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Identity Representations of Turkey and Europe in Foreign Media: Regional and Global Perspectives on EU-Turkey Relations

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ABSTRACT

This FEUTURE paper examines global (Russian and US press) and regional (Egyptian and Georgian press) perspectives on EU-Turkey relations since 1999 with respect to identity and culture. Using the Critical Discourse Analysis methodology, the research traces the evolution of Turkey and Europe's identity representations in foreign media, therefore providing an outlook of the way significant Others make sense of the EU-Turkey relationship in the context of Turkey's EU bid. While the more dynamic (and positive) Egyptian and American press coverage initially contrasted with Georgian and Russian newspapers' static portrayal of Europe and Turkey's respective identities as antithetical, the prominence of certain identity markers in recent drivers contributed to shifts in identity representations supporting the degradation of EU-Turkey relations toward conflict.

ÖZET

Bu makale kimliğin ve kültürün 1999 yılından bu yana Türkiye ile Avrupa Birliği (AB) arasındaki ilişkilerin küresel (Rus ve ABD basını) ve bölgesel (Mısır ve Gürcü basını) medya kapsamını inceler. Kritik Söylem Çözümlemesi metodolojisini kullanarak araştırma, Türkiye'nin AB üyeliği bağlamında başkalarının AB-Türkiye ilişkisini anlamlı kıldığını, zaman içinde kimlik temsilcilerinin gelişimini analiz ederek bir görünüm verir. Araştırma bulguları, ABD medyasında Türkiye'nin AB'ye üyeliğini desteklerken Mısır, Rusya ve Gürcistan'ın Türkiye'nin AB'ye bağlı olma ihtimaline karşı şüpheli kaldıklarını iddia ediyor. Analiz, uluslararası ve bölgesel medyanın, Türkiye ile Avrupa arasındaki yakınlaşmadan ziyade farklılığı vurguladığını ve Türkiye'nin AB'ye daha uzun bir süreç olarak katılma teklifini sunduğunu gösteriyor.



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Introduction

The present paper explores regional and global perspectives on the identity/cultural dimension of EU-Turkey relations over the 1999-2016 period. The analysis tracks the Egyptian, Georgian, American, and Russian press coverage of critical junctures that have triggered in-depth discussions about European and Turkish identities and their relationship to one another, namely the declaration of Turkey’s candidacy status to the EU with the Helsinki Summit in 1999; the start of EU-Turkey accession negotiations in 2005; Orhan Pamuk’s 2006 Nobel Prize in literature; Sarkozy and Merkel’s stance on Turkish accession (2007-2012); the 2011-2012 French parliament’s bill on mass killings of Armenians; the 2016 EU-Turkey migration deal; and the July 2016 coup attempt in Turkey.¹

According to the FEUTURE Work Package 7 conceptual framework, these aforementioned key political and cultural developments are regarded as identity drivers because they constitute milestones in the history of EU-Turkey relations “in terms of stimulating interaction (either in the form of convergence, cooperation or conflict) between Turks and Europeans and thus (re)shaping identity representations” (Aydın-Düzgüt et. al., 2017a: 96). These drivers in turn reflect on one or more of the four main focal issues – civilization, status in international society, nationalism and state-citizen relations – around which Turkey and Europe have constructed their identity in relation to their significant Other (ibid: 5).²

In line with the FEUTURE paper series on Identity, the research employs Wodak’s Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) – one of the main branches of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) – in the empirical analysis of the newspapers sample.³ Beyond the broad CDA method that looks into the relation between power and language and places a premium upon the socio-political context of language use, the three-step interdisciplinary DHA integrates the historical context and investigates the role of discourse in the construction of identities (see Annex).

The newspapers were selected based on their circulation figures, ownership, and ideological and/or geographical diversity in order to provide a representative sample of the populations from the countries under scrutiny. As regards regional perspectives, six Egyptian newspapers were consulted: two state-owned (*al-Ahram* and *al-Akhbar*), two opposition party-owned (*al-Wafd* and *al-Dustur*), and two independent (*al-Masry al-Yum* and *al-Shuruk*). *al-Ahram* addressed most of the five drivers through newsfeeds and some editorial short/opinion articles, whereas the opposition and independent newspapers remained silent or only occasionally discussed EU-Turkey relations. The Georgian press sample includes liberal sources like *Amerikis Khma* (Voice of America), *Radio*

¹ Five drivers were initially pre-selected by the WP leaders, namely the declaration of Turkey’s candidacy status to the EU with the Helsinki Summit (11-12 December 1999); the start of EU-Turkey accession negotiations (3 October 2005); Orhan Pamuk’s winning the Nobel Prize of Literature (12 October 2006); Nicolas Sarkozy’s speech against Turkey during the French presidential election campaign (21 February 2007); the EU-Turkey migration deal (18 March 2016). Due to a dearth of sources, the researchers dropped some drivers and selected others among the list provided in the Guideline Paper (pp98) that were the most covered in the newspapers of their respective regions.

² For more on the focal issues see Aydın-Düzgüt et. al., 2017a

³ For more on the methodology see Aydın-Düzgüt et. al., 2017b; Wodak (2001: 63-94); Annex



Tavisupleba (Radio Liberty); centrist sources: *Kviris palitra*, *Rezonansi* (Resonance) and conservative ones like: *Alia*, *Sakartvelos Respublika* (Republic of Georgia), *Adjara and Akhali Taoba* (New Generation). Turkey-EU relations were given little attention in Georgian media as not all events were fully covered and often addressed through fact-based columns.

At the global level, Russian sources include: *Gazeta.ru* (newspaper), *Novaya Gazeta* (new newspaper), which are among the liberal sources; *Pravda* (Truth), *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* (Russian Newspaper) and *Vedomosti* from centrist sources; *RIA Novosti* (Russia’s international news agency), *Argumenty I Fakty* (arguments and facts), *Vzlyad* (viw; *utro.ru* (morning); *Izvestiya* (news), *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (Komsomol Truth) and *Kommersant* (The businessman) from conservative sources. Turkey-EU relations were not given a high priority in the Russian media, which rather provided straight reporting on the drivers rather than an assessment of these events. The American press sample subsumes the rather conservative *Chicago Tribune* and *The Wall Street Journal*; the *Los Angeles Times*, generally regarded as centrist⁴; and liberal dailies *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. The drivers were widely covered in the American media, particularly in *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* – respectively considered the most mainstream conservative and liberal newspapers – that produced most opinion pieces.

With this analysis, the paper aims at giving an outlook on how significant Others make sense of the EU-Turkey relationship in the context of Turkey’s EU bid by analysing the evolution of identity representations over time. Further, it complements the work of our colleagues tracing Turkey and Europe’s mutual representations over the same period.⁵

1. 1999 Helsinki Summit – Turkey’s EU Candidacy Declared

The Helsinki European Council Summit held on 10-11 December 1999 represented a major endeavour to both enlarge and deepen the European Union. During this event that paved the way for the EU’s largest expansion and envisaged the creation of an independent European defence capability, Turkey was granted the candidate status, twelve years after it formally applied for EU membership.

Regional Perspectives

Most Egyptian articles highlight the path towards modernity undertaken by the republican leadership since Atatürk. While this event is mostly reported as a short newsfeed in Egyptian newspapers, two opinion articles refer to Turkey as a “Muslim” and “Eastern” country that is looking forward to developing a strong tie with the European Union referred to as “the Christian Club” (1999A1; 1999A2). One of these articles mentions that the declaration of Turkey’s candidacy to the EU is perceived as the peak of Turkey’s willingness to be part of Europe, its endorsement of the Western, liberal and civilized traits of development (1999A1). The other indicates, “Turkey is very determined to access the EU and is looking forward to the announcement of a date for the

⁴ It initially targeted Republican readership but leans to the left nowadays

⁵ Deliverables D7.2 and D7.6 by the Danish Institute for International Studies.



start of accession negotiations” (1999A2). While the Egyptian press considers Turkey as a “modernising” and “Europeanising” entity, it also signals the EU would show some reluctance to admit it (1999A1). It expects that Turkey’s “relentless” effort to join the EU would be “futile” because the latter does not favour having Turkey as a European member due to religious, economic and security concerns. By putting into perspective Turkey and Europe’s cultural differences, opinion articles in the Egyptian press emphasise the conflicting nature of their relationship.

