incompatibility of civilisations, for instance of Turkey and Europe or the West and the East, but somehow hinders a normative pre-eminence of the EU over Turkey. In this sense, any effort that would facilitate further convergence between the parties and thus would consolidate Turkey's international prestige is supported and valued. Not only the institutional transformations but also the presence of Turkey in the European sphere is considered important. Turkey's participation in the Europe-oriented organizations like the OSCE, OECD, and NATO is "seen as an indicator of Turkey's democratic, secular, liberal identity" (Hauge et al., 2019: 23) just like in the earlier examples of Turkey hosting the Twelfth Congress of the International Alliance of Women or Keriman Halis' Miss Universe victory were seen achievements that were "certifying the Western/European credentials of Turkey" (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 12). These interactions and cooperation in various areas seem to be regarded as validations of Turkey's Europeanness from the very earlier years of the relations.

Emerging in the years immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, **Eurasianisation** draws significant attention to the smaller, newly formed countries of Eurasia. It leaves Turkey's one-sided foreign policy orientation toward the West aside and establishes Turkey as an influential regional power and a bridge between the West and the East. While acknowledging Turkey's self-evident connection to Europe, it asserts that Turkey is not merely a European country but a key actor with historical, cultural, and geographical connections with countries from a wider region. In this context, the Turkish identity is understood as a complex and multi-layered phenomenon (maybe more than of the EU). It is also considered adaptive and fluid as the country melts its historical heritage (through which it bears a resemblance to its Eastern neighbours) and modern competencies (through which it stands close to the EU) in the same pot. In this regard, it does not tackle "Eastern and Western civilizations as mutually exclusive but rather co-existing" (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2018: 2) and "considers communication possible and even essential between the two groups" (ibid.: 3).

In this understanding, civilization is nurtured by democratisation, liberalisation, and securitization. It is an accumulation of knowledge, which is not necessarily produced or owned solely by the West (or Europe) but can be relayed from there to the East through Turkey. Assuming that the EU would seek political and economic or even integration with Eurasian actors, this narrative not only sees Turkey as a role model for these countries or merger of the West (civilized) and the East (less-civilized) but also argues that Turkey's much-delayed membership to the EU is the first step of the European project's possible deepening and widening in the region. In a similar fashion as in the 1950s, it welcomes the establishment of closer ties between Turkey and Western Europe and attributes importance to the status in the international society, not only for Turkey and the EU but also for the other regional actors.

The **Turkey as the Heir** narrative essentially revolves around the so-called clash of the Turkish and European identities. It portrays Turkey as an honourable but victimized side of the

relationship against the deceptive and dishonest EU, which "bring(s) up the so-called identity-related differences and strategically use(s) Turkey's past to mask out [its] own reluctance for further integration" (Hauge et al., 2019: 28). It claims that although Turkey exerts itself to the utmost and keeps all of its promises; it cannot escape the unfair and disrespectful treatments by the EU. In the wake of the waning of the membership perspective and the continuing impasse in the accession negotiations, empathy and admiration give way to attitudinal ambivalence and scepticism and Turkish actors severely criticise the Europeans of purportedly propounding the memories of past atrocities and conflicts and exploiting the historical divergences among parties. This attitude seems very similar to the discontent about the EU's indifference and apathy as expressed after the historical incidents like the release of 'the Midnight Express' and the Srebrenica Genocide when the EU was accused of invoking "topos of the ancient history" Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2018: 8) and having "a hypocritical agenda which ignores the injustice done to outsiders." (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2018: 16).

As Turkey develops closer relations with the Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries and becomes more conservative under the AKP rule for the last 16 years, references to Turkey's imperial legacy and allegedly organic links to preceding Turkic empires seem to increase significantly (Hauge et al., 2019: 27). While this narrative envisages Turkey as the grandiose heir and highlights the glory of the former empires, however, it does not necessarily defend the idea of conflicting identities of Turkey and Europe. On the contrary, it often asserts that Turkey is European because of its Ottoman past and its thousand-year-long presence on the continent. While this linkage between civilization and county's ancient history seem interesting, there are, in fact, other references, which associated civilisation with the Orient and Islam (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 12)[9]. That being said, despite promoting greater engagement of Turkey with the countries were once a part of the Ottoman Empire, this narrative still lays great stress on Turkey's objective of full membership to the EU, and asserts that Turkey will continue to pursue its goal to become an integral part of the European integration.

