

## Placing Turkey on the Map of Europe



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BOĞAZIÇI UNIVERSITY PRESS - **İSTANBUL 2005**

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**İstanbul**  
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Etiler/İstanbul TÜRKİYE  
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**Boğaziçi University Library Cataloging in Publication Data**

xxxxxx xxxxx  
Placing Turkey on the Map of Europe/ Hakan  
Yılmaz  
vi, 86 p.; ill.; 23 cm.  
Includes biographical references  
ISBN 975-6193-XXXX  
1. xxxxx, xxxx xxx--Turkey--xxxxx.  
I. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
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Kapak tasarımı: İnci Batuk  
Baskı: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Matbaası  
Birinci Basım: 2005  
9,5 pt Bookman

*Printed in Turkey*

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## Acknowledgements

The first five contributions in this collection were originally written in 2002 for a research project, which was entitled “Turkey and Europe: Cultural Encounters”, sponsored by TESEV (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation), and carried out in 2002. These five articles are now being published without a change in their content. The said project was directed by Hakan Yılmaz and conducted with the participation of Ali Akay, Duygu Köksal, Arzu Öztürkmen and Aslı Özyar. Our special thanks are due to TESEV for its kind permission to publish the research reports in this volume. We should particularly mention the kind support and encouragement we have received from Özdem Sanberk, the general director of TESEV in 2002, and Ali Çarkoğlu, TESEV’s research director in that period. Arzu Öztürkmen’s essay on “the European Impact on the Early Turkish Folklore Studies” has been specially written in 2004 for this volume. Hakan Yılmaz’s second essay, exploring “Turkish Public’s General Attitudes towards the European Union”, was originally written in 2002 as a report for a research project entitled “Turkish Public Opinion Regarding the European Union”, sponsored by TESEV, and conducted in the Spring and Summer of 2002 by Ali Çarkoğlu, Refik Erzan, Kemal Kirişçi and Hakan Yılmaz, all, at the time, professors at Boğaziçi University. The third and brief essay by Hakan Yılmaz, written in 2004, aims to present the basic findings of a research project entitled “Euroskepticism in Turkey: Manifestations at the Elite and Popular Levels”, which was run by Hakan Yılmaz with the assistance of Nazan Maksudyan and Zeynep Özgen. This project was co-

sponsored by the Open Society Institute Assistance Fund and Bogazici University Research Fund and conducted between July 2003 and July 2004. Last, but not least, our thanks go to Gülşah Seral, for her meticulous work in translating two of the articles from Turkish into English, and to Bahar Başer who has cheerfully done the painstaking work of preparing the index.

## Introduction: Placing Turkey on the Map of Europe

***Hakan Yılmaz***

The issue of culture made its way onto the agenda of the European Union and that of the Turkish-European Union relations in the 1990s. During these years the unification of Europe changed direction from its pre-Cold War economic character to its post-Cold War political one. The primary indicator of this change in direction was the Maastricht Treaty, which was signed by the European Council of Heads of State and Government that met in Maastricht in December 1991. Formally known as the Treaty on European Union, it aimed to transform the European Community, an international organization of an economic character, to the European Union, a supranational union of a political character. The concrete form that this political union would assume was intentionally left vague in the founding treaty. It had been thought that the concrete form of the European political union should take shape via future developments and debates. The shape it would take in the future aside, the political unification of Europe involved two dimensions. The first dimension was referred to as “deepening,” and comprised fortifying the political collaboration between the member states of the Union, creating the political organs through which this fortified collaboration would come to life, and forming a common foreign and security policy.

The second dimension of political unification was termed as “enlargement,” which referred to the accession process of new states to the Union, particularly the Central and Eastern European states that had recently come out of the Soviet system. While the European Council that convened at Maastricht in December 1991 drew up the organizational framework of deepening, the organizational framework of enlargement was outlined by the European Council that met in June 1993 at Copenhagen and formulated the well-known Copenhagen Criteria pertaining to enlargement.

Through all these processes of deepening and enlargement, what was the role culture was thought should assume? As may be seen in the relevant articles of the Maastricht Treaty, as well as other official European Union documents, the formation of a common European culture was viewed as one of the primary factors of social cohesion on the level of the European Union, forming a common European identity and creating a European citizen. In fact, Article 128 of the Maastricht Treaty gave the Community the responsibility to bring out the “common cultural heritage” of the member states, and to take into consideration cultural factors in all its policies. The “Culture 2000” program, on which the European Parliament-European Council Conciliation Committee agreed in early 2000, and which is to stay in force for five years, between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2004, gathered under one financial and programmatic roof three programs the European Union had enacted earlier with the aim of supporting the cultural arena; namely, KALEIDOSCOPE, for the support of artistic activities, ARIANE, for the support of publication activities, and RAPHAEL, for the support of efforts aimed at protecting the cultural heritage. The aims of the Culture 2000 program included bringing out into the light and sharing Europe’s common cultural heritage, and on a European level, strengthening the role culture plays in the processes of social cohesion and citizenship formation (Parliament-Council Conciliation Committee, 2000). In his May 2001

speech at the European University Institute in Florence, European Commission President Romano Prodi stated that the desired “New Europe” could only be realized via creating “a real European community.” He also noted that a real European community could be formed with people, albeit from different nations, who had the feeling of a common identity, common vision and objectives, and the will to reach these common objectives together. A common European culture would thus be the foundation on which this “real European community” would be constructed; it would be the soul of this community, cementing it together (Prodi, 2001).