Georgian newspapers predicate Europe and Turkey as representatives of two different civilizations. Turkey is viewed as outside Europe because it is described as more pro-American than pro-European, and as a Muslim country while European states are Christian (1999G1). In terms of hierarchy, Turkey is perceived as economically inferior to Europe but militarily superior to European countries. – “Turkey has the biggest and strongest army in Europe” (1999G1). The text exaggerates European standards of living and its economic possibilities, noting that an “Economic crisis is impossible in the EU member states” (1999G1). Moreover, 1999G3 suggests Turkey lags behind the EU as it “will have to make reforms to catch up on European standards”.

Georgian articles show divergence between the EU and Turkey, arguing the declaration of Turkey’s EU candidacy status at the Helsinki Summit was not predicted.

Global Perspectives

US articles preponderantly predicate Europe as democratic and economically prosperous, sometimes contrasting Greece that “joined (the EU) in 1981 and rode quickly to prosperity and solid democracy” with Turkey (1999E6). Some texts however explain that Turkey’s candidacy status was in part delayed because of Europe’s racist or xenophobic bias.⁶ Overall, Turkey is perceived as democratising (i.e. 1999E6, 1999E15) and Europeanising (1999E7; 1999E13) although many texts emphasise the country’s authoritarian/repressive character as a drag on the accession process that would likely make Turkey “one of the later entrants”(1999E9). While Turkey is often described as Muslim, the texts do not consider religion as a negative feature that should justify keeping the country outside Europe (i.e. 1999E1, 1999E11).

Praising the instrumental role of the US government in both the long-awaited European recognition of Turkey’s candidacy status⁷ and Turkey’s acceptance of the invitation, the American press portrays the event as a symbolic rapprochement between the EU and Turkey. Liberal texts tend to rely on the topos of universal values to argue that the recognition of Turkey’s ‘candidate status’ indicates greater association with Europe, as it pushes the country to undertake political and economic reforms. Most importantly, the topoi of hybridity and power/status are employed to advertise closer EU-Turkey association as mutually beneficial due to the rising influence of the EU trade bloc and Turkey’s geostrategic importance.

⁶ 1999E7 : « thinly disguised prejudices against the Muslim faith of most Turks ...combined to keep Ankara outside Europe ...» ; 1999E13 : « a long history of stereotyping of Turks as un-European » ; 1999E15 : « Frequently heard around EU conclaves was the racially tinged argument that the ‘Turks aren’t Europeans’ ».

⁷ 1999E1 « Turkey has finally been invited », 1999E2 « the EU finally answered with a conditional invitation for eventual full membership », 1999E4 « Europe at last ready to welcome Turkey », 1999E 13 « Turkey had at last been admitted as a candidate for membership »



Focal Issues

The "civilization" focal issue is extensively covered in the media. For Egyptian newspapers, the event demonstrates Turkey's eagerness to adopt the civilizing characteristics of Europe such as democracy, liberalism, and economic development (1999A1; 1999A2). US texts point to Europe and Turkey as overlapping or coexisting civilizations. While some articles emphasise Turkey's liminal position "straddling the fault line between Europe and Asia, West and East, Christianity and Islam" (1999E1), Turkey is also depicted as a positive "other" located mostly in Asia (1999E12) or in the Middle East (1999E2). Articles insist, "an overture to Turkey would enhance the union's image as a multicultural alliance embracing diversity" (1999E3), or refer to the brief 15th century "synthesis of Ottoman and Western cultures" as "one of the high points of world civilization" (1999E13). 1999E11 further stresses the civilizational implications a potential consolidation of the Turkish-Greek rapprochement; it "could have a calming influence in the Balkans" and demonstrate "there is no reason why Muslims and Orthodox Christians should be fighting old battles".

The civilizational undertone of most US articles directly feeds into the second focal issue, "status in international society". Described as a "vital geographic bridge between Europe, Asia and the Middle East" (1999E4), a "bulwark against hostile regimes in Iran and Iraq" (1999E15) and "an honest broker between Europe and the Muslim world" (1999E11), Turkey is represented by most articles as a crucial strategic asset for both the EU and the protection of US interests – "a stalwart member of the NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] alliance that staved off the Soviet Union for decades", (1999E1). The Georgian texts view the EU as a union of developed countries, while Turkey is not as developed as the EU – "In case of Turkey joining the European Union, the EU has to put a lot of efforts into making Turkey as developed as the EU countries" (1999G1). The Georgian press also perceives Turkey as an occupier of part of Cyprus that is not willing to withdraw its army, which is unacceptable for the EU.

Regarding the focal issue of "state-citizen relations", the Egyptian, Georgian and US texts tend to consider Turkey as inferior in terms of political, economic, human and ethnic minority rights. The Egyptian and American texts additionally claim the "candidate status" incentivises Turkey to democratise. The Egyptian press presents the reconsideration of minority rights, the limitation of military intervention in politics and the consolidation of a free civil society as the main steps that Turkey should adopt in order to be accepted as an EU member state (1999A1). Most liberal-oriented US newspapers also argue it already had a positive influence on minority rights – particularly for the Kurds (1999E14, 1999E15) – and that it is "expected to strengthen" Turkish politicians "who favour democratic reforms (1999E3, 1999E4).

As for "nationalism", the Egyptian sources present Turkey's willingness to access the EU as a reconsideration of the nationalist/authoritarian tenets of the Republic (1999A1; 1999A2).

2. EU begins full membership negotiations with Turkey (3 October 2005)

The EU formally opened accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3, 2005 after a two-day diplomatic deadlock occasioned by Austria's populist government, which eventually dropped its last-minute objections to Turkey's full membership. Considered "truly historic", Turkey's beginning of full membership negotiations nevertheless took place in a particularly tense atmosphere, notably after the Netherlands and France's rejection of a European Constitution following consultative referenda.

Regional Perspectives

Producing six opinion articles, Egyptian media give more importance to Turkey's EU membership negotiations. Although three articles represent Turkey as a nation that "follows the European model" and acts like a "bridge" between the East and the West, they view Europe as "reluctant" to Turkey's EU bid (2005 A1; 2005A2; 2005A3). In this regard, 2005A4 adds that the start of negotiations does not mean Turkey's eventual accession to the EU since these negotiations would take more than ten years. Along other articles, it mentions Islamophobia as one of the main reasons behind the reluctance of some European countries to Turkey's membership in spite of its persistent fulfilment of the EU conditionality (2005A4; 2005A5; 2005A6). Some articles underline that Turkey's accession process is an "illusion" and a "misleading" process as the country is "lagging behind the EU conditionality". Moreover, Turkey is portrayed as a country having an "identity crisis" that is looking forward to being part of Europe in spite of being Muslim (2005A3; 2005A5). In spite of the announcement of a date for the start of accession negotiations, a lot of predicaments that troubled bilateral relations throughout 15 years or more still exist, notably the Cypriot issue and the Armenian genocide. While some European countries like Germany called for a privileged partnership rather than full membership, one article emphasises that the Brussels' document is not paving the way for an automatic accession once the EU conditionality is fulfilled but indicates that Turkey's accession is a goal, which is a different thing (2005A2).

In Georgian media, Turkey is viewed as outside of Europe, because it is described as an Islamic country, while European states are described as Christian (2005G7; 2005G5; 2005G6). In addition, Turks are viewed as "temperamental people", while Europeans are perceived as "cold-minded people" (2005G5). Turkey is hierarchically perceived as inferior to Europe, because it is poorer than the EU states whereas Europe is viewed as a leading actor, whose rules Turkey should follow. 2005G5 notes that despite many obstacles related to human/minority rights and the Cyprus issue, Turkey is getting closer to Europe, developing "with giant steps" and becoming one of the strongest countries, which always should be taken into consideration by others.

Georgian articles suggest negotiations regarding Turkey's full membership in the EU will not be possible in the near future as Turkey should fulfil quite a few EU requirements and is not willing to do so – for instance, the recognition of the occupation of Cyprus and the Armenian genocide seems unacceptable for Turkey and leads relations between Turkey and the EU towards conflict.(2005G4).



