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Future of Turkey–EU relations: a civilisational discourse

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Abstract

Should or can Turkey join the European Union (EU)? This paper argues that there are three alternative scenarios of the EU decision to grant membership to Turkey: 'privileged relationship offer,' 'wait and see attitude,' and 'start of full membership negotiations.' It then gauges each alternative path, and argues that the most likely scenario is a decision to start the negotiations, followed by the scenario of 'wait and see.' The EU decision will be conditioned by its future vision of global governance and the role foreseen for Turkey inside, outside or at the margin of it. The paper concludes that the EU decision will have significant implications for the future of relations between Europe and Turkey on the one hand, and Europe and the Islamic world on the other.
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1. Turkey–EU relations: an overview

Turkey's close relations with the EU date back to the Association Agreement signed in Ankara in 1963 between Turkey and the European Economic Community (EEC). When the agreement was signed, Walter Hallstein, the President of the EEC Commission, declared "Turkey is part of Europe." There were no noticeable objections to Hallstein's statement; no one disputed his perception of where Turkey stood with respect to Europe and Europeanness. The common understanding at the time was that Turkey was an invaluable partner in Western security against the Soviet bloc and therefore must be integrated in the Western system as tightly as possible via, among others, the EEC mechanisms [33]. Less than three decades later, as the Cold War came to an abrupt end in 1989, the EU authorities re-assessed and downgraded the relative 'value' of Turkey for

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Europe from central to secondary importance, relegating Turkey to the margins of the 'new,' 'united' Europe. Notwithstanding the culmination of the stipulations of the Ankara Agreement into a Customs Union between the EU and Turkey in 1995, Turkey's bid for full membership in 1987 fell on deaf ears in the EU and political relations were poisoned for a number of reasons, including the human rights predicament of Turkey, in the course of the following decade.

In the aftermath of the terrorist events on September 11, the EU felt an urgent need to reconsider its place in the new global security environment. As part of this re-evaluation, the EU began to view its state of affairs with Turkey in a new light. After plainly excluding Turkey from its future enlargement plans at the 1997 Luxembourg Summit, the EU leaders rather surprisingly welcomed the 12-year old Turkish bid to be accepted as a candidate for full membership at the Helsinki Summit in December 1999. The summit decision gave signals of European rediscovery of Turkey's indispensable role for the European security—just as the Association Agreement did so in 1963. The decision stipulated that Turkey would start the membership negotiations with the EU once the former completed its domestic reforms to satisfy the political requirements of the Copenhagen Criteria—stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.

Despite this positive decision of the 1999 Helsinki Summit, however, the European debate on '(re)locating' Turkey with respect to Europe—geographically, economically, politically, and civilisationally—has not been finalized. The opposition to the Turkish entry has been quite noteworthy since the 1999 Helsinki Summit, especially for its fast evolving trajectory. The European objection initially focused on patchy human rights record of Turkey and the existence of death penalty. As Turkey made major improvements in this important issue area, the opposition shifted towards Turkey's problematic democracy including cultural and minority rights, civilian control of the military, and lack of transparency of the state institutions. Again, Turkey responded with swift reforms to the satisfaction of the European demands. Various legislative packages containing sweeping reform measures were enacted into law. The focus of the European criticism then shifted to the issue of full implementation of the enacted laws. The Turkish government has shown its determination to improve the implementation. Yet, the opposition to Turkey has continued on the basis of the Cyprus issue. The recent referendum results and the Turkish Cypriots overwhelmingly accepting the UN-brokered Annan Plan in contrast to the Greek Cypriot rejection, boosted the position of the Turkish side in the eyes of the EU.

Despite relentless Turkish efforts to conform to the EU's political standards since the 1999 Helsinki Summit, there are still influential quarters in the EU that persistently keep alive the fundamental claim of 'civilisational incompatibility' between the EU and Turkey. It must be noted that the opposition to Turkish entry has stemmed from very diverse reasons and therefore as Turkey has moved towards the EU standards of democracy and foreign relations, a number of opponents switched their initial positions. However, strong opposition can be expected from those who are likely to stick to their position regardless of the changes in Turkey since

their 'civilisational incompatibility' argument is not conducive to reaching a consensus.