Finally, the **Turkey as a Great Power** narrative envisages Turkey as a powerful political and economic actor with a pivotal regional role that entails various strategic opportunities. It also proposes a revised image of the EU as a struggling partner that is gradually losing power in the wake of the recent crises within the broader region and refuses the earlier asymmetrical relationship set up between Turkey and the EU. These arguments actually resemble the assessments after 'Anschluss', which predicted Europe as "'weak', 'divided', and 'prone to conflict'" (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 15), and "in a serious decline facing the threat of 'destruction'" (ibid.: 15).

On the other hand, this narrative contains an explicit "Us" vs "Them" rhetoric, which eventually becomes more antagonistic in the light of the series of events that bring forward the differing and sometimes contradictory interests of the parties. During the Syrian Refugee Crisis and

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[9] In the text, it is stated that Yunus Nadi dismisses this linkage as he "depicts the West (Garb) as the 'true civilization' nurtured by science" (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 12). Still, his statements indicate that this was a common perception at the time.

successive accidents in the Mediterranean, for instance, the EU is portrayed as a selfish and heartless utilitarian, who turns a blind eye to the suffering of the non-Europeans (Hauge et al., 2019: 30). In a similar vein as in various incidences in the 1990s (like Arson Attacks and Srebrenica Genocide), the EU is blamed of negligent, incompetent, and too focused on its domestic issues in the heated discussions on important matters like religion, race, and nationality (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 12, 15).

Finally, the role and importance of individuals might be most apparent in the Turkey as a Great Power narrative. The transmission and adoption of the arguments of President Erdoğan by other political actors underlines the capacity of agents in construction and negotiation processes of the reality. The documents demonstrate that the arguments presented by him (as far as the selection shows) were echoed by many others later on. A similar conclusion regarding the importance of particular individuals in shaping the identity representations can be drawn by Sultan Abdulaziz and Sultan Abdulhamit, both of whom evoked strong (both negative and positive) opinions on the European side at different times, left a mark in the history of the relations (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 5, 9).

Overall, this narrative pictures Turkey and the EU as equals, asserts that the accession negotiations should continue in a more transparent, impartial manner, and criticizes the EU for not showing the interest and respect Turkey deserves (Hauge et al., 2019: 29). While it does not abandon the EU membership objective of Turkey, it sustains that the EU and Turkey are at a crossroad, meaning that there is a certain need for a fundamental change in the EU's attitudes towards Turkey in order to maintain the dialogue.

As will soon become clear, the Westernization and particularly Europeanization narratives find their corresponding "counterpart" in one of the European narratives, namely, *Membership*. With the dominance of these narratives in the 1960s and 1970s on both sides, there was thus a period of "convergence" of narratives, which was paralleled by a tendency of a perception of Turkey as European. The Eurasianisation narrative also show some parallelism with the Strategic Partner narrative in terms of identity representations as they both depict Turkey as an important actor, have a focus on a regional level, and shaped by security- and economy-related drivers. The last two Turkish narratives, on the other hand, have no correspondence with any of the European narratives. The ways in which Turkey and the EU as the two sides of the relationship are perceived and narrated are found nowhere in the European stories.

Before proceeding to examine the European narratives, another important observation is that while they touch upon all four focal issues that are mentioned above, each Turkish narrative attributes a differing level of emphasis them. Generally speaking, it seems that the Westernization and Europeanization narratives are more linked to the civilization focal issue. They value and attach importance to the EU membership mostly because they expect the integration to entail further civilization through democratisation, liberalisation, and secularisation. The Eurasianisation and the Turkey as the Heir narratives bring forward the nationalism focal issue as they are based on the ground of the Eurasian or European nature of the Turkish national identity. Finally, Turkey as a Great Power narrative is linked to the focal issues Status in International Society and State-Citizens Relations. On the one hand, Turkish

actors view the relations with Europe (and the EU membership) as a means to a greater status in international society while, at the same time, seem willing to pursue other status positions such as 'regional power' during the periods when Europe is in relative decline or turmoil. On the other hand, their allegations of European interference in Turkey's domestic affairs, i.e. in the cases of the Constitutional Reform, Kurdish Issue, the failed coup attempt, bring up State-Citizen Relations issue up to the agenda of the EU-Turkey relations.