Global Perspectives

Despite the eventual opening of the negotiations, Europe is depicted negatively in the US media. Some articles are highly critical of Austria’s ‘disgraceful’ (2005E4) attempt to block the process, calling the country “racist” and even alluding to Austria’s Nazi past (2005E6; 2005E7). Labelled “elite club” (2005E10), “very exclusive club” (2005E5) or “Christian Club” (2005E7), Europe is described as parochial and “increasingly sceptical” (2005E2). In most articles, the description of Turkey as “predominantly Muslim, large and poor” is used as a strategy to implicitly criticise the EU, which has used this argument as a pretext to keep Turkey outside Europe (2005E3, 2005E4, 2005E11).⁸ This contrasts with the positive representations of Turkey, praised for adopting “a flurry of reforms” (2005E12), “racing toward European-style democracy” (2005E5), and moving “mountains to qualify merely to *start* membership negotiations” (2005E7).

For US media, the opening of the accession negotiations – framed as Turkey and the EU avoiding to further distance themselves rather than a step toward greater association – symbolises a “crisis averted” (2005E1). Mainly relying on the topoi of culture and nationalism, the texts tend to warn about the obstacles lying ahead of a long process with a more than uncertain outcome.

In Russian media, Europe and Turkey are different entities, representatives of two different civilizations. Conservative views state that Turkey retains a “completely different culture, religion and political tradition”(2005R1) or characterise Turkey as representative of Islam whereas Europe symbolises Christianity (2005R2). Liberal sources also claim Turkey is alien to Europe “by religion, mentality, way of life” (2005R3). An interesting point is raised about Turkey being a country of “young aggressive male energy” and Europe being “an aging and gender-equal society” while 2005R5 makes a statement that the beginning of talks with Turkey changes Europe’s “whole organism.”

Almost similar arguments to Egyptian and Georgian articles are discussed in the Russian sources. The start of negotiations is presented as either being destructive to the EU because it challenges European values or as a process that is too long and without a clear outcome in sight. Turkey’s admission to the European Union would be too costly for Europe because the EU chose enlargement in favour of integration and internal consolidation (2005R5) and “extending one’s hand to foreign-born neighbours is one thing, letting them live in your home is another” (2005R1). Furthermore, the EU is not a superpower and such acceptance might lead to the “militarisation” of European politics, which will hurt European values (2005R3). In all the liberal sources the European Union is viewed as a struggling actor. For instance, 2005R3 states upfront that Europe is not a superpower, and does not wish to become one and 2005R4 points out that in comparison to Europe, Turkey has several aces in its hands that it can use to “blackmail” and “play on the fears of Europeans.”

⁸ 2005E11 explicitly claims Turkey is geographically partly inside Europe but not accepted as such by Europeans because of culture and religion.



Focal Issues

"Civilization" remains a central issue in the Egyptian texts. Although a far-fetched dream, Turkey's EU membership would be beneficial for Europe. In spite of cultural differences Turkey could act as a mediator between the East and the West, and promote coexistence and multiculturalism (2005A3). In contrast, the Russian sources cast Turkey and the EU in opposition due to different values and directions in international politics. Similarly, the Georgian texts also represent Turkey and Europe in different civilizations. 2005G7 indicates that Turkey will need a "cultural revolution" for membership of the EU. The US texts also portray distinct civilizations facing growing difficulties cohabiting with each other. For instance, 2005E3 describes Europe in the midst of an identity crisis, to which the question of Turkey's membership – with its "vastly different cultural and economic heritage" – has become "central to the debate". Some texts contend the event was viewed as a "barometer of the West's broader relations with the Muslim world" (2005E8) and that Europe hardly averted a civilizational clash by nearly rebuffing the only Muslim EU candidate (2005E1). Other texts clearly frame Austria's opposition to Turkey as historic civilizational animosity dating back from the Hapsburg/Ottoman wars (2005E7, 20005E8, 2005E11).

As for the "status in international society" focal issue, the American press implies that, although Europe avoided losing credibility in the eyes of the Muslim world, its international status has nevertheless been weakened by the internal identity crisis and circumvolutions of increasingly inward-looking member states (i.e. 2005E4, 2005E7). Focusing on Turkey, the Georgian sources claim the country's international status is not strong as Turkey has many problems it should solve if it wants to join the EU. 2005G4 points out that there is a frequently asked question of whether Turkey needs the EU and vice-versa. The Egyptian sources, however, present Turkey's status in international society in a more positive light. They claim that, by complying with the EU conditionality at the political, socio-economic, and foreign policy levels, Turkey would succeed in connecting with Europe (2005A4; 2005A5).

State-citizen relations are a problematic issue in Georgian sources. Turkey is perceived as inferior to Europe; the rights of the Kurds as an ethnic minority are not protected in Turkey. The same goes for religious minorities, as freedom of religion does not exist. The US texts focus on the role of the EU in Turkey's democratisation process. Given Turkey's fast pace of reforms, the texts argue that it was Europe's responsibility to guarantee the opening of the accession negotiations in order to prevent destabilising a reformist government that has bound "its future on building ties with the West" (2005E1). The texts therefore suggest that not opening the accession talks could have halted Turkey's democratic transition (2005E4, 2005E12).

Finally, the US press also covers "nationalism" as a major challenge for greater EU-Turkey association. Some texts argue that increasingly xenophobic and Eurosceptic attitudes across Europe have contributed to reviving nationalist sentiments in Turkey (2005E5, 2005E10). Others contend Turkish ultranationalists who fear the government is selling out their country's territorial integrity and sovereignty with the impressive reforms is even more a threat to Turkey's EU bid than the "country's size, religion and Middle Eastern borders" (2005E2, 2005E12).

3. Orhan Pamuk Wins The Nobel Prize In Literature (13 October 2006)

On October 13, 2006, less than a year after being charged for “insulting Turkishness” over an interview in which he spoke about the mass killings of Armenians and Kurds, Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk was awarded the Nobel Prize of Literature by the Swedish Academy. The event also took place on the same day the French lower house of Parliament voted a bill criminalising the denial of the Armenian genocide.⁹

Regional Perspectives

Egyptian newspapers treat the attribution of the Nobel Prize to Orhan Pamuk as political news underlining conflict between Turkey and Europe. One newsfeed contends that the “West” adopted an “unexpected gesture” towards Turkey by rewarding a Turkish writer for his criticism of Turkey’s historical policies against Armenians and practices against Kurds (2006A1). Two Egyptian newspapers’ reports indicate that the prize was awarded to Pamuk after the drop of his judicial pursuit in Turkey, which the EU instrumentalises against Turkey in the accession negotiations (2006A2; 2006 A3).

The Georgian press also presents the event as chiefly political. The texts place a premium upon the writer’s troubles with the Turkish government and the judiciary as a result of his comments on the Armenian genocide and repression of the Kurds. Turkey is portrayed as being inferior to Europe, because the accusation was deemed an unfair reaction and a violation of human rights.. Pamuk is perceived as the only one in Turkey who dares to speak extensively about these issues, and would be punished, had European countries not expressed their disapprobation (2006G4). In Georgian media, Pamuk’s Nobel Prize, considerably overshadowed by his prosecution, is viewed as Europe keeping its distance from Turkey.

Global Perspectives

US articles that specifically mention Europe describe it as increasingly Islamophobic (2006E6; 2006E7).¹⁰ Some accuse European governments of hypocrisy and suggest those are not as free and liberal as they claim (2006E3), whereas others criticise the Swedish Academy for being overly political and moralistic – sarcastically referring to the latter as “the progressive arbiters of taste in Europe” (2006E10). Turkey is presented as a fragmented society. On one hand, Pamuk epitomises a “modern”, “free” and “Europeanising/Westernising” Turkey. On the other, the articles portray a more “traditional” Turkey, embodied by “religious conservatives” and “ultranationalists” (2006E9).