Amidst this public discourse, the EU will deliver a verdict, in December 2004, on the future shape of its relations with Turkey.[1] On the basis of the European debate on Turkey, this paper discerns three alternative scenarios about the EU decision this coming December: 'privileged relationship offer,' 'wait and see attitude,' and 'start of full membership negotiations.' The paper then assesses each alternative path and argues that the most likely scenario is a decision to start the negotiations, followed by the scenario of 'wait and see,' whereas a rejection of the Turkish bid is the least likely option. Before analyzing the three different scenarios, Section 2 gives a brief sketch of the fundamentals of the EU's future vision.

2. A sketch of EU's civilisational project

The 2001 Laeken Summit's Declaration on the Future of the European Union (EU) states that Europe is at a crossroads. Based on this understanding, the EU leaders decided at the Summit to ask for a European Convention to draw up proposals on three subjects: how to bring citizens closer to the European design and European institutions; how to organise politics and the European political area in an enlarged Union; and how to develop Union into a stabilising factor and a model in the new world order. The Declaration further elaborated on the future vision of the EU:

> The Union faces twin challenges, one within and the other beyond its borders. Within the Union, the European instutions must be brought closer to its citizens. … Beyond its border, in turn, the EU is confronted with a fast-changing, globalised world. Following the fall of the Berlin wall, it looked briefly as though we would for a long while living in a stable world order, free from conflict, founded upon human rights. … The eleventh of September has brought a rude awakening. … Now that the Cold War is over and we are living in a globalised, yet also highly fragmented world, Europe needs to shoulder its responsibilities in the governance of globalisation. … The image of a democratic and globally engaged Europe admirably matches citizens' wishes. [Citizens] want to see Europe more involved in foreign affairs, security and defence, in other words, greater and better coordinated action to deal with trouble spots in and around Europe and in the rest of the world.

The ideas ingrained in the Laeken Declaration are not necessarily novel. Indeed, in important speeches before and after the Laeken Summit, the major statesmen of the EU offered opinions paralleling those of the Declaration on the Future of Europe [5,11,12]. The Draft Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe, submitted to the European

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[1] For a range of variables, including 'identity issues,' that are likely to influence Turkey–EU relations, see Aylin Güney [13].

Council by the European Convention in 2003, also attest to the elements of Europe's future vision. It can be summarised that the EU efforts are underway to:

(1) create a European demos on the basis of common European values,
(2) work more assertively for a morality and rule-based global system of governance, and
(3) contribute to civilisational harmony.

Clearly, the EU is searching for ways to develop a European demos that is expected to have a special European identity based upon shared European values and a common approach to universal issues [28:7]. The new European demos must be able to move beyond the national attachments of the member state citizens. Habermas identifies five attributes common to Europeans: "The neutrality of authority, embodied in the separation of church and state, trust in politics rather than the capitalist market, an ethos of solidarity in the fight for social justice, high esteem for international law and the rights of the individual and support for the organizational and leading role of the state" [15].

It is generally accepted that the EU wants to have a bigger and stronger say in global affairs. The EU aims to emerge as a global actor [20]. A global-power Europe needs on the one hand an optimal size and location in geography, population and resources, and on the other hand a relatively unified decision-making capacity to arrive at decisions as swiftly as the fast pace of global events require. Additionally, as a response to the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the EU has increasingly emphasised going beyond *real politik* and called for the development of a rule- and value-based, inclusive global society [31]. A recent essay co-written by Habermas and Derrida, two leading philosophers of the continent, called upon the avant garde core of European states to design a common European foreign policy based on European enlightenment values. Responding to the American invasion of Iraq, Habermas and Derrida identified "high esteem for international law" among the five attributes Europeans share [15,42].

Finally, the 'new' European project, at least in rhetoric, envisions a plural global community based on sharing experiences among different civilisations on the basis of mutual respect, tolerance and solidarity. Especially after the September 11 attacks, the global community has belaboured the issue of dialogue among different cultural traditions, between the East and West. The EU has played an important role in bringing together representatives of various cultures in a variety of forums to promote peaceful, enlightened visions of cooperation. Such a forum was convened in Istanbul on 12–13 February 2002 with the participation of representatives of 76 countries, including 51 Ministers of Foreign Affairs, from the EU and Islamic countries [24]. This was the first ever high-level meeting devoted to the need to intensify multicultural dialogue, with the goal of, in Jordanian Prince El Hassan Bin Talal's words, "providing the first opportunity to engage in conversation with each other, rather than talking at each other" [24:152]. Javier Solana, Secretary General of the European Council, stated "the developing culture in Europe encompasses all civilisations. We have, in the EU, millions of citizens or residents who recognise in themselves both the values of Europe and those of Islam" [24:35].

