

Ş E N E R A K T Ü R K

*Incompatible Visions
of Supra-Nationalism:
National Identity in Turkey
and the European Union* *

DEBATES over European identity in relation to Turkey's possible accession to the EU receive substantial coverage in the popular media and in the scholarly community (1). However, little attention has so far been paid to Turkey's national identity, as it is officially institutionalized at all levels of the state apparatus, in relation to its compatibility with the vision of a collective European identity. In Turkey, the proportion of those who think EU membership would be a "good thing" has fallen to well below half the population, indicating the urgency of discussing perceptions of Europe from Turkey's point of view (2). The issue of European-Turkish compatibility in terms of identity politics is almost always discussed from the European point of view (3). Whether the narrative of Turkish national identity is amenable to being incorporated into a European supra-nationalism is not discussed. Has there been an identity dimension to Turkey's pursuit of EU membership from the

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(1) COHEN 2004; DAHLMAN 2004; YAVUZ and KHAN 2004; WALLERSTEIN 2004; TEITELBAUM and MARTIN, 2003.

(2) Eurobarometer 65, Spring 2006 (published in July 2006), National Report (Executive Summary): Turkey. Available from [<http://ec.europa.eu/public-opinion/archives/eb/eb65/eb65-tr-exec.pdf>].

(3) Valéry Giscard D'Estaing, "Turkey is not a European country". Available from [<http://aegeantimes.net/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=854>].

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Turkish point of view? Are the historical experiences of Turkey in the 20th century parallel to those of most of the EU member states? If not, how do they differ? This essay looks at the question of Turkish-EU relations with a specific focus on identity narratives from the Turkish point of view. It outlines Turkey's official national narrative in supra-national contexts and compares it with the supra-national framework of EU member states' national narratives.

I draw on previous works dealing with the major changes in Turkish historiography since the 1920s (4), but my aim is a different one: to clarify the place of Europe in these changing narratives. The approach is a constructivist one and I emphasize not only the key institutions where ideas about the boundaries of political community are propagated, national and supra-national alike, but also historical experiences and their interpretation in elite discourses, the political-cultural institutionalization of these interpretations, and the role of intellectual and political leadership. The roles of the political and intellectual elites are integral to the creation of a homogenous national experience. The emphasis in the analysis that follows is on the officially sanctioned and disseminated version of Turkish identity. Major changes in identity orientation and the content of official educational and cultural policies in Turkey are the main data, since these changes are both constitutive and partly representative of public opinion (5). Official historiography, due to its mandatory nature and ubiquity, is the best source of evidence for examining identity-based claims.

The Turkish educational system has been unified under the tight control of the Ministry of Education since 1924, when a law on the "Unification of Education" (*Tevhid-i Tedrisat*) standardized primary and secondary education, abolishing the extensive independence that religious (Islamic *medreses*) and foreign (American and European missionary) schools enjoyed under Ottoman rule. Music, cinema, theater, fine arts, and all of the major cultural and artistic endeavors were reorganized by the state in accordance with the goal of creating a modern Turkish nation. As higher education spread, separate laws in 1971 and following the 1980 military coup brought higher education under the

(4) A good example of such work can be found in COPEAUX 2006.

(5) Turkey maintained a relatively democratic regime and open channels of communication between the population and the state for most of the 20th century, especially since the inauguration of competitive multi-party elections in 1950. Although the precise reception of the national ideology may vary significantly,

e.g. among ethnic and religious minorities, I contend that its central features and symbols have been thoroughly disseminated as a result of the educational and cultural policies pursued since the 1920s (for theoretical and historical background see GELLNER 1983; ANDERSON 1991; HOBBSAWM 1991; DARDEN 2005; KELLER 2006).

strict control of political authorities as well (6). In short, the official discourse on Turkish identity has been ubiquitous and unavoidable for the average Turkish citizen. How is Turkey situated in relation to other nation-states in the official narrative? Is Turkey part of a European family of nations according to the official historiography of the Turkish state? The answer to this question is an unqualified “no”.

Argument and outline

The argument put forward in this article is that no official or popular discourse that imagines the Turkish nation as part of a European family of nations has existed in Turkey in the 20th century; nor does any such discourse exist today. There are three parts to the explanation of this situation. First, Turkey’s choice not to depict itself as part of a European family is partly a result of the Ottoman imperial past. Second, this choice is also conditioned by the political elites’ decision to sanction many historic empires as the predecessors of the modern day Turkey and as part of the Turkish national heritage. These imperial pasts and their acceptance as part of the Turkish national heritage allowed for the retention of Ottoman notions of supra-nationalism and promoted vigorous Turkey-centric visions of the world. Third, Turkey’s military vitality and its ability to preserve its independence in the face of challenges from the Great Powers (notably during the War of Liberation) contributed to the survival of alternative supra-national visions. Turkism, Islamism, and Ottomanism are among the most prominent supra-nationalist visions that situate Turkey as a member of a larger family of nations. In these Turkey-centric supra-nationalist visions, EU member states are conspicuous by their absence as family members.

The Kemalist formulation of Turkish identity retained its non-European quality by creating a myth of origins in Central Asia, which was construed as being implicitly supportive of “Turkic imperial” imaginations (7). The Kemalist formula preserved many tenets of the Ottoman imperial outlook, especially manifest in its immigration policy and, after the 1950s, in the evolution of Turkey’s educational and cultural policies. In this light the nationalist societal backlash to Turkey’s pursuit of EU membership, which has been brewing in the opinion

(6) The 1980 military coup established the Board of Higher Education, and entrusted this institution with the appointment of the deans

and other key personnel of all the universities in the nation (DİNÇ 1986).

(7) BOZDAĞ 1998.

polls, should not be so surprising. It is not inconceivable that this anti-European backlash in domestic politics could lead to Turkey's withdrawal from EU membership negotiations and even from the Customs Union that Turkey has been a member of since 1996. Withdrawal from EU membership negotiations may lead to a new Turkish foreign policy that is more in tune with Ottoman, Turkic, and Islamic visions of supra-nationalism embedded in the official institutionalization of Turkish national identity.