Several texts indicate Pamuk’s victory represents a greater cultural association of Turkey and Europe through the topoi of literature and hybridity. 2006E9 depicts Pamuk as “the West’s literary guide to the East” and 2006E11 argues that many more readers will reach the viewpoint East and West can combine after Pamuk’s Nobel. 2006E10 however argues that “Turkey desperately lacks a writer to explain itself to the world” implying that Pamuk is too elitist – from a Westernised

⁹ The bill was eventually rejected by the French Senate

¹⁰ 2006E6, “Anti-Islamic sentiments have shifted from the far right to the center of European political life”.



wealthy family of Istanbul – to be representative of the Turkish society. Like the Georgian and Egyptian media, many US articles also contend the awarding of the Nobel was politically motivated and in turn implicitly indicate Turkey and Europe are distancing themselves at the political level (i.e. 2006E2; 2006E3, 2006E8, 2006E12).

Russian texts view the EU as a homogeneous entity, whereas Turkey is heterogeneous. This is most obvious from the internal disagreements the image of Orhan Pamuk generated in the country. 2006R1 is satirically called “The under-repressed,” referring to Pamuk’s troubles with the Turkish government. Parallels are drawn with Soviet Nobel laureates – including Solzhenitsyn, who was “thankfully, not yet stripped of his citizenship” when granted the prize (2006R1). The implication is that both Turkey and Russia try to censor unfavourable views, while the EU is implicitly assumed to have no such repression. The conflict between Europe and Turkey is implicit in 2006R3, where it is claimed that Turkey was pressured to not prosecute Pamuk after he spoke out about the Armenian genocide and the repression of Kurds. More explicitly, 2006R4 states that Turkey (alongside Russia) is a country “traumatised by nostalgia for imperial glory” and “vacillating between the West and the East.” Only one article rejects inherent characterisations of Turkey, denouncing the claim that Turkey has “genes of Muhammad” as a “European heresy” (2006R5). Turkey is equal but different with its own path of development, where there are tensions between people looking to liberalise and the ideology built on taboo since the time of Mustafa Kemal.

Focal Issues

The focal issue of civilization figures prominently in the argumentation of Russian newspapers. Some Russian articles claim there is a tension between the two civilizations, which are able to coexist but are not entirely reconcilable (2006R4); others that the tension is part of normality and the difference in the level of modernisation (2006R2); and yet another article completely rejects the notion of widely different civilizations (2006R5). The article where this last argument is made also stresses the heterogeneity of Turkey, where some parts of the society are more Europeanised than others. Georgian texts underline that Pamuk’s novels discuss the disposition of West and East in Turkish culture and show that Turkish culture is partly European. For their part, US media present Pamuk’s victory as evidence “East” and “West” can co-exist at a time of growing tensions between the “West” and “Islam” or that European and Turkish civilizations overlap.¹¹

“State-citizen relations” are also discussed in the Egyptian, Georgian, Russian and US articles. Georgian texts stress that human rights are not protected in Turkey, which is unacceptable for EU standards. In both Russian and US sources the persecution of writers, restrictions on freedom of speech and the role of literature in providing criticism of the state is emphasised. One Russian article focuses on the cultural rights of the literary world and “literature with a human face” is compared to the state of the country where it is unacceptable for individuals to criticise (2006R5). A US text argues, “Turkey continues to demonstrate its unreadiness to join the rank of mature democracies” but also shames European governments that “twist language into politics by criminalizing speech” in reference to the French Parliament’s attempt to enact a law on the mass killings of Armenians (2006E3). For the Egyptian press, two reports indicate the event is a “slap”

¹¹ 2006E2 “an act of reaching across the gulf of cultural differences”; 2006E11: European and Turkish cultures are “far more intermingled than the leaders of his (Pamuk) parents’ generation would admit”



against Turkey as regards the efforts deployed towards “liberalisation”, the adoption of a political, cultural and educational system close to the West, and the rapprochement with the latter (2006A2; 2006A3).

The issue of “nationalism” is represented in the Egyptian, Georgian and US sources as Turkey distancing itself from Europe. Georgian sources explain the European Union’s condemnation of Turkey following the latter’s prosecution of Pamuk has brought up nationalism in Turkey. Some US articles regard the Nobel Prize as an “anti-nationalist slap in the face” (2006E4) by many Turks because of Pamuk’s controversial comments.

Georgian media perceive Europe as a leading actor that has downgraded Turkey’s status in international society by forcing the latter to drop charges against Pamuk. For Russian newspapers, Europe is a leading actor and Turkey the follower, since the Nobel – with a large influence on public opinion – is presented as a valuable prize to receive. To a lesser extent, the US press touches upon the issue but, in contrast to Georgian and Russian media, claim that Pamuk’s victory has elevated Turkey’s status in international society culturally as it “signalled the emergence of Turkish literature as a genre” (2006E12).

4. Merkel And Sarkozy Sceptical Of Turkey’s EU Membership (2007-2012)

10

Turkey’s accession to the EU has been problematic for many European countries, notably France and Germany especially after conservative parties came to power. The leaders of the Christian Democratic Party in Germany the Union for a Popular Movement in France, Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy have respectively expressed their parties’ concerns as regards the accession of a majority-Muslim populated country lying mostly in Asia to the European Union.

Regional Perspectives

The Egyptian texts underline conflict in the EU-Turkey relations by referring to Turkey as the “eastern” and “Muslim” nation. Two opinion articles emphasise these attributes as the main reasons behind both Sarkozy and Merkel’s resilience towards Turkey’s candidacy even if it fulfils all the accession requirements (2007A1; 2007A2). As in the second driver, Turkey is referred to as a “nation that has an identity crisis”. It is striving to adopt a secular system with functioning Western norms and principles but is still dominated by religious and traditional values and social practices that are promoted by the Justice and Development party (AKP), notably the veil issue and the constitutional amendments (2007A1; 2007A2).

Egyptian newspapers underline religion as the main factor in the EU’s rejection of Turkey’s accession since its identity constitutes a matter of concern for the public opinion in many EU countries. According to an opinion article, although Turkey has tried hard to become a European state, has achieved a lot, notably at the economic and political levels, and is an important security partner for Europe, Turkey’s relationship with the EU is a “one-sided love” (2007A1).

The Georgian articles predicate Turkey as an outsider, inferior to Europe hierarchically and spatially, which tries to get closer to the EU. Compared to Europe, Turkey is a poorer country with a fast-growing population. However, Turkey is viewed as an ambitious country, which is searching



new relationships outside of Europe and getting closer to Eastern countries. Only one article (2009G2) views Turkey as equal to the EU, wherein it is described as an “important super-state in the region economically and military”, which can “decide its destiny itself”. 2009G3 also indicates Turkey is a “rapidly developing super country”.

Mostly relying on the topoi of universal values, power/status and religion, the argumentation strategy of the Georgian texts indicates that Europe is distancing itself from Turkey. The argument suggests that Turkey’s membership of the EU is not possible in the near future. In the texts, the Turkey-EU relationship is perceived as conflictual because of some leading states in Europe such as France and Germany that do not wish Turkey to be part of the EU and whose leaders offered Turkey a Privileged Partnership that was rejected by the latter. 2009G3 claims, Turkish politicians are tired of waiting for the EU, and while Turkey still decided to maintain goodwill towards the EU, it also looks at Eastern Arabic countries, which respect Turkey much more than the EU does.

Global Perspectives

As is the case with Georgian media, the notion that Turkey is an outsider to Europe underlies most of the Russian texts. 2007R1 defines Europe as “Christian” through the way Austrians describe themselves, particularly the Union for Austrian Future and Freedom party. Turkish people are grouped together with Bosnians, Albanians, and Arabs clearly based on their Muslim majorities. 2007R2 praises Germany for “finally” doing something about Turkish immigrants, who have not been successfully integrated. 2007R4 states that Turkey is not a European country from a geographic and cultural-historic perspective. Some articles do not explicitly identify the EU and Turkey as obverse (2007R5) and claim that Turkey joining the EU is a problem specifically for European conservatives (2007R3).

Along Georgian media, Russian articles suggest to different degrees that Turkey’s EU membership is not possible in the near future. Divergence between EU-Turkey is caused by the difficulty of integrating Turkish immigrants into Europe, especially in Germany (2007R1, 2007R2).