Like the Turkish narratives, narratives by European actors have also changed and become more divergent over time. Not only the mutual perceptions have undergone transformation (to a varying degree) but also the number of competing perspectives and different goals formulated as part of the official stories of the involved actors has increased. In the latter aspect, they differ from the Turkish narratives outlined above, which all tend to share the goal of membership to the European Union.

According to the ***Membership*** narrative, Turkey should become a member of the European Union. There are different drivers that motivate this narrative over time, such as geopolitical arguments stressing Turkey's importance for security in the region or the emphasis that Turkey is an important trade partner, in recent decades. The prospect of contributing to the democratisation in Turkey via the enlargement process is another regular element of this narrative's plot and relates to an overall vision of the Union's mission in the international system (as expressed in Art. 21 TEU). *Membership* was an influential narrative in the 1960s and 1970s, thus against the backdrop of an aggravating East-West conflict. Its relevance declined since in the 1980s, when the political conditions in Turkey became more problematic after the military coup, but also because the European political elites shifted their attention more to the Eastern European countries.

In terms of underlying identity representations, this view puts more value to the common features that Turkey shares with Europe. This line of thinking is most prominently captured by the often-quoted speech of the first Commission president Walter Hallstein at the occasion of the signature of the Ankara Agreement 1963 when he repeated that "Turkey is a part of Europe" (Hallstein, 1963). He argued that, in particular, Atatürk's efforts of modernizing the country contributed to rendering the country more "European" and that this modernization process was a characteristic that Turkey shared with Europe.

Taking a look at the longer history, while in the 19th century, the analysed sources for the FEUTURE study on identity representations mostly did not go as far as to label Turkey a European country, there were several cultural events, such as Sultan Abdülaziz's visit to Europe, or Keriman Halis' vistory as Miss Universe, which had the effect that, in civilizational terms, there was a certain sentiment of closeness with Turkey, as the European sources analysed attest (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 17). The narrative study, on the other hand, has shown that this kind of perception placing Turkey's identity in the European "family" has been present at some instances of time in the official statements of EU actors since the 1960s, but that it has not emerged as a constantly dominant perception (Hauge et al., 2019: 33). Rather, the underlying perception of Turkey as European, has been contested in most of the phases of the relationship.

At the other end of the spectrum of the political discourse, the **Distant Neighbour** narrative perceives Turkey as an estranged and distant, or even hostile neighbour and tends to keep the country at a distance. With regard to the implications for the institutional side of relations, references to the freeze or suspension of relations and/or an abandoning the accession process represent the most drastic consequence or postulation forming part of this narrative in its contemporary form. It can also imply a distancing from political tendencies, from authoritarian trends, but is also often linked to an emphasis on the EU as a community of values in the first place. In recent years, this narrative has gained relevance and particularly so since the purges in Turkey after the coup attempt of 2016. Since then, EU actors have often argued that Turkey is moving "away in giant strides from Europe" (Juncker, 2017).

From an identity and culture perspective, this narrative tends to perceive Turkey as 'the Other' and, hence, also as too different from 'Europe' to become an EU member. In these instances, Turkey is rather situated outside the European 'borders'. Besides possible geographic arguments, representations also tend to refer to the differences in a cultural and religious sense, for example by underlining an alleged Islamic character of the Turkish society. In many instances, representations of Turkey as 'Other' also bear orientalist features outlined by Eduard Said, adopting a patronizing view of Turkey (and the Middle East) as less developed (Said, 1978).

On a first glance, one might assume that this kind of perception of Turkey as the completely different 'Other' might have been the most dominant perception in the earlier history of relations, namely when considering that the political and societal interactions had not reached the high and intertwined level of today. However, in the 19th century, Aydın-Düzgit et al.'s study on identity representations finds that although the Ottoman Empire was often perceived from European sources as exotic or barbaric, many sources analysed did note positively certain reforms or changes taking place in the Ottoman Empire and were able or willing to revise a certain (negative) perception they had on the Ottomans. For example, the Imperial Edict of Gülhane was perceived as a "historical step towards civilization" (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 3) in many European sources. Similarly, the Sultan Abdülaziz's visit to Europe and to the Paris World Fair of 1866 contributed to a more differentiated view of Turkey in the sense that the commonalities were perceived to a higher degree than before. Some authors, however, argue that the Turks in history, despite the existence of sometimes more differentiated views and perceptions among European actors, were still conceived as an "out group" (Wood, 1923: 195) or "not authentically of the West" (Robins, 1996: 65).