Turkey's pursuit of EU membership is not driven by considerations of identity, as Turkish historiography has never depicted Turkey or the Turks as being part of a European family of nations. Rather, Turkey is conceived as a member of Turkic, Islamic, and Ottoman supra-national families, where the EU member states are conspicuous by their absence. Unlike post-Communist Eastern European countries, where the sense of "belonging to Europe/being European" and the need to confirm this status was an important motivation behind the campaign for EU membership, in Turkey, since Turkish identity is formulated as non-European, no such positive identity-based considerations exist. In fact, identity-based arguments, to the extent that they come into play, may have a negative influence, since joining the EU might be seen as the loss or sacrifice of Turkey's non-European (or even, anti-European (8)) identity (9). One of the many implications of this thesis is that Turkey is likely to abandon its quest to join the EU if the EU is no longer perceived as benefiting Turkey economically. The same reaction might be expected if some of the major economic and other material benefits of EU membership (such as freedom of movement) are not offered to Turkey, a compromise suggestion commonly advanced by conservative politicians in current EU states. Anti-European opinions in Turkey can be attributed in part to the many rebuffs from the EU that Turkey has suffered since 1987, when Turkey first applied to join. However, the widespread belief in Turkey that the Turks are not Europeans cannot be

(8) In fact, many tropes of official Turkish historiography depict Turks as the opposite of Europeans, therefore, not only non-European, but anti-European. The celebration of Attila the Hun in Turkish history textbooks as a Turkish king is one example. This can be contrasted to depictions of Attila in, for example, Italian or French historiography (e.g. Attila the Hun painting in the Pantheon in Paris). Turks are always depicted as nomadic conquerors, never themselves conquered. A Turkic tribe that adopts a European language or religion (i.e. Christianity) is immediately

labelled as "lost" and not Turkish anymore. Turkish history textbooks often use Hungarians and Bulgarians as two prominent examples of such losses.

(9) This is in fact what we have been observing almost daily in the headlines and columns of newspapers such as *Yenicag* (Kemalist-nationalist) and *Vakit* and *Milli Gazete* (Islamist), and journals such as *Aydinlik* (Socialist-Maoist), among others, for the last few years. See [www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr], [www.vakit.com.tr], [www.milligazete.com.tr], [www.aydinlik.com.tr].

explained by recent diplomatic developments. Russia, for example, is not part of the EU, nor is it likely to join in the foreseeable future; nevertheless a high proportion of Russians think of themselves as Europeans. In Russia, at both elite and popular levels, competing historiographies offer quite different visions as to whether Russia is a European country or not. In Turkey, however, the rivalry is between historiographies which emphasize Turkic, Islamic, or Ottoman supra-national affiliations, or alternatively stress the unique elements of Turkey's identity; there is no Europeanist party in this competition.

The empirical core of this article is a detailed critical review of the official discourse on Turkish national identity in historical perspective. I then compare the evolution of Turkish national identity in the 20th century with the major formative experiences of most EU member states, including Nazi Occupation, Allied liberation, post-war reconstruction and re-education "from above" by the US and the Soviet Union, strong socialist and communist movements, and decolonization. These experiences are notable for their absence in the case of Turkey.

The role of identity in EU integration and expansion

There are lacunae in the theoretical literature about European integration with regards to the role of identity. Despite the variety of contending paradigms concerning the expansion and deepening of EU integration, none of the classical schools of International Relations has attributed a causal role to identity in the making of the EU. Sociological and organizational institutionalists emphasize "cultural" frames as causal variables in EU integration but their understanding of culture is not fundamentally related to the kind of identity questions (ethno-national vs. supra-national, etc.) that concern us here (10). This essay suggests that the content of official historiography provides an empirical link connecting identity-based arguments to processes of European integration. Only a few scholars have sought to link identity narratives to EU expansion in ways relevant to the goals of this essay. For example, in a comparative study of the evolution of nation-state identities in Britain, France, and Germany, Thomas Risse found that the EU represents "French nation-state writ large" for France, while it was perceived as the fulfilment of the post-war liberal democratic German identity for Ger-

(10) FLIGSTEIN and DRITA (1996) use cultural frames; see also GARRETT and WEINGAST 1993.

many. By contrast, in Britain, the national identity was still perceived as distinct from the European identity, and the Commonwealth was an important source of supra-national identity (11). Though the extra-European understanding of British identity did not prevent Britain from acquiring full membership, it has arguably contributed to Britain's continuing unwillingness to subscribe to full EU integration (e.g. accepting the unified currency). In Eastern Europe, Hungarian nationalists have embraced EU integration as a process which they hoped would peacefully remove the frontiers separating a territorially contiguous Hungarian population extending from western Slovakia to central Romania (12). In light of all this variation one may ask, "how do Turkish nationalists relate to EU integration?" The short answer is that Turkey differs from the great majority of EU members, which have created a discursive frame wherein their national identities can be incorporated into a supra-nationalist European identity. To the extent that Turkey preserves an extra-European national identity embedded in alternative supra-nationalist frames it resembles the isolated case of Britain.

My contribution to the constructivist approach to the study of nationalism is to draw attention to the content of nationalist discourse, with particular reference to the invocation of imperial history. While constructivists emphasize the central role of elites and the state in creating a nationalist discourse, they pay little attention to classifying the different types of nationalist narratives that emerge. For example, it is noticeable that the narrative of Turkish nationalism relies on military turning points. One of the tropes of Turkish nationalism has always been "independent statehood" and military invincibility. A nation that did not maintain an independent state continuously throughout history cannot be considered a great nation, according to Turkish historiography. In this context, it is emphasized that Turks have always been independent and established independent states and empires. Given this discursive feature of Turkish historiography, it is difficult to see how Turkish national narrative can be reconciled with a supra-national European one without the memory of a major, constitutive war fought together. In the Turkish case, the relationship between self and other also depends on military turning points, as can be seen in the exclusion of Christian communities from Turkish identity construction, on the basis of their rebellion against the Ottoman Empire and collaboration with foreign invaders during the War of Liberation (13). Official histo-

(11) RISSE 2001.

(12) CSERGO and GOLDGEIER 2004.

(13) For the systematic exclusion of non-

Muslims from Turkish identity construction and public service, see OKUTAN 2004; ORAN 2004; AKAR 1992. In his discursive analysis of

riography later extended this principle to exclude the Arabs and the Kurds on the basis of their rebellions against the Ottoman and the Turkish state, respectively.