Focal Issues

Civilization is widely discussed in the selected texts. Georgian media again suggest Europe and Turkey are two different civilizations; contrasting Muslim Turkey to the EU – a union of Christian states. They further add, EU membership entails “building a western-style developed country”(2010G1). Egyptian newspapers similarly highlight the religious divide and argue that Turkey’s rejection was made on cultural and religious bases (2007A1; 2007A2). In the Russian press, there are contradictory views. According to the conservative view, Christian Europe and Muslim Turkey represent separate civilizations, which is evident from the lack of integration of some Muslim communities in Europe while one liberal article rejects the idea of West and East as necessarily at odds with each other (2007R4).

‘Status in international society’ is predominant in the Russian sources that describe Europe as a leading actor with a developed economy. Accordingly, Turkey is an actor that needs to develop economically to catch up to European standards and convince member states. Most Georgian texts also indicate Europe is a leading actor because Turkey’s EU membership depends on European solutions. Turkey is shown as accepting whatever the EU decides. While Turkey is perceived



as a country that keeps waiting for the EU, it however tries to create an image of itself as a peaceful neighbour among Eastern Arabic states (2009G3).

Regarding “nationalism” Russian articles mention Turkey’s EU membership in the context of the national preservation of European countries, specifically Germany. For the Egyptian press, the rise of nationalism in the Turkish society would undermine the achievements of the Turkish state with regard to the adoption of the EU conditionality (2009A1).

5. The French Parliament Passes A Bill On The Mass Killings Of Armenians (December 2011 – January 2012)

On December 22, 2011, France’s lower house of Parliament passed a bill outlawing the denial of the 1915 mass killings of Armenians just two months after French President Sarkozy warned his country would consider amending its legislation on the issue. The bill led Turkey to temporarily freeze political and military relations with France and marked one of the lowest points in French-Turkish relations during Sarkozy’s presidency. Although the French Senate approved the law in January 2012, it was eventually ruled unconstitutional and overturned by France’s highest court a month later.

Global Perspective

In general, Europe is implicitly predicated as less free while France is specifically portrayed as censorious and singled out as Turkosceptic alongside Germany (2012E1, 2012E4, 2012E5, 2012E6). Although 2012E6 mentions “EU-candidate country Turkey”, 2012E4 characterises the country as repressive (2012E4 “Turkey’s own parlous record on free speech”) and implicitly locates it outside Europe.

Given the nature of the event, the texts unsurprisingly indicate Europe is alienating Turkey through the topoi of law and history. With the exception of 2012E3, the articles take the stance that it is not the legislator’s role to supplant the historian in defining a nation’s past and that France’s bill constitutes a serious violation of freedom of expression and opinion.¹² 2012E6 suggests Turkey distances itself from Europe as the dispute over the bill “could spread beyond Paris to affect broader EU ties” and 2012E4 warns temptation for Turkey to shift eastward would grow.

Focal Issues

In regard to “status in international society”, 2012E4 presents Europe as a declining actor economically with people fretting “about pay-checks and their abrupt disappearance, a jittery currency and suffocating debt” therefore inclined to look at “the past for salvation”. Conversely, Turkey is depicted as a leading actor, “an increasingly sharp-elbowed NATO ally and regional player” (2012E4), which “takes on an increasingly influential role in the Middle East” (2012E6). Consequently, US media hint at the bill’s inauspicious timing for EU-Turkey relations and more broadly for US interests in the region.

The texts also largely focus on “state-citizen relations” and shame France for legislating on Turkey’s past. France, in some way, contravenes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (2012E2)

¹² None of the articles however deny the mass killings of Armenians.



as the bill constitutes “a monstrous violation of free speech” and “an egregious act of pre-emptive censorship” (2012E1). On that specific human rights issue, France and Turkey are negatively considered equal. 2012E5 states “Asserting the reality of the Armenian genocide is no less risky in Istanbul than is contesting it in Paris”.¹³

“Nationalism” is also discussed in relation to history and calls for Europe distancing itself from Turkey. The texts denounce the uptrend in the regulation of collective memory (2012E5) and constructions of the “founding myths and taboos of national identity”, increasingly being used for political gain (2012E4).

To a lesser extent, 2012E4 also touches upon “civilization”. It locates Turkey in between a “prosperous tranquil West” and a “rougher unstable neighbourhood” and implies Germany and France implacably oppose Turkey’s membership because it is a Muslim candidate country.

6. A Joint Agreement On Refugees Was Reached By The EU And Turkey (March 2016)

On March 18, 2016 the EU signed a deal on refugees with Turkey in an attempt to prevent the deepening of the most serious migration crisis in Europe since World War II. Under this agreement, Turkey committed to accept the return of all irregular migrants that transited through the country in exchange for re-energised accession negotiations, concessions on visa liberalisation for Turkish citizens and billions of euros in assistance for refugees relocated to Turkey.

Regional Perspectives

Egyptian sources refer to Turkey as a country that is “trading” with the refugees’ souls in an attempt to incite the EU to move forward with the accession process. The EU’s critical position toward the refugees deal illustrates the underlying conflict between Turkey and the EU. The Egyptian press indicates former French President Sarkozy is firmly opposed to the agreement, particularly the financial and visa-related concessions, which he considers an “insult” to the EU that has become subject to “Turkish authorities’ manipulations.” Egyptian newspapers underscore the government’s condemnation of the deal whereby Turkey is “using” Syrian refugees as a means to negotiate its accession to the EU, which turned refugees’ camps into “centres of detention” and instigated the UNHCR’s reserves (2016A1; 2017A2). Also, it is mentioned that Turkey’s demand to have access to the Schengen area by July 2016 and to make further progress in the accession negotiations seem an impossible step to achieve in return for limiting the flows of refugees to the EU (2017A1). This argument is further highlighted by the following quotes reported by al-Shuruq newspaper: “Erdoğan threatens the EU: I will teach you vandalism and if you continue to act that way no European citizen will feel safe anywhere”; “Turkey will abrogate the deal in case the EU doesn’t fulfil its promises of granting free access to Turkish citizens to the Schengen area” (2017A1).

¹³ 2012E5 « The position of the French Parliament is hardly more commendable than that of the Turkish authorities, for whom references to the Armenian genocide are seen as an insult to « Turkishness »



In the Georgian press, Turkey is predicated as an unwelcoming country for refugees, which looks like a prison for migrants. Articles note that Turkey is not a safe place for migrants to live in (2016G2) while Turkey leads the situation because Europe needs the former’s assistance (2016G3). Turkey is however still perceived as inferior to Europe as it received a warning from Merkel to protect all refugees-related standards (2016G6).

Georgian texts contend that Turkey is now useful for and getting closer to the EU. Turkey will help Europe to handle the refugee crisis, while the EU will grant some benefits to Turkey. The texts also show that the EU is not going to change its views about ongoing prosecutions related to the media and political opposition in Turkey.

Global Perspectives

The US texts seem to indicate the gap between Europe and Turkey has widened. On one hand, Europe is again predicated as increasingly inward-looking and xenophobic with the rise of right-wing parties across Europe boosted by populations increasingly wary of migrants (2016E2, 2016E3, 2016E6). On the other hand, Turkey is presented as increasingly repressive, de-democratising and de-Europeanising (2016E3, 2016E4) with articles denouncing the government’s crack-down on the opposition (2016E7), journalists (2016E1, 2016E6), and the war against Kurdish separatists (2016E3).

US media mainly discuss the deal through the topoi of law and universal values and present it as “sadly necessary”, “the best of some bad options” (2016E2) or a “show of support” to the Turkish regime (2016E3). The underlying argument is that the deal will not lead to convergence. 2016E5 contends Turkey did not obtain all the concessions initially discussed with the EU and quotes the British Prime Minister stating Turkey’s membership was “not remotely on the cards”. 2016E7 highlights the tensions between Turkey and the EU during the negotiations of the agreement caused by the Turkish Prime Minister’s discontent at the “EU leaders for allowing pro-Kurdish demonstrations” and the “European Council President defending the right to protest as a core European value”. The article further quotes a former EU ambassador to Turkey claiming, “The Erdoğan government does not truly want E.U. membership”.