In concurrence to the Distant Neighbour narrative, one of the most, or even the most constant element in the official rhetoric of the EU institutions, and forming part of different narratives, has been the emphasis on Turkey's high geostrategic relevance for Europe. This links to an understanding of Turkey as a **Strategic Partner**. Drivers motivating this kind of narrative usually relate strongly to the security-related arguments, but also to Turkey's growing economic importance and the increasing trade relations, as well as to its role in the neighbourhood. It goes without saying that the international context is also an influential factor, for example, the many instances in which Turkey's role as a partner of 'the West' and as a bulwark against the expansion of the Soviet Union was acknowledged or even underlined by political elites at

different times. Despite the high level of conflict in the diplomatic relations recently, and the harsh criticism and concerns voiced by the EU institutions, one can still find numerous representations of this perspective in most of the statements.

The research on identity representations throughout the history has shown that this kind of motive, i.e. the emphasis of Turkey's role as an important partner with a view to the international order -i. e. against a Russian or Soviet threat- could already also be found in the 19th century in Europe. For example, Doğan Gürpınar (2012: 349), in his article on the nineteenth-century British turcophilism, identified a British fear of Russia's. This led to a perception of the Turks as "promising candidate to the newly established European order" (Gülmez et al., 2017: 11). Similarly, in Germany, the Ottoman Empire was also regularly seen as a source of stability in the region (ibid: 13f).

These examples suggest that the international and security-related context play a role and can even induce a tendency to consider Turkey more as part of the 'European' sphere as in other times. Similarly, Aydın-Düzgit et al. conclude that "during times of cooperation, European States portray the Ottomans as an equal partner and capable of joining the European civilisation" (2017: 18). One indicator supporting this analysis -applied to the 20th century- is the example of the coup of 1960 in Turkey. This coup did not have any negative consequences on the relationship, such as the harsh criticism voiced in terms of democratic standards we witnessed later such as in the 1980s. European partners at the time did not question Turkey's alignment with the West. This was obviously motivated by the international context, i.e. the issue of status in international society, in this case, became the dominating point of reference (see Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2018: 4f). The dominating concern at this time was the common enemy, i.e. the Soviet Union and, therefore, this development did not cause "oppositional identity constructions that drive conflict" (ibid.: 7).

Another relevant narrative of the last decades in the EU's discourse is the one depicting Turkey as *Special Case (or Candidate)*. It argues that the country has specific characteristics, which may entail remarks relating to the (large) size, the geography or the economy – and a concluding question mark regarding the absorption capacity of the EU. It can also comprise statements on cultural or religious differences. This line of argumentation is also prone to stressing Turkey's difficulties in fulfilling the Copenhagen Criteria and implementing the acquis, resulting in emphasis that its association and later candidacy are different and more difficult when compared to other cases. With a few representations in the European Community's official discourse during the time of the preparation of the Ankara Agreement, when Turkey's economic situation caused worries, this narrative gained even more relevance in the late 1980s. It was then 'institutionalised' at the European Council of 1997 because the EU put forward a specific "European Strategy" only for Turkey and also decided not to grant candidacy status to the country (unlike in the case of the Eastern European applicant states). Elements of this narrative continue to be a part of the EU's discourse, also after the opening of accession negotiations in 2005 (see Hauge et al., 2019: 16).

Linked to this kind of narrative, in some instances is a perception of Turkey as "liminal", which has manifested over time, thus "a partly-self, partly-other" position (Rumelili, 2008). Its

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dominance in the 1980s and 1990s (Aydın-Düzgit et al, 2018: 20) coincides with the Special Case narrative. Thus, it is worth explaining this dynamic in more detail. In fact, Turkey's alleged liminal identity is related to different kinds of discourses. On the one hand, there is argumentation that concludes from this distinct character that Turkey is not fit to be part of the European Union (Gülmez et al., 2017: 75). On the other hand, another kind of discourse rather sees the potential in this alleged liminal identity between the East and West, also in terms of Turkey's prospects to become part of the European project (Gülmez et al., 2017: 75).

As regards the first interpretation, for example, Huntington defines Turkey as a torn country in such a rather negative sense. By 'torn', he means that the country is caught between Western and Eastern civilizations and, more concretely, the country has predominantly one civilisation while its political elite identifies it with another civilisation. According to his argumentation, this torn character renders it impossible for Turkey to become an EU member state (see Huntington, 1996: 146). Such a liminal status, as Rumelili has outlined, can also contribute to a perceived threat, not least because it may induce a more pressing necessity to "clarify and articulate the differences between Turkey and Europe" (Rumelili, 2012: 506).