While the literature on nationalism has long characterized social communication as an objective factor determining the nature of a particular nationalism, I suggest that the content of the national narrative transmitted through the national language is as important. Though millions of people of Caucasian and Balkan origin had to speak Turkish as their primary or at least public language, this alone does not necessarily indicate ethnic exclusion, as my account of Turkish nationalism will demonstrate. The message of modern Turkish nationalism, transmitted in the Latin alphabet, represents a remarkable continuity with the supra-nationalism of the Ottoman imperial tradition. Though the message is in Turkish, it embraces a multi-ethnic imperial past as the national history. Hence, although non-Turkish speaking Muslims such as the Bosnians and the Albanians are linguistically excluded, they are discursively included in the Turkish national narrative, precisely because of its (Ottoman) imperial and supra-ethnic content.

The imperial content of national historiography and supra-nationalism

The most common definition of an empire is the exercise of control, indirect or manifest, by one nation over others, in the areas of both foreign and domestic policy and the economy (14). Present-day Turkey and its inhabitants were perceived by foreigners as the core population of the Ottoman Empire and they have been depicted as such in the official Turkish historiography; hence the Turkey-centrism of the various supra-nationalist visions that prevail in the country today. Turkey's size, population, military strength, and history of independent statehood, lend Turkey-centric visions at least a narrative plausibility. If post-Ottoman Turkey had been reduced to the size of post-Habsburg Austria, or if it had been repeatedly overrun, occupied, and administered by foreign armies, then Turkey-centric supra-national visions would not have maintained their credibility.

Compared to the far-flung possessions of other European powers, in the case of contiguous polities such as the Habsburg, Ottoman, and

Turkish history textbooks, Copeaux (2006) identifies Arabs, Armenians, and Greeks as the "others" of the Turkish self. (14) DOYLE 1986.

Russian Empires the rupture between empire and nation-state is more immediate; the new boundaries separating nation states often separated families and were bound to seem artificial and arbitrary for people who were accustomed for centuries to traverse those boundaries. Contiguity makes imperial collapse much more dramatic and personal than is the case of an overseas empire, where the connections between people were typically mediated through the capital city. Thus England, India, and Sudan were all connected through London, but Scottish peasants were not trading with Punjabi merchants nor intermarrying with Sudanese in the way that Turkish, Bosnian, Arab, Albanian, Greek, and Armenian communities were related to each other under the Ottomans. While overseas empires forge limited links between certain highly mobile elements of society (expatriate bureaucrats and business people, indentured servants and slaves, etc.), contiguous empires establish a framework of experience and memory via daily contact at the local level between different ethno-linguistic and confessional communities. This history has enabled Turkey to establish its post-imperial national identity within a broader “family of nations”. People do not necessarily value the imperial identity (“Ottomanness”) more than the national identity (“Turkishness”) but the former empire provides experiences, memories, and nostalgia within which to situate the modern nation.

By supra-nationalism I mean the political imaginary that exists above the nation while including the nation as its member. Samuel Huntington has provided one example by defining a civilization as a fraternal community above the nation-state but below humanity. However, the eight civilizations that he identifies on the basis of religion represent only one way of imagining supra-national families (15). Whereas for Huntington Turkey is simply a member of the Islamic supra-national family, in fact the country also has a multi-confessional Ottoman and an ethno-secular Turkic political imaginary. Rather than insist on the prior claims of just one supra-nationalist vision based on some structural or essential attributes, scholars need to attend to historical experience, its interpretation by the new regime, and the dissemination of that new interpretation through educational and cultural policies. I turn now to a historical survey to show the continuity between Turkey’s imperial past and the supra-national imaginations it fostered in the 20th century, none of which include EU member states in the same family of nations as Turkey. I focus on the defining historical experiences of Turkey in the 20th century, their perception and conceptualization by the elites responsible for the construction of Turkish nationhood, and the subsequent insti-

(15) HUNTINGTON 1993.

tutionalization of standardized interpretations of these experiences. At every stage I shall describe the emotive frame around the idea of Turkish nationhood that emerged in the course of these developments.

Origins: pan-Turkism

It is still not widely recognized that, alongside the familiar story of the decline of the Ottoman Empire vis-à-vis European powers, it was the drive for Westernization and modernization in the Russian Empire that provided a key context for the making of Turkish national identity. The modernization of Russia transformed the socio-psychological and political cultural topography of many Turkic speaking, Muslim ethnic groups, in particular the Crimean and the Volga Tatars. A progressive, reformist Turkic-Muslim elite became acquainted with ideas of nationalism in newly established centers of higher education such as Kazan University (where Lenin also studied). The *Jadidists* (*Jadid* means “new” in Arabic) remained a minority vis-à-vis *Qadimis*, the Islamic traditionalists in Russia, but the ability of the former to utilize the language of modernity allowed them to emerge victorious in the contest for discursive hegemony among the Turkic Muslim elites (Khalid 1998).

For our purposes in this article it is important to note that *Jadidism* had a decisive influence on the future development of Turkish national identity (16). Though emphasizing language as the ultimate marker of nationality, *Jadidism* implied a profoundly supra-national or inter-ethnic notion of nationhood that was a secular derivative of a broad section of the Islamic *ummah*. Most Muslim peoples of the Russian Empire, excluding Tajiks and a few other groups, were Turkic speakers. The Jadids fought a vigorous campaign to cleanse religion of all latter day obfuscations and customs of Arab origin. In effect they aimed to elevate the vernacular (Turkic-Russian) Islam by replacing the (Arabic) cosmopolitanism of the *ummah* with a linguistic-cultural definition of community. Islam, as the foundation of “culture”, was a necessary but not a sufficient condition of Turkishness (17). *Jadidism* put forward a non-ethnic, non-racial definition of Turkic nationhood that encompassed dozens of Muslim groups across central Eurasia. This political

(16) COPEAUX 2006, especially pages 42-72.

(17) Ismail Gaspirinski, a Crimean Tatar, was the most influential figure in the spreading of *Jadidism* from Istanbul to Kazan, and then

on to Samarkand beyond. He did so primarily through his truly international newspaper *Terjuman* (“interpreter/translator”), which was based in the Crimea.

imaginary challenged the multi-ethnic nature of the Russian empire by constructing a new common identity that stretched from Eastern Europe to China.