In the Russian sources Turkey is mostly predicated as being outside Europe. 2016R1 states that Turkey does not belong to Europe spatially, in addition to raising questions about human rights and state violence. The EU is said to be begging the “intransigent” Turkey (2016R4). The EU is described as “amorphous”, “incapable”, a “club of values” and not geopolitics (2016R4). The agreement “untied the hands of Erdoğan” leading the EU to fall into a “dangerous dependency on Turkey” (2016R6).

When presenting EU-Turkey relations, the Russian articles either emphasise the difference between the EU and Turkey (2016R1, 2016R2) or focus on the diplomatic games/relations between the two and tensions over Kurdish demonstrations that occurred during the negotiations (2016R3, 2016R5). This difference is asserted to be ideological or value-based (2016R1, 2016R2, 2016R4). At the same time the cooperation between the EU and Turkey is presented as being beneficial to Turkey while the EU is described as disengaging itself from the crisis in Syria (2016R3), being forced to make a deal with Turkey (2016R1), and being blackmailed by Turkey (2016R4)..



Focal Issues

Representations of Turkey and Europe primarily revolve around their “status in international society”. While Georgian media view Turkey as a necessary country for the EU, it is nevertheless considered a declining actor, which follows Europe in order to improve its position regarding EU membership (2016G6). Conversely, Russian media largely depict Turkey as a rising actor and Europe as a declining one. The deal is a bargaining chip for Turkey because it deal gives the country the potential to acquire a visa-free regime (2016R3) and the ability to control the EU’s external borders (2016R5). The US press tends to focus on the EU which is presented as a declining actor that, through the agreement, is downgrading its own moral, legal and humanitarian standards (2016E3, 2016E4, 2016E7).¹⁴ The migration crisis has “plunged Europe into one of its biggest existential crises” and demonstrated the member states’ inability to “tackle the challenge and maintain unity” (2016E1). The highly pessimistic article 2016E6 further suggests the threat to the EU’s survival posed by the migration crisis may even be growing despite the deal and a failure of the latter could make the bloc implode.

Egyptian, Georgian and American sources, all discuss “state-citizen relations”. Turkey is depicted as inferior to Europe in terms of political and human rights. Georgian texts stress migrants’ rights are not protected. For Egyptian media, the AKP leadership tightens the security grip of the state on citizens with the initiation of further authoritarian measures limiting public freedoms and liberties (2017A3). The American press explicitly portrays President Erdoğan as someone “who has turned his back on democracy and the fundamental values of the European Union” and “reignited a war against Kurdish separatists” (2016E3). Most importantly, articles present Europe as bailing out of its responsibilities toward both refugees and Turkish citizens. They put into perspective the irony of declaring Turkey a “safe country” for migrants when “each year at least one of every five Turkish citizens who apply for asylum is granted it in some European countries”(2016E1) and suggest the deal could also endanger Turkish citizens by likely providing “a big boost at home to Turkey’s authoritarian president, now in the midst of a crackdown on domestic dissent” (2016E7).

Egyptian and Russian sources also cover the issues of “civilization” and “nationalism”. For the Egyptian press, Turkey’s inability to become an EU member is undermining its civilizing character and increasing the nationalist tone used by the AKP leadership (2017A2). Russian articles present the Kurdish insurgency as threatening Turkish sovereignty. Furthermore, 2016R2 constructs the otherness of Turkey on the basis of civilizational arguments. Comparing the Cyprus issue to the Russian annexation of Crimea, the article presents Europe as progressive while Turkey is viewed as an occupant.

7. 15 July Coup-Attempt In Turkey (July 2016)

On 15 July 2016, a faction within the Turkish Army attempted to dislodge President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and overthrow his government. In response to the coup attempt – aborted the following day – the Turkish leadership proceeded with mass arrests of military personnel. It has, since then,

¹⁴ 2016E4 « In its rush to get rid of people it does not want, Europe is acting with cynical disregard for the welfare of human beings who have already suffered much – in violation of its own laws.



widened the purges to include civil servants, journalists, political opponents, and other segments of the Turkish society.

Global Perspective

Under this driver, representations of Europe have become increasingly pejorative. The EU is described as a back-stabber (2016R9) and nothing more than “a follower of the US” (2016R10). Russian conservative newspapers more straightforwardly predicate Europe as a coup-sympathiser or even allege that some EU member states are coup-plotters (2016R10). In contrast, articles present Turkey as a friend of Russia (2016R6, 2016R10) and underline that the Turkish executive is a “legitimate government” (2016R8). In parallel, sources put into perspective a formerly powerful Turkey – at “the same level” of Europe or in a “position of strength” – with its increasingly weakening position following the post-Failed Coup purge of the Army and Special Security Services (2016R7).

The sources are unanimous in their argumentation that the EU and Turkey are drifting apart while Russia and Turkey are coming close together. For them, Turkey’s estrangement from Europe is beneficial to Russia and, to varying degrees, Turkey. Some articles more or less explicitly argue Turkey’s shift toward the East precipitated the coup attempt. They contend the rift between the West and Turkey is growing due to the latter’s reorientation Eastward (2016R8). According to communist *Pravda*, the coup was probably prepared by the United States with the possible assistance of Germany, and motivated by the closer relations of Russia and Turkey (2016R10).

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Focal Issues

The failed-Coup attempt is almost exclusively discussed in relation to the international status of, not only Turkey and Europe, but also Russia. The dynamics of EU-Turkey relations are therefore viewed from the perspective of their influence on Russian position internationally. For instance, Turkey has to navigate the shifting dynamics of bigger powers, of which Russia is one (2016R8). 2016R7 sees Turkey as an international actor in trouble because it “spoiled its relations with practically all world and regional players” and lost influence in Syria and Iraq. Consequently, Russia emerged as the winner of this diplomatic game, while the coup attempt gave Moscow an opportunity to improve its relations with Turkey (2016R7). In both 2016R9 and 2016R10, Turkey is said to be looking for friendship with Russia due to attempts to influence its internal affairs, as it was “stabbed in the back” by NATO allies (2016R9, 2016R10). The Russo-Turkish alliance is seen as a necessity to help break Western “encirclement”, a zero-sum game whereby the mutually beneficial Russian-Turkish friendship is against the interests of Europe and the US (2016R9). Conversely, 2016R6 considers Turkey a rising international actor that is able to pressure the tandem of the EU and the US, while the Russia-Turkey relationship is based on “shared resentment of the West.

Only one liberal source covers the “state-citizen relations” focal issue and criticises repression in Turkey. According to 2016R6, the new laws that clamped down on freedom in Turkey after the coup, comparing this to the situation in Russia. It draws parallels between Turkey and Russia, such as the use of “propagandistic dirt,” inflation, investor flight, laws that allow putting opposition in prison, and imperialistic ambitions.



Conclusion

The analysis of the seven drivers rather sheds a negative light on EU-Turkey relations. Stressing divergences rather than closer association between Turkey and Europe, foreign media have generally presented Turkey’s EU bid as a long and uncertain process. Overall, there are significant continuities in the way the press in each country constructed Turkey and Europe’s identities. In the discursive and argumentation strategies, Egyptian and American media tend to be more critical of Europe as regards slowing down the accession process and usually portray Turkey as Europeanising and/or democratising. The latter’s identity is therefore not fixed but instead changes as a result of the accession process (i.e. “a reconsideration of the nationalist/authoritarian tenets of the Republic”). Spotlighting what they perceive as Turkey’s essentialist/inherent characteristics antithetical to Europe’s (i.e. “temperamental people” versus “cold-minded people”; “young aggressive male energy” versus “aging and gender-equal society”), Georgian and Russian newspapers’ representations of Europe and Turkey are conversely more static and, from the outset, almost discard the possibility of converging identities.

These variations in representations can be attributed not only to the extent the different media identify with Turkey and/or Europe but also the way they rely on the Self/Other dichotomy to position Turkey and Europe vis-à-vis each other. Egyptian media, for instance, empathise with Turkey on cultural and religious grounds and therefore implicitly position themselves as Europe’s Other. Although the US press clearly relates to Europe as its own Self and often refers to the EU and the US interchangeably with the ‘West’, Turkey has until recently stood as a positive Other. Neither quite associating with Europe nor Turkey, Georgian and Russian newspapers – the latter positioning Europe as its Other – clearly depict Turkey as Europe’s negative Other.