The joint forum discussed the issue of how to promote understanding and harmony among civilisations, and concluded that cultures, in their diversity, complement and enhance one another. The forum also confirmed its belief in the harmony among civilisations and its attainability" [24:259–60].

Based upon these EU ambitions, the EU has been in the process of assessing what Turkey's entry into the Union may mean for its future scenario. Somewhat in simplified terms, this article suggests that there are several possible conclusions on the Turkish question coming out of such European assessments. It is suggested by some Europeans that the Turkish membership will harm much-needed common identity and solidarity among the peoples of Europe, while others argue that it will strengthen multicultural characteristics of the European demos and indicate its inclusiveness of people with different beliefs and persuasions. While some insist that Turkish entry means more trouble than benefits for European foreign policy, many others argue in favour of integrating Turkey into the EU especially as Turkey will provide the EU with significant 'soft' and 'hard' powers to further evolve into a global player. Finally, there is a sharp division between those who believe that the Turkish membership will be just another case of Western powers trying to manipulate the Islamic World through Turkey, and those who claim it will mean that the EU is a union based upon common values and principles, not upon Christianity, and thus the Turkish entry will constitute a solid refutation of the clash of civilizations scenario. Indeed, Europeans seem to be quite 'torn' about the Turkish membership, to borrow Huntington's characterization of Turkey as a 'torn' country. The remainder of the paper analyses alternative views of how the Turkish membership may influence the realisation of the European vision of future in detail.

3. Turkey in Asia but as a bridge to Europe: special relationship model?

The intellectual roots of the special relationship argument goes deep into the history of Turkey–Europe relations. However, the argument has been rejuvenated in the post-Cold War period. Huntington wrote early in the 1990s that "Turkey has the history, population, middle level of economic development, national coherence, and military tradition and competence to be the core state of Islam" [17:179]. He argues that Atatürk prevented the Turkish republic from playing the leadership role in the Islamic world the Ottomans once did, by explicitly defining Turkey as a secular society and thus 'tearing' Turkey [17:179]. Yet, Huntington believes that "at some point, Turkey could be ready to give up its frustrating and humiliating role as a beggar pleading for membership in the West and to resume its much more impressive and elevated historical role as the principal Islamic interlocutor and antagonist of the West" [17:179]. Huntington also argues that "Islam is a source of instability in the world because it lacks a dominant center. States aspiring to be leaders of Islam, such as Turkey…, compete for influence in the Muslim World; … no one of them is able to act authoritatively on behalf of Islam in dealing with conflicts between Muslim and non-Muslim groups" [17:265]. All in all, Huntington argues that Turkey shall turn back to its Islamic roots and perhaps lead the Islamic World vis-à-vis other civilizations

including the Western civilization. Waever mentions Turkey, along with the EU and Russia, is to become one of Europe's three new empires, leading Turkish-speaking former republics of the Soviet Union, and operating "as a centre of power between Brussels, Moscow and the Middle East" [43:238].

Although it is difficult to discern any direct linkage, Huntington's more general arguments parallel those of the Europeans who propose a special relationship with Turkey short of full membership. The alternative has been popular in recent years especially among conservative politicians and scholars in Germany and France. The tenet of their argument is almost identical to that of Huntington's: Turkey is so "irremediably different" from Europe that its inclusion in the Union would spell "the end of the EU." Therefore, the argument goes, the EU must tell the Turks this unpleasant reality and start working on a special relationship framework applicable to other Southern and Eastern neighbours [35]. The following discussion details the rationalization of European conservatives' position on the basis of a list of political, economic and cultural arguments against the Turkish membership.

3.1. Turkey as an obstacle to creating a European demos

There are widely shared counter-arguments against the Turkish membership for its expected negative impact on the EU's vision of creating a European demos. European history often points out to 'the Turk' as the 'other' with fundamental differences from the Europeans [16,26]. It is too hard to digest the cultural/religious traits of 'the Turk' within a common European identity. Indeed, Huntington mentions 'the indigestibility of Muslims' [17:265 and 305] in the West as a potential source of conflict on the basis of his assertion that 'even more than Christianity, Islam is an absolutist faith' and 'it merges religion and politics' [17:265]. These arguments against Turks are further accentuated by the proposition that they are too numerous to 'absorb' [9:134,34:98].