Many Tatar intellectuals emigrated to the Ottoman Empire, especially following the Russian victories in the war of 1877-1878. The impact of Tatar, Azeri, and other Turkic Muslim émigrés from Russia was of paramount importance in constructing a linguistically and culturally defined, secular, modern Turkish nation. By 1905 the Azeri intellectual Ali Hüseyinzade had formulated his tripartite program to “Turkify, Islamicize, Europeanize” (18). This extremely influential agenda was in turn adopted by Ziya Gökalp, the chief intellectual behind Turkish nationalism in the late Ottoman period. It combines a linguistic and cultural attachment to Turkish with a nominal affiliation to Islam and a drive to modernize the technological, scientific, and economic infrastructure of the society. Yusuf Akçura, a Kazan Tatar émigré who became the leading nationalist intellectual in early Republican Turkey, advocated pan-Turkism in his influential short essay, “Three Kinds of Politics”. In this work Akçura dismisses Ottomanism as no longer viable in the face of strong nationalist secessionist movements among Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire. He is nominally sympathetic to pan-Islamism, but considers this option to be unrealistic in the circumstances of the early 20th century. Akçura therefore opts for pan-Turkism, the union of all Turkic peoples of Eurasia, not only those residing in the Ottoman and the Russian Empires but also those of Iran and China. However, Akçura’s definition is not ethno-racial, since he is prepared to make room for all Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire in Eastern Europe, Anatolia and the Caucasus, in his Turkist vision. Thus his political imaginary explicitly includes Albanians and Bosnians, Bulgarian, Greek and Macedonian Muslims, as well as Abkhaz, Chechens, Dagestanis, and many other Muslim groups.

Kemal Karpat has noted that none of the leading ideologues of Turkish nationalism were “ethnically” Turkish (19). Indeed it is not clear what it would mean to be ethnically Turkish in this era, since Turkish nationhood from the beginning had imperial dimensions (20). The significance of these origins is clear: Turkish nationhood was conceived as a coterie of peoples encompassing all the Muslim subjects

(18) SUNY 1993, p. 41.

(19) KARPAT 2001.

(20) The first treatise on “Turks” was written in 1869 (published in Paris a year later as *Les Turcs Anciens et Modernes*) by Constantine Borzecki, a Polish nobleman who had

sought political refuge in the Ottoman Empire and converted to Islam, taking the name “Mustafa Celaleddin Pasha” (YALÇIN 2006, p. 288). Akçura and Hüseyinzade (mentioned above) were Tatar and Azeri, respectively.

of several vast empires. Thus the “Turkish World extends from the Adriatic (Bosnia) to the Great Wall of China (Kazakhs, Krygyz, Uighurs)”, and this principle remains enormously influential in the discourses of Turkish domestic and foreign policy (21). However, one cannot extrapolate the entire course of Turkish nationalism from an intellectual construct of the early 20th century. The institutionalization and standardization of this view of Turkish nationhood can only be understood in the context of later political developments, in the course of which it went through crucial transformations.

The Kemalist era

The pan-Turkism outlined above was a marginal but growing discourse in intellectual centers, especially in Salonika and Istanbul, in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire. At this time the official discourse wavered between Ottomanism and Islamism. Ottomanism was the idea that all subjects of the empire, Christians as well as Muslims, had a common identity derived from six centuries of living under Ottoman rule. The shift from Ottomanism to Islamism which occurred during the reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909) was a reaction to the growth of nationalist movements among the non-Muslims of the Empire. At the Congress of Berlin the independence of Romania and Bulgaria, following the earlier losses of Greece and Serbia, deprived the Sultan of many of his Christian subjects, while also creating nationalist frames of reference for their co-nationals still under Ottoman rule.

After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) led the War of Liberation to a successful conclusion against the Western powers and Greece. After deposing the Sultan and founding the Turkish Republic in 1923, Atatürk and his cadres embarked on a comprehensive reformulation of Turkish identity, using all the mechanisms of the new state to disseminate and institutionalize this novel formulation among the population. The early Republican cadres were heavily dependent on Muslims from the Balkans, since the middle classes and intelligentsia were poorly developed in Anatolia. Highly educated émigrés from Russia were also conspicuous in this period: in addition to the above-mentioned Yusuf Akçura, Sadri Maksudi Arsal,

(21) It became a cliché in the mouths of Turkish politicians in the 1990s. Cf. FULLER 1993; FULLER and LESSER 1993; and COPEAUX 2006.

Zeki Velidov and Ahmet Agaev were the most important figures (22). The Kemalist government institutionalized new foundational myths about Turkish nationhood by creating the *Turkish Historical Association* and the *Turkish Language Institute* to explore the roots of the Turkish nation and to purify and modernize its language respectively. Central to the Kemalist program was the repudiation of the Ottoman past. In the official rhetoric, the Ottomans were associated with religious obscurantism, a decadent cosmopolitanism that had corrupted the Turkish “essence” with Arab and Persian elements, scientific and economic backwardness, military defeat, and collaboration with foreign invaders, as exemplified by the behavior of the last Sultan during the War of Liberation. To find the unadulterated Turkish “essence” that they needed the Kemalists turned to pre-Islamic Central Asian and Anatolian history. Official historiography drew on the work of Western Turkologists to emphasize that “seven thousand years ago” the Turks had lived in the mountain ranges of Altai, bordering present day Mongolia. Their past was glorious and they established many empires before their conversion to Islam in the 8th century. Republican history books were saturated with pre-Islamic Central Asian legends such as the *Ergenekon* and the famous Kyrgyz legend, *Manas*. The ancestors of the modern Turks were depicted as having migrated from Central Asia to Anatolia from the 10th century; Turkey (Anatolia) became the new motherland (*anavatan*), but Central Asia remained the fatherland (*atayurt*). The essence of the Turkish nation was now to be found among Anatolian nomads and peasants, whose songs were studied and disseminated via official channels, whereas the cosmopolitan, Arab-Persian influenced Ottoman music and literature were cast aside. The emphasis on Central Asian origins went hand in hand with a campaign to “Turkify” the language by purging it of borrowed Arab and Persian words. The Arabic alphabet was discarded in favor of the Latin (23).

Throughout the Republican period immigration policy defined who could join the Turkish nation and thereby demonstrated the state’s perception of national identity. Muslims from the Ottoman Balkans as well as from the Soviet Union (Caucasus, Crimea, Middle Volga) have been consistently welcomed as Turkish citizens. Other Muslims (Arabs,

(22) For Yusuf Akçura see TAŞKIN 2002; for Sadri Maksudi Arsal see SOYSAL 2002, pp. 485-486; on Agaev see SHISSLER 2003.