The way each of these media represents Turkey and Europe is also related to the socio-political context and can be affected by the relations those media’s countries of origin have established with Europe and Turkey as well as their stance on Turkey’s EU bid. A visible instance is the US media coverage of the drivers, which has both reflected the US official position as a fervent supporter of Turkey’s EU bid and been extremely sensitive to geopolitical changes and their impact on US-Turkish relations. Geopolitical considerations have also been a major determinant of the way Russian media construct Turkey’s identity, particularly after the Arab Spring. As for the Egyptian press, the pessimistic tone with regard to the possibility of Turkey’s accession to the EU throughout the five drivers can be explained by a general Egyptian scepticism towards the European intentions vis-à-vis a Muslim country like Turkey. Egypt aligned with Turkey on religious and cultural basis while perceiving Europe as a previous colonising power that does not want to accept a Muslim country as a member in the EU. Egyptian newspapers have generally referred to Turkey’s accession process as a positive development for Turkey but were sceptical towards the possibility of its crystallisation.

Out of the four focal issues, three stood out as key identity markers over the period under consideration. “Civilization” figures prominently up until 2010 in the coverage of the first four drivers. Religious and cultural differences are the most recurrent reasons advanced to explain why Turkey has remained at Europe’s doorstep. Egyptian and US newspapers more or less explicitly blame Europe’s rising Islamophobia while sometimes representing Turkey’s EU membership as mutually beneficial (i.e. drivers 1 and 2). This is particularly true for US media that have presented Turkey’s



hybridity as an asset to the so-called ‘West’ where the country came to epitomise the compatibility of Islam and democracy. In the post 9/11 context (second and third drivers), EU-Turkey interactions represent a microcosm of the broader ‘Christian-West’-‘Muslim East’ relationship in the US press. Opinion articles in the Egyptian press emphasise the opening of negotiations with Turkey encourages the latter’s achievements on the political, economic and social levels (driver 1 and 2) and enriches Europe’s cultural background (driver 1, 2 and 4). Meanwhile, civilization, as a focal issue, has underscored the presence of obstacles that stand between Turkey and Europe throughout most drivers. For Georgian and Russian media, Turkey and Europe belong to different civilizations chiefly because of the religious divide. In contrast to Egyptian and US newspapers, they seem to condone and even support the idea that Turkey should remain outside Europe as Turkey’s EU membership would otherwise spoil Europe’s identity and values. Perhaps one notable exception that differs from the usual conflicting representations in Georgian and Russian media is the coverage of the cultural driver (Pamuk’s Nobel Prize) where Turkey is recognised as partly European. Furthermore, it is the only driver whereby Georgian newspapers do not use religion as a strategy to oppose Europe and Turkey.

Particularly salient in Russian and US media, “status in international society” has replaced “civilization” as the main focal issue from 2011 onwards and created more dynamic representations of Europe and Turkey. Based on Magued’s interpretation, the Egyptian newspapers have deemphasised the positive aspect of Turkey’s accession to the EU from 2002 onwards due to the anti-Mubarak Islamists’ cheers with the AKP’s arrival to power and the fact that Turkey has overshadowed Egypt’s regional, in spite of a general sympathy towards Turkey as a Muslim country. In the first half of the period, media usually portray Turkey as lagging behind an economically prosperous and sometimes idealised – Georgian sources – Europe but militarily strong or even superior to the European member states. In the US media, for instance, the rationale underpinning positive representations of Turkey is based on the premise that Turkey’s anchor to the EU is crucial to the protection of US strategic interests. In the first three drivers, US sources combine “status in international society” with “civilization” to present Turkey not only as a vital NATO ally but also a culturally hybrid one therefore equipped to counter potential threats emanating from hostile Middle Eastern countries or to appease tensions within Europe. In contrast, Turkey’s military capacity/superiority in relation to the accession process is either regarded as an obstacle (Cyprus problem) or a potential identity spoiler (militarisation of European politics) in Georgian and Russian media. From the late 2000s, the Turkish leadership’s zero-problems-with-neighbours policy appears to trigger a break in the representations of Turkey. Georgian sources, which had previously questioned whether Turkey and Europe needed each other (second driver), label Turkey a “super-state” and associate the country’s foreign policy shift eastward with its rising influence in international society. In the post-Arab Spring context, media describe Turkey and Europe’s respective identities as growing increasingly antithetical (see also state-citizen relations below). With Russia’s growing involvement in the Middle East region, Turkey has also become more important strategically (drivers 6 and 7). Accordingly, Russian texts depict Turkey in a more positive light, praising the recalibration of its foreign policy. Conversely, Turkey’s assertiveness has become an increasing source of concern for the US media (see driver 5) to the point that they make no reference to the country as a NATO ally in the 2016 migration deal driver – as was previously the case with all the



political drivers under scrutiny. In parallel, the media progressively describe Europe as a declining actor both normatively and materially.

While the Russian press has, by and large, eluded the issue of “state-citizen relations”¹⁵, the latter has been a constant identity marker in the Egyptian, Georgian and American media coverage of the drivers. On one hand, media unanimously present Europe as a democratic referent. Portraying Europe as the guarantor of the liberal democratic values and standards – alongside the United States – US texts go further so as to suggest it is Europe’s responsibility to ensure Turkey’s democratic transition through the accession process. This, in turn, leads to negative representations of Europe that is sometimes held accountable for endangering Turkey’s EU bid. On the other hand, Turkey’s identity is contested. Georgian texts recurrently cover state-citizen relations as a thorn in the side of Turkey. Insisting on the latter’s democratic deficit and the gap that exists with Europe, the sources only once acknowledge Turkey’s reforms (driver 2). Conversely, Egyptian and American media use this focal issue to affirm Europe’s democratising effect and Turkey’s Europeaness. The Egyptian press, for instance, considers that Turkey has succeeded in complying with EU conditionality as a result of substantive reforms to the point that it underwent an identity crisis (driver 2). From 2011 onwards, Turkey however ceases to be portrayed as democratising/Europe-anising with the most prominent break in identity representations occurring under the migration deal driver. Not only do media explicitly contest Turkey’s democratic credentials and Europeaness but the country is also – and for the first time – implicitly portrayed as unfit for EU membership in the US press. Furthermore, Europe is not described as a prosperous democratic community spreading its values but rather as undermining them through its interactions with Turkey.

Looking into a causal relation – if any – between identity representations of Europe and Turkey in foreign media and the future of EU-Turkey relations is beyond the scope of this paper, and in that regard, further research is needed. The analysis of the international and regional press coverage rather serves as a basis to be compared with identity representations in European and Turkish media over the same period (1999-2016) and hints at how significant others are likely to make sense of the evolving EU-Turkey relationship. Georgian and Russian representations of Turkey and Europe in antithetical terms supported the deterioration of EU-Turkey relations toward conflict, even when these were making headway toward membership. It is therefore safe to assume Georgian and Russian media will continue depicting Turkey and Europe’s respective identities as conflictual. Egyptian and American views on the EU-Turkey relationship appeared to be more sensitive to the political context. The Egyptian press produced less conflicting representations than Georgian and Russian media, notably through “state-citizen relations”, even though the articles’ undertone grew increasingly pessimistic about Turkey’s EU membership prospects. The biggest shift in representations occurred with US media that initially appeared to have a more optimistic perspective on civilizational divides being superseded through EU-Turkey relations but later became increasingly sceptical about Turkey’s candidacy as status in international society overrode civilization as a key identity marker. Furthermore, Russian and US representations of Turkey have been diametrically opposed under the “status in international society” focal issue. American representations of Turkey were highly positive when Europe and Turkey were heading toward convergence

¹⁵ The absence of focus on « state-citizen relations » is particularly striking in the Russian media coverage of the 15 July Coup Attempt Driver (see pp..16-17)



whereas Russian media portrayal of Turkey became conversely more favourable when EU-Turkey relations hit rock bottom. At the time Turkey's EU membership seems no more than a distant memory and "status in international society" constitutes the lion's share of the international press content related to EU-Turkey relations, US media may well continue turning Turkey into a negative Other – at least for as long as Russian newspapers hail the country as a strategic asset.