Furthermore, if the European demos is loosely, multiculturally constructed to accommodate the inclusion of Turks, such a construction may be ineffective in the face of strong nationalist challenges within the member countries. This too broadly-defined European identity would not help bridge the gap between the different nationalities, perhaps even leading to the deepening of the differences, and thus to an identity crisis within the EU. Hans-Gert Pöttering, the President of the Christian Democrats, currently the largest political party group in the European Parliament, recently lamented that "because of its significant cultural differences, Turkey's inclusion in the EU would make the EU dysfunctional"[21]. Similarly, Buzan and Diez assert that "further integration between Turkey and the EU threatens the social and political self-identification of each to an unsustainable degree" [7:46].

It is suggested that Turkey has another side to its 'personality' that its modernizing elites have failed to transform, and are not eager to acknowledge. Today Turkey ranks 96th among 175 countries in terms of Human Development Index of the United Nations [42:237]. In Anatolia and strangely in many major cities of Western Europe, masses of Turkish people remain attached to tenets of the traditional society. Teitelbaum and Martin write that Turks in Germany "were the last guest workers to arrive in large numbers, the poorest, the least educated, and the most different in cultural and historical terms."

They further comment that "their integration was also impeded by sharp differences between Turkish and European cultural views on the roles of men and women, by the deep significance of Islam in the daily lives of many Turks" [34:105]. Many in Europe (and also in Turkey) question the compatibility of 'radical versions' of Islam with the values commonly espoused by the EU. Peoples Party of Denmark perhaps went the furthest when its newspaper advertisement for the coming European Parliament elections overtly proclaimed that "if there was free elections in Turkey, an Islamic regime (*sheria* law) would come" [6].

3.2. Turkey as a civilisational outsider

For some of the antagonists, there are basically two kinds of 'irremediable' problems of Turkish membership: cultural and geographical.[2] They often refer to the European history depicting Turkey as 'the other' and conclude that there is an insurmountable civilisational discrepancy between Turkey and the EU.

On the cultural discrepancy, former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt reiterated his well-known view that the 'fundamental cultural differences' with Turkey are of 'decisive importance'[9:134].[3] Schmidt is not alone on his approach. For instance, in April 1990, Pope John Paul II in a speech in Prague reminded the continent of the Christian basis of its unity: "A united Europe is no longer only a dream. It is an actual process, which cannot be purely political or economic. It has profound cultural, spiritual and moral dimension. Christianity is at the very roots of European culture" [16:194]. Stephens mentions that "for many European politicians, Europe is not a geographical or political culture, but a modern reincarnation of the ancient Christianity" [10]. Heater writes that "Christianity has been not only an integrating factor, but a means also of differentiating Europe from Islam, initially as a creed, later as personified by the Turk. Little wonder that Turkey was excluded from most schemes for EU" [16:182]. Along the same lines, Öniş remarks that

> The civilizational dimension of the European project... appears in Europe's self-definition with respect to Islam and the Middle East. What is significant is that Christianity is a key component of European identity, even though it may not be its principal or overriding constituent. In the EU's relations with Turkey, this dimension of the European identity comes to the surface and plays a major determinant role. Indeed, it would not be possible to explain differential treatment of the CEECs and Turkey, countries broadly at the same level of economic and political development, without reference to this factor [27].

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[2] Valery Giscard d'Estaing, former French President and the man in charge of overseeing the drafting of a "constitution for a united Europe," speaking to an interviewer from Le Monde (French daily) on 8 November 2002, declared further that Turkey's "capital is not in Europe, and 95 percent of its population is outside Europe. It has a different culture, a different approach, and a different way of life. It is not a European country." EU membership for Turkey would mean "the end of Europe." [34:98].

[3] More recently, Schmidt added that "the politicians recommending Turkey's membership have little about the geostrategic and demographic facts of the issue. They also know little about the history of the Ottoman Empire" [39].

These arguments sometimes follow that it is not a matter of religious differences as it is cultural differences; after all, Muslim Bosnia-Herzogovina will undoubtedly become a member of the EU in the future [21]. If Turkey, as a Muslim country lying mostly outside the European continent, becomes a member of the EU, North African Muslim countries with close ties to Europe will also apply for membership, which the EU believes would damage development of a relatively cohesive European identity.[4] If and when the EU rejects these countries, its relations with the region will be poisoned.