(23) However, the switch to the Latin alphabet, often held up as a sign of Europeanization, may have had different motives behind it. Turkish nationalist admirers of

Atatürk today are fond of pointing out that many of the Turkic groups in Russia and Central Asia had adopted the Latin alphabet by this time. Thus, its adoption in Turkey can be interpreted as part of a Turkic program of reaching out to the Turkic peoples of the Soviet Union. See BOZDAG 1998.

and later Kurds) were not. Christians were excluded outright (24). This policy is indicative of the military-political alignments during the First World War and the War of Liberation. The thesis that “the Arabs stabbed the Ottoman Empire in the back” by revolting in Hejaz and elsewhere and by collaborating with the British, became part of the official doctrine of Turkish nationalism. Kurds too were stigmatized and marginalized after the rebellion of Sheik Said in 1925. Despite the exclusion of these groups, the immigration policy remained broad enough to encompass many Muslim ethnic groups from the former Ottoman and Russian Empires.

1938-1950: Greco-Roman visions

After Atatürk’s death in 1938 power passed to İsmet İnönü, who ruled with an iron fist until 1950. İnönü reorganized the ruling Republican People’s Party (RPP) along more authoritarian lines in the 1940s, and he also implemented a different cultural policy. Whereas Atatürk had forged a new identity by combining pre-Islamic Central Asia and Anatolia as his reference points, İnönü chose to emphasize Greco-Roman sources. The chief intellectual in İnönü’s entourage, Nurullah Ataç, bluntly stated that,

[...] we [Turks] know our fault. We did not learn ancient Greek and Latin. We did not read the classics of Western civilization and did not go through a humanist Renaissance. (Ilhan 1972)

Hasan Ali Yücel, İnönü’s long time Minister of Education (1939-1946), was responsible for the translation and official dissemination of Western classics from ancient Greek and Latin. He advocated compulsory courses in Latin and ancient Greek in high schools (Karacasu 2001, p. 336). One prominent Turkish intellectual who went through high school during this period recalls that

[w]e were taught that Sophocles was better than Rumi, and Yunus Emre could not even aspire to be a Dante [...] In fact, we were putting the rope of cultural imperialism around our necks with our very hands. (Ilhan 1972)

During this period the state established “village institutes” in rural areas, where Western classics were taught and students learned to play

(24) ÇAĞAPTAY 2004 and 2003; AKÇAPAR 2006.

the violin. Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, another prominent adviser to İnönü, reflected at length about the glory of Ephesus and Pergamon and the entire civilization of ancient Greece, whose legacy linked modern Turkey to the West. For Eyüboğlu, there was no civilization other than the Western, and Turkey's salvation would be achieved by linking to it (25). Cevat Şakir Kabaağaç, a prominent poet educated in London, took the name "Fisherman of Halicarnassos" and published widely on themes drawn from ancient Greek mythology (26). The advocates of the Greco-Roman program thought they were ushering in a "Turkish Humanism" on the basis of classical sources, with a Turkish Pericles [İsmet İnönü] at the helm (27).

The Ottoman Empire strikes back

İnönü's Greco-Roman cultural policies were unique in propagating a discourse that united Turkishness with Europe at an ontological level. They came to a sudden halt with the transition to multi-party democracy in 1946. Conscious that he would need to change his policies to stand a chance of retaining power in a democratic system, president İnönü beat a retreat. In 1945 he closed down the village institutes and in 1946 he dismissed Hasan Ali Yücel. In 1949 he appointed as his Prime Minister Şemsettin Günaltay, a scholar from Istanbul University with impeccable Islamist credentials. Despite this strategy of appeasement, İnönü's government lost the 1950 elections to the insurgent Democratic Party (DP), which stood for a return to the Ottoman-Islamist themes in culture and education (insofar as such a return was possible under the Kemalist constitution). The first decree of the new government was to re-introduce the call to prayers in Arabic (it had been changed to Turkish in 1934). As Yavuz has recently demonstrated (2003, p. 37), democratization and liberalization brought Islamic and Ottoman traditions and idioms closer to the center of politics. Myths of Central Asian origins were now complemented with a renewed appreciation of the Ottoman legacy at the official level. The DP embraced the Ottoman Empire as "Turkish" heritage and expanded this imperial lineage with a much longer history of various pre-Islamic and Islamic "Turkish" empires between Mongolia and Morocco.

(25) AKYILDIZ 2002, p 466.

(26) For further discussion of all these intellectuals see COPEAUX 2006, pp. 79ff

("Humanist Reaction and Turkist Counter-
Reaction") and pp. 349ff ("Anatolianism").

(27) SINANOĞLU 1980.

Recent decades

Supra-national visions have remained ubiquitous in the Turkish political landscape; whether in the form of official and popular fascination with the Ottoman Empire, or in the form of pan-Turkic aspirations among nationalists, or the pan-Islamism of political Islamists, and to some extent even in the anti-imperialist Third Worldism of socialists. The rise of the Turkish Left throughout the 1960s and 1970s alarmed the Turkish military, and two military coups occurred in 1971 and in 1980. In its effort to build a broad anti-Soviet, anti-Leftist alliance, the military supported both nationalists, whose reference frame was Central Asia and whose future hopes were tied to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the Islamists, who looked back for inspiration to the pan-Islamism of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Their Leftist challengers, by comparison, framed their struggle for a distinctly Turkish socialism as part of a greater struggle against Western, and in particular American, imperialism. Turkish socialists had some affinity both with the Kemalist isolationism and with Third Worldist developmentalism of the kind promoted by Nasser in Egypt and other “non-aligned” states. Even Ba’athism and various other Leftist ideologies prevalent in the Arab world had some influence on the Turkish Left (28). In comparison, their connections with European social democrats remained extremely tenuous.

Although the RPP defined itself as “Left of center” in 1965 (to the outrage of thousands of socialists persecuted under RPP rule), leftist parties have remained weak, their aggregate votes never exceeding 45 % (29). The dominant view of Turkish national identity, has a distinctly Right Wing orientation. This became more pronounced after the military coup in September 1980, the third of its kind in Turkish history and certainly the most influential. Unlike the earlier military coups, which saw the officers hurried back to their barracks within a year, the coup of 1980 established a military government that lasted for three years, arrested 650,000 people, and formulated a new and markedly less democratic constitution. There was also a decisive about-turn in cultural policy. The military sanctioned the “Turkish-Islamic Synthesis” as the official definition of Turkey’s identity. Emphases on Central Asian origins and Islamic religiosity were reconciled and merged through various

(28) ÖZDEMİR 1986.