In this context, and given the prominence attributed to Huntington's argumentation, it needs to be stressed that such a perception of Turkey having a distinct character is not an observation made firstly by Huntington. Already in the time of the establishment of the Turkish republic and the reforms undertaken by Atatürk, some actors attested to Turkey being a "hybrid system comprising both Oriental and Western features" (see Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 10). Further, the FEUTURE study indicates that the rise of Islamist parties in the 1990s and Erbakan's presidency also led European actors, particularly in Great Britain, to underline a 'torn' character of Turkey "exhibiting the features of both Western and Eastern identities in a contradictory way" (see Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2018: 16ff).

Rather interpreting Turkey's liminal character in a positive sense, is a common frame depicting Turkey as a bridge or a gate between Europe and the Middle East (see e.g. Lindgaard et al., 2018: 2). This interpretation not only resonates in the discourses of the Turkish actors, especially in the Eurasianisation narrative, which "establishes Turkey as an influential regional power and a bridge between the West and the East" (Hauge et al., 2019: 11), but also in the European and international spheres. For instance, in the context of the 'Arab Spring', political actors regularly stressed the role of Turkey as a model for the Islamic World, combining successfully democracy and Islam. The modernization and reform packages of the 1990s and early 2000s supported this view further that Turkey could be a model and a bridge to countries in the Arab world. With the internal political changes in Turkey of the last years, this image has, however, lost its relevance – at least from the European perspective.

Overall, the overview of these narratives and their historical roots, suggests that -despite common features that have endured over time- the probably more defining characteristic of narratives and identities in Turkey and Europe is their changing and growingly multifaceted nature. Another central conclusion is that narratives on both sides have become more conflictual in recent times. The next chapter will provide deeper insights on these dynamics, among others,

by mapping these reflections results against different focal issues which are crucial for identity construction processes in Turkey and Europe.

4. A Trans-historical Perspective on Identity Construction in Europe-Turkey Relationship

The research on identity representations identifies four focal issues that have been present in the Turkish and European actors' discourses in a trans-historical way, *nationalism*, *status in international society*, *civilisation* and *state-citizen relations* (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017, 2018). Concordantly, this section discusses presently influential narratives as outlined above in relation to these four focal issues, aiming to further explore the potential implications and clues for the future of the partnership.[10]

The Turkish narratives that are most prevalent according to the analysed documents for the mentioned narratives study in more recent years are **Turkey as the Heir** and **Turkey as a Great Power**. Both of these narratives have been gradually dominant since the mid-2000s, with the latter especially after the Financial Crisis in 2008. They both seemingly comprise more conflictual elements compared to other Turkish narratives. In fact, it can be claimed that, in these narratives, the Turkish actors' perceived image of the EU change radically and adversely. The normative superiority of the West in general, and of the EU in particular, is no longer a defining characteristic in mapping the future of the relations. The EU's trustworthiness, transparency, and sincerity are under question, which makes the Turkish actors more intolerant, sceptical, and aggressive towards the EU and pessimistic about the future of the relationship. With the prolonged Turkish candidacy, increasing number and variety of drivers, and the persistent lack of a clear roadmap for membership (Hauge et al., 2019: 26), the Turkish identity representations of Europe mirror the "European tendencies towards a downturn" (Lindgaard et al., 2018: 13) as the antagonistic tones and differentiation of *the Self* from *the Other* become more visible in the discourse. Consequently, despite the repeated emphasis on Turkey's indispensable and indisputable goal of EU membership, these particular stories of the Turkish actors incapacitate the possibility of convergence between the narratives of Turkey and the EU.

In these recent Turkish narratives, we see a "(re)turn to nationalism" (Lindgaard et al., 2018: 22). Both narratives glorify the Turkish national identity with its multinational, multilingual, and multicultural nature and centuries-old history. They place great emphasis on religion and proudly acclaim the strong state tradition of Turkey. Although Turkey's hard power and influence in the region are often underlined, the **nationalism** as manifested in these narratives does not necessarily entail militarism. Unlike the earlier instances, which glorified "the army as the embodiment of the nation" (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017), this particular nationalism mainly relies on a majoritarian grip, which pits the pure and faithful 'national will' (*Milli irade*) against a wide array of enemies inside and out, including the shadowy forces (Hauge et al., 2019: 31) in

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[10] Like the overall paper, this section bases its reflections on the results of the empirical study on narratives carried out for the FEUTURE Project. For demonstrative excerpts and the list of primary sources that provide the basis for the overview provided here, please see Hauge et al., 2019.