On the other hand, the geographical 'problem' is summed up in the statement that "Turkey is an Asian, not a European country" [9:134]. It is a common theme of European conservatives that Turkey's inclusion in the EU is *also* wrong for geopolitical reasons. As the former French President V. Giscard D'Estaing bluntly stated, "most of the Turkish land lies in Anatolia, which is not European [34:98]. German historian Heinrich August Winkler recently lamented, "an integration extending to the banks of the Euphrates is idiotic" [39]. Another German historian Wehler wrote, "the neurotic pressure to accept that Anatolia is part of Europe ignores the fact that the transformation of Anatolia must come from within" [18]. In addition, the EU will not impress all Muslims with Turkey's inclusion, as many Muslims are quite sceptical of Turkey's Islamic credentials.[5] "In the Middle East such doubts have been compounded by bitter memories of the final years of the Ottoman Empire and resentment at the modern republic's close defence ties with Israel" [19:45]. There is also the possibility that some in the Muslim world might see this as sign of a Western instigation to intervene in the affairs of the Islamic societies [17:311–2].

3.3. Turkey and the EU's designs for future of global governance

The proponents of the special relationship school argue that Turkey's entry into the EU will have detrimental effects on the European vision of global governance based on international law. These circles are uneasy at the possibility of Turkey following in the footsteps of American policies in its region. This assessment, a sort of 'the Trojan horse' syndrome, alludes to the UK attitude within the EU. This was not seen as a major problem until now when "American perceptions of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, of the strategic importance of Central Asia and the Caucasus, differ subtly but significantly from predominant European perspectives" [44]. This view is still alive and well among some Europeans although the close alignment of American and Turkish foreign policies has been brought under serious doubt since March 2003, when the Turkish Parliament rejected a motion allowing American soldiers to pass through Turkey to Iraq, which indicated that Turkey could make independent decisions [3].

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[4] The Moroccan government spokesman commented that acceptance of Turkey as a candidate country lifts a taboo. Ukrain and perhaps behind it Russia may well use the Turkish example as precedent. For these, see William Wallace [44].

[5] A recent newspaper article made essentially the same argument but concluded differently: "Turkey's EU membership would complete the European political project;" however, the Arab world will reject the 'Turkish model' because of strong historical and cultural differences," and therefore, "Turkey could become an important border nation inside the EU" [39].

Secondly, the Turkish membership will extend the borders of the EU well into the Middle East and expose the EU to dangers of this region, such as terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, civil war, and so on. Huntington argues that "militarism, indigestibility, and proximity to non-Muslim groups are continuing features of Islam and could explain Muslim conflict propensity throughout history, if that is the case" [17:265]. Buzan and Diez conclude in the same vein that if Turkey is linked to the EU through a special relationship, then, the EU will not run "the risk of being drawn into tensions and conflicts in which it does not have to be directly involved" [7:42] while Turkey would "preserve its insulating role in matters of military security" [7:53]. All in all, the EU must steer away from Turkey's neighbourhood if it is to advance global policies based on international law rather than be a hostage to Turkish national interests. This way, the EU can become more active internationally but also avoid becoming a surrogate for the nationalist ambitions of its member states.

3.4. Turkey at the margin of Europe

It seems that the Turkish case has put pressure on the Europeans to think about various scenarios for the future, short of full membership. Many conservative politicians in Europe, such as Edmund Stoiber and Angela Merkel —German CSU and CDU party leaders, respectively—have argued for having a "special relationship" with Turkey [2,37,38].[6] In addition, some academics provide these politicians with intellectual ammunition. For instance, prominent EU specialist William Wallace argues that both Ukraine and Turkey, as peripheral European states,

> are too important to exclude, but extraordinarily difficult fully to include without overstraining the capacities of the institutions they seek to join. It might be more statesmanlike, on both sides, to explore the possibilities for a mutually satisfactory form of association, first for Turkey and then for Ukraine. But that will require political imagination, economic generosity, and an investment of leadership from within the EU (as well as from within Turkey) of which there is yet little sign [44:400].

The members of the special relations school acknowledge that the long-term stability of the EU requires developing a framework of relations with the countries around the Mediterranean that offers them genuine opportunities instead of political and economic exclusion. They recognise that the Barcelona Process, started in 1995, was a step in the right direction, and can be taken as a model for the future [44:400]. Indeed, the Commission recently published details of a new framework for relations with Eastern and Southern neighbours [35].