(29) The results of all national elections since 1950 are available through the following

link in the official website of the Turkish parliament: [<http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/genel-secimler.genel-secimler>].

discursive methods. For example, the pre-Islamic traditions of Central Asian Turks were depicted as somehow “proto-Islamic”: since these shamanic Turks had always believed in a single Sky God, Islam did not contradict or compromise the Central Asian “essence” but rather complemented it (30). The Turks were the most exalted of Muslims by virtue of their glorious past as the founders of empires and thus the tension between the secular/non-religious depiction of Central Asian Turks and the Ottoman-Islamic past was reconciled in an official “merger” orchestrated from above.

Two symbols

Supra-nationalism, whether European, Soviet or Ottoman, like national identity depends on publicly displayed and celebrated symbols. Let me at this point interrupt the chronological narrative to draw attention to two of the prominent symbols linking Turkish national identity today to the supra-national imperial identities of the past.

The Janissaries were the elite corps of the Ottoman Empire, originally composed of Christian children from the Balkans who were converted to Islam. They were critical to Ottoman victories and expansion but during the 18th century they became increasingly unruly and were abolished by the Sultan in 1826. However, the military orchestra of the Janissaries was preserved, even after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the founding of the Republic of Turkey. With the passing of the anti-Ottoman fervor of early Republican period, the Janissary orchestra became ever more popular and cherished in the public sphere. The enduring popularity of the military orchestra of a fallen empire might be dismissed as a mere tourist attraction, bringing to the present the tunes of past imperial grandeur. However, closer inspection demonstrates the extent to which the Janissaries and their repertoire were reconstructed during the Republican period. An overwhelming majority of the military tunes that they perform nowadays were composed during the 1950s and 1960s. For example, one Janissary tune has the following lyrics:

Mehter [Janissary in Turkish] gives us a spirit
From far away lands
From Meric [Eastern Thrace], the Dardanelles, Yemen, and Korea...

(30) KAFESOĞLU 1985.

Following a series of Ottoman wars in the Balkans and Arabia, Turkey's participation in the Korean War is surreptitiously incorporated into the military history of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic are linked in military history, in song, and in memory. Some Turks thought of Korea as a Muslim country that the Turkish infantry saved from the Communists, just as they saved Muslim lands from Christian aggression in the Ottoman past. More recent operations of the Turkish military, as in Cyprus in 1974, or potential interventions, as in the cases of Nagorno-Karabagh and Northern Iraq, are often framed as an act of responsibility vis-à-vis former Ottoman lands and peoples, leading some analysts to speak of "neo-Ottomanism" in contemporary Turkish foreign policy (31). When Turkish forces entered Bosnia on a peace-keeping mission in 1995 they were led through the streets of Sarajevo and Zenica by the Janissary band to the great acclaim of local Muslims.

For a second example let us consider the design of the Presidential Seal, which exemplifies the "top-down" dissemination of Turkish Islamic Synthesis doctrine. The Presidential Seal of the Republic of Turkey was put in place by a governmental decree on January 25, 1985. It consists of a sun surrounded by sixteen stars, either displayed by itself or, more often, occupying the upper left corner of the Turkish flag. The sun represents the Republic of Turkey and the sixteen stars in its orbit "the 16 great Turkish Empires in history..." (32). The Turkish Republic is thus portrayed as the 17th great political entity in Turkish history, and the carrier of the legacy of all its predecessors. This symbol is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, these 16 "Turkish" Empires are only the "great" ones that made it to the Presidential Seal (33).

Turkey into the EU?

The first decade after the end of the Cold War witnessed numerous tensions between identity-driven and economically-driven foreign

(31) YAVUZ 1998.

(32) Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı Forsu: Forstaki güneş ve yıldızların açıklaması [The Presidential Banner of the Republic of Turkey: The Explanation of the Sun and the Stars in the Banner]. Available from [<http://www.cankaya.gov.tr/tr-html/gunes.htm>].

(33) They are (in chronological order): Great Hun, Western Hun, European Hun, and

White Hun Empires, Göktürk Empire, Avar Empire (East-Central Europe), Khazar Empire (Russia), Uighur State (China), Karakhanid State (Central Asia), Ghaznevids (Iran-Pakistan-India), Great Seljuk Empire, Khorezmshahs (Central Asia), Golden Horde (Russia), Great Tamerlane Empire, Babur (in English, Mughal) Empire (India), and the Ottoman Empire.

policy options for Turkey. The collapse of the Soviet Union removed the strategic foundation of Turkey's alliance with the West, and Turkey was the first country to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan. Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan were enthusiastically welcomed by Turkey as the other "Turkish republics", which had finally won their independence after living under the yoke of Russian imperialism. Turkey undertook to educate significant numbers of Central Asian students and civil servants, while the Turkish satellite TV network for Central Asia and the Caucasus broadcast three hours of programs every evening as part of its policy to promote a common language. At the same time Turkey offered financial aid to the Central Asian states. This implicit pan-Turkism was noticed with a mixed fascination by Western observers (34). History, geography, and national security text-books in Turkish high-schools all had maps showing the extent of the Turkish world, "stretching from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China", along with lists of independent, autonomous and other Turkish peoples of the world (35).

But pan-Turkism was not the only officially sanctioned identity-driven supra-national vision of the 1990s. When the Islamist-led coalition government of Necmettin Erbakan came to power in 1996, Erbakan called for the founding of the Muslim G-8, composed of Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Nigeria, the seven most populous Muslim countries at the time (Malaysia was included as an economically advanced Muslim country) (36). However, it soon became apparent that neither a union of Turkic states, nor an Islamic Common Market, nor an Islamic NATO, nor a Muslim G-8 were realistic options with tangible economic benefits. Only then did Turkey scale back its Turkic and Islamist visions in order to focus instead on acquiring EU membership.