Europe/the West, like the 'mastermind' (*Üst Akıl*) or the 'interest rate lobby' (*Faiz Lobisi*) (Lindgaard et al., 2018: 13).

In conjunction with the economic stability and development in the last fifteen years under the AKP rule, these particular narratives provide a radically revised image of Turkey vis-à-vis the EU and in world affairs in general. In these narratives, Turkey is considered able to pit against the EU –not only normatively but also politically and economically. In the wake of the recent crises within the broader region (like in the cases of Syria, Ukraine, Spain, and United Kingdom), Turkey is believed to acquire a growing pivotal role that entails various strategic opportunities. It is pictured as a significant player rising in the face of its neighbours, or, a great power as the title of one of the narratives suggests. Conversely, the EU is considered to gradually lose power and capacity to pursue the integration project as is. As a result, the Turkish actors lash out at the EU for its incapability to sustain its integrity and hint at a certain "jealousy" aspect (Hauge et al., 2019: 31). Therefore, their understandings of the **status in international society** also display a radical change in favour of Turkey against the EU.

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In their own view, Turkish politicians do not differentiate Turkey and the EU in terms of **civilization**. Their seemingly ossified "Us" versus "Them" dichotomy is not necessarily antagonistic despite their ascending harsh criticism on the EU's alleged unfair, prejudiced behaviour and hypocrisy. According to this view, the free and powerful "New Turkey", which has the capacity to wield its influence and sit down at the table under equal terms, does not have to comply with the EU's rules (Hauge et al., 2019: 29). In that sense, these narratives refuse the asymmetrical relationship between Turkey and the EU. Perhaps for the first time in the history of the relationship, they see Turkey and the EU as equals. Not only is the normative superiority of Europe no longer appears prominently in the stories but also its economic and political powers are despised at times.

Although they develop in reaction to the European scepticism towards the Turkish membership, which allegedly propounds the memories of past atrocities and conflicts, these narratives (especially Turkey as the Heir) embrace "the civic memories of the country's past but do[es] not disparage Turkey's Ottoman or Turkic characteristics against alleged European ones" (Hauge et al., 2019: 11). They see Turkey not only as the heir of the formidable Ottoman Empire but also as an inheritor of the preceding Turkic empires and aim at initiating "a discussion on the common history without subscribing to ancient hatreds and prejudices" (Hauge et al., 2019: 11). They acknowledge the differences between Turkey and Europe but at the same time see them as parts on one civilization instead of subscribing to the idea of a dichotomy of civilizations. It even goes one step further and argues that Turkey is more European than the EU member states based upon its thousand-year-long history in Anatolia.

Still, with regard to the issues like the Kurdish issue, the Gezi Protests, and the failed coup attempt, Turkish political actors criticize the double standards and moral compass imposed by the Europeans. They advocate for their rights to handle domestic affairs and discipline the unruly subjects by military action by international standards, something that was also vocalized in the past, i. e. during the Hamidian Massacres (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 8). They blame the Europeans for not seeing the crux of the problems with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya

Karkerên Kurdistanêor, PKK), Gülenist Terror Organisation (Fethullahçı Terör Örgütü, FETÖ) and Parallel State Structure (*Paralel Devlet Yapılanması*; PDY), and directly or indirectly supporting them against the Turkish state. They point to international conspiracies, which somehow involve the European forces behind the crises Turkey has been facing in the last decades and "harp on the national struggle to defend the country's strength and sovereignty against the enemies inside and outside" (Hauge et al., 2019: 11). In that regard, they accuse the EU of interfering with the issues that only concern Turkey, subverting the core principles of the relationship and not respecting Turkey's domestic affairs, therefore, tackle the focal issue of **State-Citizen Relations** in a conflictual manner in the EU-Turkey relations.

Still, these narratives put a strong emphasis on the mutual dependence between the EU and Turkey. They point out to the commonalities and mutual dependency against common enemies and on shared concerns and interests. They state that full integration or at least further cooperation between the parties would ensure a better status in the international community for both.