4. Turkey stuck between Europe and Asia: 'wait and see' model?

Huntington writes that Turkish leaders, "having rejected Mecca, and being rejected by Brussels," often describe Turkey as a 'bridge' between two cultures and civilisations,

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[6] Hugh Pope writes that: "a European 'yes' to accession negotiations would normally mean that Turkey would certainly join. But in extremes, Europe could change its mind. So could Turkey" [29].

physically and philosophically. He further argues that "a bridge, however, is an artificial creation connecting two solid entities but is part of neither" [17:146 and 149]. Indeed, many Europeans remain uncertain on where Turkey stands or should stand, and therefore demand more time to come to a conclusion on the issue. The proponents of this ambiguous view seem to entertain the logic described by Mattli:

If an outsider is not a desirable candidate in the sense of being able to make a net positive contribution to the union … the union is unlikely to accept it, unless exclusion of such a candidate is costlier to the union than accepting it. … A union may have an interest in accepting 'undesirable' candidates when negative externalities originating in outsider countries threaten to disrupt the union's prosperity, stability, and security" [22:63].

The supporters of this view are torn between the EU's need for Turkey to reach the Union's future aspirations and the possibility of its paralysis caused by the entry of Turkey—a large, Muslim and undeveloped country located largely outside Europe. They would therefore prefer to delay a decision on Turkish accession.

Although the proponents of this perspective have a lot in common with the special relationship approach in their antagonism against the idea of the Turkish membership, they are more forthcoming in recognising that Turkey does not occupy a marginal place in the future vision of the EU. Because of their vagueness on the balance of what Turkish entry may lead to, they prefer a 'wait and see' attitude towards Turkey to keep the country in the 'waiting room' while the EU can gain time to ascertain the issue in the future.

This view seems to be dominant among the political circles in France and in a few other European countries. For example, the new Foreign Minister of France, Michel Barnier, declared recently that "under the given circumstances," it is without a doubt that "Turkey does not comply with the EU criteria," [41] which seems to be a thinly veiled demand to postpone a decision on Turkey. On a slightly better note, the French President Jacques Chirac argued that the EU may start the membership negotiations with Turkey, but it is clear that Turkey's actual membership would take "a long time" [30].

The wait and see approach also had strong following in Germany's Red-Green coalition government at least until the end of 2002. Indeed, it was reported by Danish media after the December 2002 Copenhagen European Council Summit that Joschka Fischer, the Foreign Minister of Germany, told the Danish Prime Minister on the decision to start negotiations with Turkey to "let it sleep first, then let it be forgotten." Yet, in the past year, the German government, along with the UK government, seems to be one of the most ardent supporters of Turkish membership in the EU, citing especially Turkey's importance for the inter-religious dialogue between Europe and the Islamic World.

Two academics, Teitelbaum and Martin also argue for a "wait and see" approach although for a different reason: "the overriding fact is that no one knows what the consequences of rapid admission would be. Given such crucial uncertainty, prudence and good sense support a more cautious process." The authors identify the main element of uncertainty as "the possibility that Turkey's military might once again take power, especially if it feels the country is threatened by resurgent Islamists." In this case, "EU leaders find themselves facing an impossible choice: between endorsing a military takeover or accepting an Islamist regime in their largest member state" [34:110–1].

5. Turkey in Europe as a bridge to Asia: full EU membership?

The last of the alternative strategies for the EU is to start the full membership negotiations with Turkey with a view to incorporate Turkey into the Union at the end of a period of approximately 10 years. As December 2004, the time of the decision to start the entry negotiations, draws near, the positive arguments towards Turkish membership seem to dominate the others. The membership argument appears to be strongest in the UK, Italy, Spain, and a few other countries in Europe. As stated earlier, it is gaining strength in Germany in recent times.

The proponents of this alternative acknowledge that Turkey has embraced, over the last few years, the values ingrained in the EU, by meeting the Copenhagen political criteria as well as by showing a willingness to cooperate with the EU in areas of common interest, including foreign affairs. The advocates suggest that Turkey became particularly important in recent years in terms of transforming the EU into a global power by, *inter alia*, abridging Europe with the Islamic world.