If there is no supra-national vision that suggests a common future for Turkey and the EU member states based on a shared identity, it stands to reason that economic motivations must be uppermost. Turgut Özal, prime minister between 1983 and 1989 and then president until his death in 1993, had a mix of pan-Turkic and pan-Islamic visions for Turkish foreign policy, but his commitment to free markets and economic development was the major impetus for him in submitting Turkey's first EU membership application in 1987 (it was rejected after a two year

(34) FULLER and LESSER 1993, p. 39.

(36) ARAL 2005.

(35) Turkish history, geography and national security books have included this map since the early 1990s.

review). Tansu Çiller, prime minister in several governments throughout the 1990s, was responsible for bringing Turkey into the European Customs Union in 1996. This was part of her wider political agenda to lock Turkish political economy into the European market as a means of securing the support and resilience of export oriented and pro-market business groups in Turkey. Tayyip Erdoğan, the liberal Islamist prime minister elected in 2002, has introduced sweeping political and economic reforms, making it possible for Turkey to begin membership negotiations in October 2005. In terms of social policies he is a conservative, and his commitment to EU membership is again rooted in his strategy of supporting export-oriented business people and opening up development opportunities for small and middle sized businesses in Anatolia, groups that overwhelmingly support him. None of these politicians has ever articulated an interpretation of Turkish history that imagines a common lineage or future for Turkey and the EU member states on the basis of a common identity. Their pursuit of EU membership has not been propelled by considerations of identity; in fact, it has been pursued *despite* the conservative, nationalist and Islamist perceptions of Turkish identity that they and their parties endorse.

*Conclusion: imperial visions, their institutionalization,
and Turkish identity*

This article has emphasized the persistence of imperial visions in 20th century Turkey. The Kemalists attempted to repudiate the Ottoman heritage by disseminating counter narratives of Turkish nationhood which drew on pre-Islamic Central Asian origins. However, even the Kemalist construction of Turkish nationality was multi-ethnic and supra-national, due to the influence of Russian Muslim émigrés and the retention of Ottoman categories in immigration policy. Official myth-making fostered a supra-national vision of a Turkic federation encompassing much of Asia. With the transition to multi-party democracy, the Ottoman heritage and Islamic visions re-emerged to contest official, secular nationalist historiography. The military authoritarianism of the 1980 coup merged Turkish nationalist, Ottoman, and Islamist visions together in its promulgation of a “Turkish-Islamic Synthesis” as the official identity of Turkey. The updated lyrics of the Janissaries and the adoption of the Presidential Seal in 1985 were offered as symbolic manifestations of imperial visions at both popular and official levels.

How does the historic evolution of Turkish nationhood, with its fixation on supra-national visions, connect to the prospect of EU membership? I argue that the Turkish visions of supra-national political organization are distinct and irreconcilable with the EU. Supra-national entities are as much imagined communities as nation-states are, and there are several competing supra-national visions in the institutional, official, and popular constitution of Turkish nationhood. However, in none of these supra-national visions are EU member states imagined in a common framework with Turkey.

Although Kemalist elites are often depicted as a Westernizing constituency, the real picture sharply contradicts this commonplace assumption. The identity story found in Kemalist historiography is a secular, Turkish nationalist one that has Central Asia and Anatolia as its reference points. The single most important emotive component of Kemalism is the War of Liberation, which was fought against Britain, France, Italy, Greece, and their local Christian allies. Kemalism relies to a considerable degree on anti-Westernism for its popular legitimacy. In Turkey today, the groups that self-identify as “Kemalists” are the most uncompromising opponents of the European Union (37). They tend to favor a socialistic closed economy and a developmentalist state governed by secular, nationalist technocrats, allied with the Third World countries against the West. In short, the myth of Kemalism as a pro-Western discourse does not stand up to scholarly scrutiny (38). One should not confuse the representation of Kemalism as an ideology prescribing Turkey’s alliance with the West, which was a presentation aimed at Western audiences during the Cold War, with the actual political reality in Turkey (39).

(37) For example among newspapers: *Cumhuriyet* (Kemalist-Left) and *Yeniçağ* (Kemalist-Right); among TV channels: *Kanaltürk*; among political parties: *Bağımsız Cumhuriyet Partisi* (Independent Republic Party) led by former Foreign Minister Mümtaz Soysal, *Cumhuriyetçi Demokrasi Partisi* (Republican Democracy Party) founded by the former chief justice of the Constitutional Court Yekta Güngör Özden, *İşçi Partisi* (Labor Party) led by Doğu Perinçek, and to a lesser extent the RPP, still the major opposition party in Turkey today, which has been much more critical of the EU accession process than the ruling Justice and Development Party. The most popular Turkish intellectual of recent

years, Attila İlhan, who passed away in 2005, was a major leader of the Kemalist movement against the EU in intellectual circles. For a detailed review of İlhan’s views, which were foundational for the new Eurasianist movements, see AKTÜRK 2004.

(38) ÖZDEMİR 1986; ALPKAYA 2001; İLHAN 2001; KAZANCIGİL 2001.

(39) The confines of this paper do not allow for a further elaboration on this theme. However, any observer of Turkish politics able to follow Turkish language publications will concur that the self-identified “Kemalists” in Turkish politics have been extremely critical if not outright opposed to Turkey’s continuing the negotiations for accession to the EU.

Epilogue: comparisons

Of course, numerous EU member states were also imperial powers before embarking on the pan-European project. Why and how was it possible for EU member states to leave behind their exclusive empires and alternative supra-national imaginations, and converge on the common supra-national project that is the EU? How were the particular nationalisms and supra-nationalisms of EU member states accommodated into a pan-European framework in a way that cannot be observed happening in the construction of Turkish identity? The answer lies in a set of formative historical experiences which almost all EU member states went through, while Turkey did not.

The end of the First World War spelled the end of empire for Austria, Hungary, and Germany. Their territories shrank significantly and left behind a popular yearning for empire and resentment. This is a socio-psychological reaction that many core nationalities in supra-national systems go through, and the case of post-Soviet Russia in the 1990s is very similar. Among the losers of the Great War, post-Ottoman Turkey alone rejected the peace settlement and managed to reverse the political outcome of the First World War with a successful military campaign. Of course success was limited, since Turkey failed to regain the Arab Middle East that it lost to Britain and France. However, victory against foreigners in the War of Liberation endowed the new republic with a nationalist pride.