As regards the European side, the issue of **Civilisation** continued to be relevant in terms of identity also in recent decades. It is often intertwined with arguments linked to State-citizen Relations. In relation to the Turkish membership bid, the EU tends to underline the character of the European Union as a being value-based, stressing human rights and democracy as its foundation. These concerns have been most present in the EU's discourse in the 1980s after the military coup and until the mid-1990s and with another peak since 2016. The recent political changes in Turkey have led the European Commission to state in its progress report for the year 2017 that "Turkey has been moving away from the European Union" (European Commission 2018: 3). Given that the progress reports constitute a form of text that is usually quite formally written, this kind of formulation indicates that there is a quite strong feeling of difference towards Turkey.

Similar to this example, **State-Citizen Relations** are also rather an issue in relation to which representations of difference manifest in the present. Both FEUTURE studies find that after the Cold War, there was a growing salience of human rights, hence rendering state-citizen relations "a more prominent aspect of EU-Turkey relations" (Aydın-Düzgit et al 2018a: 19). When looking at how this unfolds in the recent times, one can see that the reforms in Turkey at the beginning of the 2000s, motivated also by the accession perspective, were perceived as promising and being a sign of Turkey moving closer to the EU. But this has changed towards the opposite. From the EU's perspective, the autocratic developments in the last years widened the gap further and further.

A key question has also been if and to what degree we can identify an essentialist and exclusionary perception of Turkey. Historically, for example, Aydın-Düzgit et al. e.g. stress that in the 19th century, the Reform Edict and Tanzimat Edict contributed to a more differentiated view. Civilisation during this time was thus an issue that rather induced a sense of unity. Contrarily, the Hamidian Massacres caused an opposite development and led to an exclusionary reading of European civilisation vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 16). In this context, European representations in their majority emphasized religious identity as main

difference again and presented "Europe as the monde civilisé" in contrast to the Ottomans (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 7). In recent times, we note that civilisation and state-citizen relations have both rather functioned as issues of difference in terms of identity and even more, as fields of serious conflict in the relationship from a European perspective. In line with this, the Turkey as a Distant Neighbour narrative has become more dominant in recent years.

As has been stated by Aydın-Düzgit et al. (2018: 21), **Nationalism**, as another focal issue for identity construction has risen both in Turkey and the EU since the 1980s. Naturally, this has been particularly apparent rather at the level of the EU Member States and rather less directly so at the EU level, i.e. in the EU's official statements that have been analysed in the narrative study. Despite this, the general "enlargement fatigue" on the EU side should not be evaluated without taking into account the rise of populist and right-wing parties in many Member States (see FEUTURE EU 28 country reports), which tend to oppose Turkish membership to the EU more and more (see also Lindgaard, 2018). Interestingly, Aydın-Düzgit et al. stress that some periods in history, nationalism had been rather an issue bringing together the "Selves", namely during the period of fascism in Europe. In the mentioned FEUTURE study, this had become for example apparent in the reactions to the victory of the Turkish Keriman Halis as Miss Universe. Some sources analysed from that period implicitly placed Turkey within the "white race" in reaction to this event (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2017: 13, 16).

Status in International Society continues to be a factor that rather motivates cooperation or convergence in the relationship with Turkey, and which causes actors to focus more on the commonalities between Europe and Turkey. In particular the Turkey as Strategic Partner narrative, as the one continuously dominant narrative over time (Hauge et al, 2019), reflects the consistent conviction that Turkey is important for Europe, and particularly so on an international level. Examples for this "inclusionary stance" (Jakob et al. 2018: 1f) were, for example, the Kosovo conflict at the end of the 1990s, the fight against terrorism particularly in the aftermath of 9/11, but also more generally Turkey's grown economic importance when compared to earlier decades. From a historical perspective, Aydın-Düzgit et al. conclude that in the 19th century, status in international society and civilisation were also often "conflated" (2017: 17). This refers to a dynamic according to which the adherence to European standards ensured, from an Ottoman perspective, the strategic goal of forming part of the European sphere.

Concluding from this, it seems that democracy and human rights concerns (related to state-citizen relations) on the one hand and Turkey's strategic importance (related to status in international society) on the other seem to be two factors in competition with each other. This dynamic arguably complicates the EU's efforts to find a common and consistent approach for a future strategy in its relationship with Turkey.

5. Conclusion: What about the Future?

This paper concludes with some considerations on the present and possible future of the relationship, based on the above reflections on narratives and identity representations in Europe and Turkey from a trans-historical perspective.