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1999G3 – “ეროვნული უმცირესობათა საკითხი გადასაწყვეტია [Issues of National Minorities should be solved]”, *Sakartvelos Respublika*, 28 December 1999

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2005G7 – "თურქეთს ევროკავშირამდე გრძელი გზა აქვს [Turkey has a long way to go before EU membership]", *Akhali Taoba*, 6 October 2005

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Annex

Critical Discourse Analysis Template:

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| CATALOGUE INFORMATION | | | |
| Text number | | | |
| Bibliographic entry | | | |
| Period | | | |
| Date | | | |
| Driver category | | | |
| Driver specific | | | |
| European or Turkish | | | |
| Author (if any) | | | |
| Newspaper (if applicable) | | | |
| Original Language | | | |
| DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES | | | |
| Nomination | | | |
| How does the text mainly refer to Europe? (Identify at most one dominant representation (1) and at most two other secondary representations (0.5)) | | | |
| <i>as EEC/EC/EU</i> | | | |
| <i>as nation-states of Europe</i> | | | |
| <i>as Europeans (public)</i> | | | |
| <i>interchangeably with West</i> | | | |
| <i>interchangeably with Free World</i> | | | |
| <i>interchangeably with Great Powers</i> | | | |
| <i>Other 1 (pls indicate)</i> | | | |
| How does the text refer to Turkey? (Identify at most one dominant representation (1) and at most two other secondary representations (0.5)) | | | |
| <i>as Ottoman Court (Sublime Porte, Sultan, etc.)</i> | | | |
| <i>as Anatolia</i> | | | |
| <i>as the Turk</i> | | | |
| <i>as Republic of Turkey</i> | | | |
| <i>interchangeably with Muslim world</i> | | | |
| <i>interchangeably with Asia/ Orient/ Middle East</i> | | | |
| <i>Other 1 (pls indicate)</i> | | | |
| Does the text constitute Europe as homogenous (0) or heterogenous (1)? If heterogenous, what is the main axis of differentiation? | | | |
| Does the text constitute Turkey as homogenous (0) or heterogenous (1)? If heterogenous, what is the main axis of differentiation? | | | |
| Predication | | | |
| How does the text predicate Europe? (identify at most three dominant predicates(1)) | | | |
| Predicate | Explicit/Implicit | Inherent/ Acquired¹⁶ | Positive/Negative |
| civilized | | | |

¹⁶ Inherent: The attribute is considered an inherent characteristic, which cannot change.; Acquired: The attribute is considered an acquired characteristic, transient, and possible to change.



| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| modern | | | |
| economically prosperous | | | |
| technologically advanced | | | |
| free, liberal | | | |
| secular | | | |
| capitalist | | | |
| powerful | | | |
| democratic | | | |
| egalitarian | | | |
| moral | | | |
| imperialist | | | |
| degenerate | | | |
| Christian | | | |
| nationalist | | | |
| parochial | | | |
| xenophobic | | | |
| racist | | | |
| Other | | | |
| How does the text predicate Turkey? (identify at most three dominant predicates) | | | |
| Predicate | Explicit/Implicit | Inherent/ Acquired | Positive/Negative |
| barbaric | | | |
| traditional | | | |
| backward | | | |
| poor | | | |
| agrarian | | | |
| traditional | | | |
| Muslim | | | |
| Repressive/authoritarian | | | |
| aggressive | | | |
| authentic | | | |
| Oriental | | | |
| secular | | | |
| modern | | | |
| democratic | | | |
| democratizing | | | |
| European | | | |
| Europeanizing | | | |
| White | | | |
| Other | | | |
| Structure of Self/Other Differentiation (indicate all that apply) | | | |
| Spatial axis | | | |
| <i>Turkey is inside Europe; Turkey is partly inside of Europe; or Turkey is outside of Europe</i> | | | |
| Hierarchy | | | |
| <i>Turkey is inferior to Europe; Turkey is equal to Europe; or Turkey is superior to Europe</i> | | | |
| Temporal axis | | | |
| <i>Turkey is ahead of Europe; Turkey is behind Europe; or Turkey is moving away from Europe</i> | | | |
| Argumentation: | | | |
| Does the text make an argument? If so, how (indicate all that apply): | | | |



| Argument/ Topoi | Culture | Geography | Power /status | universal values | Threat from Turkey or Europe | Nationalism | Progress | Other | |
|---|---------|--|-------------------------|------------------|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Greater association of Europe with Turkey | | | | | | | | | |
| Europe's distancing itself from Turkey | | | | | | | | | |
| Greater association of Turkey with Europe | | | | | | | | | |
| Turkey's distancing itself from Europe | | | | | | | | | |
| FOCAL ISSUE ANALYSIS: | | | | | | | | | |
| Civilization | | | | | | | | | |
| Single civilization or Multiple civilizations | | | | | | | | | |
| If single: | | If multiple: | | | If hierarchy: | | Stable | Rising | Declining |
| Possibility of civilizational excess | | Mutually exclusive civilizations | | | West above the Rest or Rest above the West | | | | |
| Possibility of civilizational decline | | Overlapping, hybrid civilizations | | | | | | | |
| Turkey is civilized | | Coexisting civilizations | | | | | | | |
| Turkey is barbarian | | Clashing civilizations | | | | | | | |
| Universal | | Turkey and Europe in same civilization | | | | | | | |
| Particular to Europe | | Turkey and Europe in different civilizations | | | | | | | |
| | | Civilizational equality | | | | | | | |
| | | Civilizational hierarchy | | | | | | | |
| Status in International Society | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Self-perception | Other-perception | Globally | Regionally | Materially | Normatively | | |
| Europe as leading actor | | | | | | | | | |
| Europe as lagging/declining actor | | | | | | | | | |
| Nation-state as leading actor | | | | | | | | | |
| Nation-state as lagging/declining actor | | | | | | | | | |
| Turkey as leading actor | | | | | | | | | |
| Turkey as lagging/declining actor | | | | | | | | | |
| Nationalism | | | | | | | | | |
| | | German | French | British | Turkish | minority nationalism | | | |
| Does the text make reference to nationalism? | | | | | | | | | |
| Nationalism/ associated with | | | | | | | | | |
| race | | | | | | | | | |
| culture | | | | | | | | | |
| history | | | | | | | | | |



| | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| religion | | | | | | | |
| ethnicity/kinship | | | | | | | |
| self-determination | | | | | | | |
| national survival/ territorial integrity | | | | | | | |
| imperialism | | | | | | | |
| world order/ peace | | | | | | | |
| conflict/ war | | | | | | | |
| Nationalism calls for | | | | | | | |
| closer relations with Turkey | | | | | | | |
| distancing from Turkey | | | | | | | |
| closer relations with Europe | | | | | | | |
| distancing from Europe | | | | | | | |
| State-citizen relations | | | | | | | |
| Issue/ assessment | Europe inferior | | | Turkey inferior | | Europe equal to Turkey | |
| Political Rights | | | | | | | |
| Economic Rights | | | | | | | |
| Cultural Rights | | | | | | | |
| Equality | | | | | | | |
| Inclusion (migrants-hospitality) | | | | | | | |
| citizen activism | | | | | | | |
| ethnic minorities | | | | | | | |
| religious minorities | | | | | | | |
| women | | | | | | | |
| Turkish issue/European responsibility | colonialism | military intervention | sanctions | withholding incentives | provision of incentives | shaming/ criticism | no responsibility |
| non-Muslim minorities | | | | | | | |
| Kurds | | | | | | | |
| women | | | | | | | |
| assimilation | | | | | | | |
| repression | | | | | | | |
| discrimination | | | | | | | |
| violence/ genocide | | | | | | | |



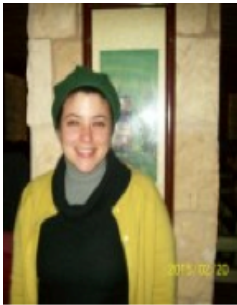
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ABOUT FEUTURE

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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