Nazi Occupation and the experience of liberation by foreign powers (the Soviet Union, the United States, and Britain) had a clear institutional-political legacy in most European countries. Both the United States and the Soviet Union deliberately exorcised the “discourse of empire” from public discussions wherever it existed. More or less violent decolonization processes became part of the European experience in the following decades and they encouraged popular acquiescence in elite efforts to construct a new supra-national, pan-European identity. At the same time, at the popular level strong socialist and communist movements were self-conscious participants in a counter-hegemonic, supra-national, European discourse (40). By contrast, Turkey did not have strong left-leaning parties. To the extent that socialist movements existed, they existed in the relative isolation of

(40) It is interesting to note that for Portugal, Spain and Greece, who all suffered under right wing military dictatorships, accession

into the EU corresponded to a period of socialist rule. The EU project was part of the socialist agenda in these countries.

the Turkish public, and not as part of a pan-European framework. To the extent that they displayed international solidarity and a supra-national vision, it was with Third World countries in Asia and Africa (41). To the extent that Turkey's integration with the European Economic Community was on the agenda, it was part of a thoroughly conservative, Right Wing agenda that focused on the deregulation and liberalization of the economy. Discussing the evolution of nation-state identities in the cases of Britain, Germany, and France and the extent to which they have been affected by Europeanization, Thomas Risse has shown how imperial visions and narrowly nationalist understandings can be transformed to reinforce a novel supra-national project such as the EU. The reformulation of German national identity in a pan-European mold followed the Nazi catastrophe, which decisively discredited visions of a "German Europe" but allowed for the discursive hegemony of a "European Germany". In contrast, the idea that there is a British identity that is distinct from Europe remained hegemonic among the British public. France represents an intermediate case: according to Risse, the early insistence on a vision of *grandeur* and *indépendance* was later modified to allow the French to incorporate "Europe" into the French collective identity "by adopting a vision of Europe as the French nation-state writ large" (42). But the Turkish case differs from all of these because Turkey did not share the historical experiences that bound together most of Europe in the 20th century. Turkey did have supra-national visions, but they extended east to Central Asia and Russia and south into the Islamic World, not to its western neighbours.

Winston Churchill expressed British national identity vis-à-vis Europe by using the preposition "with" rather than "of": "we are with them, but not of them. We have our own Commonwealth and Empire" (Risse 2001). Nothing could better sum up the nature of Turkey's post-imperial nationhood and its curious relation to Western Europe in the 20th century. The officially sanctioned and institutionalized perception of Turkish nationhood relates to supra-national visions extending "from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China". In the formulation of Turkish nationhood today as in the past, there is no space for an identity-driven argument for Turkey's EU membership. Unlike France where the elite re-imagined Europe as an extension of the French nation-state and civilizing mission, or in Italy, Austria, Hungary, and Germany where imperial and anti-European visions were exorcised from the public discourse following military defeat, foreign occupation, and re-education from above, or in Spain, Portugal, and Greece where

(41) ÖZDEMİR 1986.

(42) RISSE 2001, p. 199.

the strong socialist movements subverted the national identity to fit a pan-European framework, Turkey did not experience such a transformation of its national identity. The French, the Germans, and the Spanish all have identity narratives about Europe (even though these may not be fully compatible with each other) (43). For Turkey, such an identity narrative does not exist at all. Turkey has been marginal to the formative experiences and movements of modern European history and followed its own isolated path under the Kemalists. No significant leaders or institutions have pushed for a comprehensive pan-European vision of identity. Rather, the agents pushing for Turkey's EU membership have been conservative nationalist and reformed Islamist politicians whose primary purpose is to entrench free markets.

Standard frames of interpretation for common historical experiences are needed for mass mobilization and to elicit contributions to common social, cultural, educational, and especially security policies. Europe needs supra-national myths of a common collectivity just as nation-states do: you cannot explain why northern Italians periodically and consistently transfer their income to subsidize southern Italians, let alone fight for them in time of war, without an emotive component (presumably, "Italian-ness"). An emotive component is needed to justify and sustain sacrifice in the face of individual and communal selfishness. Emotive frameworks are an essential component of a political community. It is not clear whether liberal citizenship (rule of law, common legal procedures, etc.) alone can sustain a supra-national integration with social, cultural, and security dimensions. It is true that the successful candidacy of an extra-European Britain demonstrates that a merger of identities is not necessary for the level of integration present in the EU today, but a common identity will become a more serious consideration if and when the EU moves into "deeper" forms of integration (44).

(43) Curiously, the experience of several million immigrants from Turkey living in EU member states, most notably in Germany, did not translate into a pro-European identity narrative that could place Turkey in a European family of nations. On the contrary, segments of the Turkish diaspora in Europe (such as the Caliphate State in Cologne, and other Islamist and ultra-nationalist groups), as well as the perception of discrimination and xenophobia against Turkish immigrants in European countries (highly publicized episodes such as the arson attacks against immigrants from Turkey in Solingen and Mölln), contri-

buted to and reinforced already existing anti-European sentiments in Turkey. For a thorough documentary review of the Turkish experience in Germany, see GÖKTÜRK *et al.* 2007.

(44) Britain has experienced three different phases since the 1970s: economic integration, identity backlash, and a recasting of identity (I owe this comment to Martin Stokes). Turkey has been experiencing the first two moments since joining the Customs Union in 1996, but has yet to experience the third.

Because political institutions and educational and cultural policies allow elite discourses to influence popular opinion, identities are highly malleable. The Ottoman Empire could theoretically have been interpreted and officially sanctioned in Turkey as a European empire and a European civilization, since the Ottomans thought of themselves as the protectors of an Islamic civilization in the Balkans. However, neither official Turkish historiography nor European history textbooks embrace this view. As a result, no discourse of a common European heritage in the Balkans has developed, either in Turkey or in EU member states. "Euro-Ottomanism" is one of many missed opportunities in forging a pan-European identity where Turkey is a constituent part.

In conclusion, the Turkish nation has not been imagined as part of a European family of nations at the official or the popular level in Turkey during the 20th century. This outcome is the result of Turkey's history, the interpretation of this history by intellectuals, and the institutionalization of this historiography by the political elites. Instead, Turkey-centric supra-national visions (Ottoman, pan-Turkic, pan-Islamist) occupy the center stage in national identity discourse. EU member states are not included in these supra-national identity discourses and Turkey's pursuit of EU membership is therefore not driven by considerations of European identity.

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