Overall, as the above sections have shown, Turkey and Europe have been an important, or, as some argue, even the main reference point for each other in terms of their respective identity construction. As Gülmez et al (207: 4f) illustrate, in the 19th century, Europe's *Other* was the collapsing Ottoman empire. Vice versa, Turkey encountered a divided Europe. In the present, Turkey is perceived as a difficult candidate, particularly in terms of democratic standards, and thus, to some degree, again functions as Europe's *Other*. On the other hand, an EU facing manifold crises ranging from the Brexit and growing populist tendencies to the financial and economic crises of the last years has also been conceived of as Turkey's "other". At other instances in time, such as during the Cold War, but also between 1999 and the early 2000s, the difference was less pronounced in the discourses.

Thus, we can conclude that certain patterns exist, but also that Turkish and EU narratives comprise varying accounts of each other. Narratives by political actors are subject to constant change, and this change is often linked to certain milestones or junctures of the relationship. The same applies to the identity representations underpinning the narratives. As for the future, one needs to underline that given that there has neither been a linear pattern of identity representations nor of the narratives on the relationship, it is unlikely that we will encounter any linear development of identities and narratives in the nearer FEUTURE (see also Aydın-Düzgit et al 2017: 18). It will likely remain one of the main characteristics of the EU-Turkey relationship (and the debates on it) that it shifts, changes, remains dynamic and consequently moves between instances of conflict, cooperation, or even convergence.

Based on the empirical studies examined, we can further conclude that both the narratives as well as the interlinked identity perceptions have recently undergone a phase of increasing conflict. While the empirical data confirms that conflictual rhetoric is rather a recurring pattern and not new to the debates on EU-Turkey relations, the level of escalation on both sides in the last years has been considerably higher. This is also linked with an increased relevance of nationalism for the identity formation both in Turkey and in the EU in the last years and decades. Given this dynamic, and with the political developments in Turkey and EU at hand, it seems that conflict is likely to remain part of the political discourses in the nearer future.

Besides this, the paper acknowledges that identity representations and narratives as such are not to be analysed isolated from the political and international context. Geostrategic and international factors can influence identity construction. Jakob et al. e.g. argue that possibly identity issues could lose in salience compared to security concerns at the international level (2018: 24f). What in any case be safely stated is that Turkey's strategic importance for Europe will remain to be a dominant factor influencing narratives, and possibly also identities from a European perspective.

Consequently, the EU in its narratives seems to be torn between acknowledging Turkey's importance for Europe while at the same time questioning the relationship in light of the serious concerns in political terms. This dynamic is also exemplified by the European Commission's progress report of 2018, which states in the first sentence that "Turkey remains a key partner for the European Union" (European Commission 2018: 3) but then continued with a gloomy and rather critical analysis of the situation in Turkey.

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On the other hand, Turkish narratives transport a similar growingly assertive self-perception and a certain glorification of the Turkish nation. This is accompanied by harsher criticism towards the EU, also in light of the de facto still stand, or even setback of the accession process.

The paper also finds that individuals have the capacity to be particularly important in terms of identity constructions, which can be both positive and negative. In the 19th century, the journey of Abdülaziz to Europe of 1866, for example, had such an effect. After this visit, European actors perceived Turkey in a more differentiated way. Nowadays, Turkish president Erdogan plays a decisive role in shaping the debates on both sides.

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ABOUT FEUTURE

FEUTURE sets out to explore fully different options for further EU-Turkey cooperation in the next decade, including analysis of the challenges and opportunities connected with further integration of Turkey with the EU.

To do so, FEUTURE applies a comprehensive research approach with the following three main objectives:

1. Mapping the dynamics of the EU-Turkey relationship in terms of their underlying historical narratives and thematic key drivers.
2. Testing and substantiating the most likely scenario(s) for the future and assessing the implications (challenges and opportunities) these may have on the EU and Turkey, as well as the neighborhood and the global scene.
3. Drawing policy recommendations for the EU and Turkey on the basis of a strong evidence-based foundation in the future trajectory of EU-Turkey relations.

FEUTURE is coordinated by Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Wessels, Director of the Centre for Turkey and European Union Studies at the University of Cologne and Dr. Nathalie Tocci, Director of Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome.

The FEUTURE consortium consists of 15 renowned universities and think tanks from the EU, Turkey and the neighborhood.

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