5.1. Turks within the European demos

The proponents of this perspective assert that Turkey's inclusion in the EU will help the creation of a European demos that goes well beyond narrow self-definitions, representing an important rupture with the divisive identity politics of the European past. In that vein, Habermas suggests "the 'Carolingian' background of the founding fathers—Schuman, De Gasperi, Adenauer-with its explicit appeal to the Christian West, has vanished" [14:7]. Etzioni argues that the EU must handle this issue of identity with the principle of 'diversity in unity' [1].

Secondly, the argument goes, Turkey's inclusion will highlight the fact that Europe has been home to people with religious/cultural backgrounds other than the Judeo-Christian tradition. The 'split' personality of Turkey presents opportunities for a global Europe. Turkey, unique and different in some ways from the core Europe, nonetheless shares with Europe important traditions of parliamentarism and democracy, a sense of rationality and the idea of progress. The commonalities between the two can be enhanced with Turkey's full membership. Especially the Muslim communities within the EU will be more likely to develop a feeling of being at home in Europe, facilitating increased inclusiveness, tolerance, understanding and diversity in harmony.

5.2. Turkish contribution to civilisational harmony

Historically speaking, Islam and Europe collided from the days of the invasion of Spain to the Crusades to the colonialism of more recent times. Turkish membership in the EU will help bridge the gap between Islam and Europe. This will be a fundamental contribution to a more constructive discourse between the two civilisations. Indeed, many consider Turkey's quest towards the West as an asset. In addition to its strategic importance, Turkey is now seen by the West as a valuable example for Muslim countries striving to realise the goals of freedom, democracy, and secularism. Günther Verheugen, the EU Commisioner for Enlargement, recently acknowledged that

"Turkey will prove that European democracies and Islamic world would be not in conflict but in a relationship based on tolerance, understanding and cooperation" [45].

Secondly, the supporters of the Turkish membership argue that Turkey's exclusion from the EU undermines the EU's claim as a law- and morality-based actor in the international arena. The claim that Turkey is not part of Europe is unfounded, on the ground that Turkey has been in Europe for hundreds of years; it has been part and parcel of the Western system, in particular a Southern flank of NATO, during the Cold War, which seems to be an important difference from the other states with disputed Europeanness.[7]

The third argument for Turkey's integration into the EU appears to be the leverage it will provide to the EU on world stage due to Europe's inclusive attitude towards a Muslim democratic country. This would undermine the anti-Western propaganda of Muslim fundamentalists directed towards those Muslim nations that are and feel excluded and exploited, and raise the profile of the EU as a justice- and morality-based international actor [4].

Fourth, the EU then can prove that a conflict between Islam and the West is—contrary to what Huntington argues—avoidable. It is often stated that Turkish membership in the Union has acquired a different tone since the September 11. Although there has been counter evidence to weaken the validity of the civilisational conflict thesis during the 1990s, the September 11 events nevertheless vividly showed the real possibility of falling into a spiral of events pitting 'cultures' against each other. During his visit to Turkey in November 1999, President Clinton pointed out Turkey's role as a bridge between countries and cultures and as a source of inspiration. In his historic speech at the Turkish Parliament, he said "what Turkey has generated in this century is a living example of what all people can do to claim a better destiny for themselves" [36]. The 'Turkish experiment' is expected to have positive influence on the democratisation and liberalization of Islamic states as well as Turkic states of Central Asia.

5.3. Turkish entry and the EU's role in global governance

The EU's positive stand on world peace through genuine dialogue with different cultures and civilizations will be a major contribution to the development of a universal value system for effective world governance in the future. Turkey's membership would first of all show that the EU keeps to its international promises, since Turkey has been an associate member of the EU since 1963 with a promise to become a full member in the future as well as the activation of its official candidate status in 1999. 'The moral duty argument' is often invoked by Turkish analysts to criticize the EU for giving preferential treatment to the Eastern and Central European countries, which were 'adversaries' during the Cold War whereas Turkey contributed significantly to the EU security. Arguments about moral duty are seldom heard in Europe outside Turkey itself [9:136]. In case of the Turkish entry, the EU will be praised for its inclusiveness of different shades of cultures,

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[7] See an interesting narrative presented by Vaclev Havel in which Russia is constructed as the other. Turkey and Russia bear similarities in their relations to Europe. Havel also appeals to the moral responsibility of Europe vis-à-vis Eastern Europe. Turkey can also remind Western Europe of similiar moral responsibilities as she carried a heavy burden during the Cold War for western security [25:107].

realizing the slogan of 'diversity in unity' in Europe, and boosting the image and status of Europe as a prestigious global actor.

Second, many suggest that Turkish membership is also valuable for the EU's future security goals. Turkey's inclusion will promote and defend common European interests. As Duner argues, this "is the result not only of Turkey's geographical location but also of its size. It should be recalled that Turkey is a comparatively big country in terms of population and area, and even bigger with respect to military resources; its military forces are larger than those of any of the West European countries" [9:139]. EU Commissioner Verhuegen recently lamented that "like many others in Europe I also changed my strategic assessment on Turkey after the September 11. Before, the question in Europe was 'where is Turkey?' whereas now the question has become 'what is Turkey?'" [45].

Turkey's inclusion is also likely to improve the EU's security umbrella against 'soft' threats to Europe such as fundamentalist terrorism, illegal human and drug trafficking, and so on. Looking at the factors leading to integrative pressures, McKay argues that internal and external threats are catalytic to enlargement [23]. It is often asserted that the Turkish membership is likely to help reduce both types of threat [9:139].In that vein, the Turkish membership will eliminate the danger of conflict between Greece/ Cyprus and Turkey, ensuring security, peace and cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans [13]. The current optimism on these issues will be solidified, creating significant potential for trade, energy, transportation, and environment in the region.

6. Conclusion: quo vadis?

Considering that the future aspirations of the EU have evolved over the last decade in the direction of more global engagement, pressures to integrate Turkey into the EU are increasing. Indeed, repeatedly Turkish membership is seen as an invaluable asset for the EU in its future aspirations. It is expected to strengthen multiculturalism within the EU. It will prove that the EU is a union based upon common values and principles, not on Christianity. Thus, it will constitute a solid refutation of the clash of civilizations scenario.

While the support for the Turkish membership is increasing in Europe, at the same time many in Europe and Turkey have reacted strongly against the 'special relationship' and the 'wait and see' scenarios. Kemal Derviş, a prominent social democrat from Turkey and former Minister of Economy, flatly rejected the idea of a 'special relationship' with the EU because he argued that it implied a 'second class status' in Europe [8]. Former German Federal President Richard von Weizsacker, a member of the Christian Democratic Union, also rejected his party's proposal to offer Turkey a special relationship with the EU. Instead, he urged the German government to intensify dialogue with Islamic countries where he considers Turkey's role as a bridge between Europe and the Orient in Europe's interest [40].

Today, more than ever, a growing number of Europeans and others welcome the inclusion of Turkey in the Union within a reasonable time frame. For instance, Walter

Schwimmer, European Council Secretary, recently welcomed Turkey's membership in the EU. He suggested that

> The European project should not be defined by narrow cultural, religious or ethnic criteria. A modern, democratic, open and tolerant Turkey will be an asset for us all. This will make us all more European. Turkey has been a member of the European Council since 1949 and made a decision in favour of Europe more than 50 years ago. Germany joined this international association promoting one year after Turkey [40].

In a similar spirit, former US President Bill Clinton cherished at various occasions the EU decision in 1999 to include Turkey among the countries for future membership: "The European Union … obviously is in the process of … what I consider to be a very hopeful and strategically important event, made a decision which I strongly supported to continue to increase its membership and to include Turkey for future membership" [36].

When he states that "one gets out of the future what one puts into it," Sardar sums up the essence of future studies. Indeed, "in the final analysis, the future is dominated by world-views," [32:100] in our particular case by the worldview of the EU. Given Turkey's historic insistence to fully integrate into the EU, the future shape of Turkey–EU discourse boils down to what kind of a future worldview the EU envisions for itself and where Turkish membership is located with respect to this worldview. In this context, recently the Turkish membership has been proposed as an invaluable asset for the EU to fulfil its future aspirations. The Turkish membership is expected to strengthen enlightened multi-culturalism within the EU demos as well as to prove to the world that the EU is a union based upon common values and principles, not simply on religion. Thus, the Turkish entry would constitute a solid refutation of the clash of civilizations scenario.

Former French President Charles de Gaulle, in one of his famous press conferences in 1967, declared that full membership for Britain would lead to the destruction of the Community [22:84–5]. One needs to wait patiently until December 2004 to see if there will be any EU member state that will rebuff Turkey's historic bid for full membership in the same spirit as de Gaulle did against the British entry during the 1960s.

Acknowledgements

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