Defining a European culture is essentially drawing the boundaries of Europe and Europeanness. And in turn, drawing boundaries is essentially an exercise in inclusion and exclusion. Each time European culture is defined, or in other words each time the boundaries of Europe and Europeanness are drawn, the exercise becomes synonymous with embracing some places, countries, and peoples, while leaving out some others. Looking at what has been written on European culture, we see that Europe’s boundaries have at times been drawn historically. Accordingly, Europe is, for instance, the area within the borders of the Holy Roman Empire. Some authors draw Europe’s borders based on religion, and identify Europe with Western Christianity. Yet another group imposes historically-determined, almost mythical geographical borders on Europe. Europe, geographically defined, is sometimes the lands stretching from the Urals to the Atlantic, and sometimes the area beginning from the Atlantic and ending at the Bosphorus. In addition to inherent and unchanging criteria such as history, geography and religion, liberal and secular European scholars used to define European culture based on its economic and political roots. According to this liberal-secular definition, Europe is a “community of values.” European values encompass political ones such as democracy, liberty, and tolerance, as well as economic

ones such as the social market economy. What is important here for our purposes is that no matter what criteria are used in drawing Europe's cultural map, Turkey has almost always been left outside this map.

It can be observed that in the course of history European exclusionary narratives regarding Turkey passed through three major stages: first, from the early modern age till the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, in which the chief ground of exclusion was "religion" (Christianity); second, from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century till the end of the interwar period, in which the principal ground of exclusion was "civilization"; finally, third, from the end of the Cold War until today, in which the main theme of exclusion has emerged to be "culture". The Cold War offered an interlude in this evolution, during which European rejectionism vis-à-vis Turkey appears to have been temporarily suspended under the exigencies of the survival instinct, which was motivated by an impending Soviet threat against the West.

In its first stage, whose starting point can be dated back to the early modern age and which lasted up until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the main theme of exclusion was religion. Hence, Turks were to be excluded from Europe because they were unbelievers, infidels, and embodiments of the anti-Christ. In this first period, Christianity-based rejectionist arguments were often formulated by the clerics, who were also very active in trying to put together a European coalition of a political and military nature for the purpose of driving the Turks away from the European lands. An early and well-known example of the religious rejectionist thesis can be found in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century treatise of an Italian clergyman, Cardinal Alberoni. In his treatise, Cardinal Alberoni proposed a "Scheme for Reducing the Turkish Empire to the Obedience of Christian Princes". He said:

It is amazing to see Christian Princes ... so easily piqued at one another, upon trivial Incidents, and tamely sitting down ... with the most outrageous Affronts, Violations, Ravages, and Depredations of the Infidels... Heaven seems to point

out the Subversion of the Turkish Empire, by such a Concurrence of Incidents, as has not been known, since the Doctrine of Mahomet first appeared in the World: A Juncture that ... the Turbant trembles upon the Head of Arch-Infidel. ... Nothing has afforded more just grounds of Complaint, and Grief to all good meaning Christians, than to behold the Princes of Europe, carrying on, unnecessary, and often unjust, Wars against one another, and shedding Streams of Christian Blood, ... whilst the inveterate and professed Enemies of Christianity are Masters of several large and flourishing Provinces and Kingdoms, in Europe and Africa, and are Lords of, almost, all Asia. (Cardinal Alberoni 1736, pp.84-85, 87).

More than a century later, in 1876, another clergyman, Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer, in a letter he wrote from the Balkan city of Djakovo to Mr. William E. Gladstone in London, was making a similar Christianity-based rejectionist argument for banishing the Turks out of Europe:

It is not a question whether this or that event took place in this or that form, but mainly whether it is possible that Christians should remain under the rule of the Koran and its fanatical followers free from tyranny and every kind of cruelty. Every thinking man must answer this question with a decided 'No.' ... The whole history of the Christians among the Turks is written in three dreadful words: stupid arrogance and laziness; shameless and often unnatural lust, and finally the horrible cruelty and tyranny which go with it. ... I added; if to these cruelties of a single place and a single occasion be added the whole extensive Turkish empire and four whole centuries, then every Christian heart will be convinced that the bitter cup of suffering of the poor Christians in Turkey is already overfull and that we are justified in at last expecting from the justice and wisdom of Europe that it should take pity on them and hasten to their aid...(Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer 1876, pp.428-430).

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and all through the interwar period, the criterion of exclusion changed from religion to "civilization". Thus, in the new type of rejectionist arguments the Turks were portrayed as the Barbarians vis-à-vis the modern European civilization, inhibiting the

growth of civilization in the European lands they had invaded and enslaved for centuries by sheer force. This idea is best epitomized by the notion of the “Turkish Yoke” in the Balkans, used as a *deus ex machina* to explain the Balkans’ backwardness relative to Western Europe:

In its simplest form, this argument is advanced in daily conversations in many Balkan countries, in exchanges like this: A tourist asks, ‘Why is the elevator out of order today?’ (or, ‘Why is there no milk, or coffee, or gasoline?’). To which a local citizen replies, ‘Pet sto godina pod igotom.’ (in Bulgarian, or its Greek, or Romanian, or Serbian equivalent) –five hundred years under the Turkish yoke. (Sowards, 1996).

In the civilization-based exclusionary narratives, the Turks were portrayed as an alien force that had to be deracinated from Europe and sent back to where they had come from, i.e., to the wilderness of the central Asian steppes. A typical example of this type of turn-of-the-century civilizational argument can be found in the following quotation from an American author, William Milligan Sloane, who, in 1908, wrote an extensive account of his personal observations in the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire:

They [the Turks] can live only as they find dumb, servile human cattle to herd, drive and slaughter. ... From Asia they came, to Asia they return with little regret; and being a totally unhistoric people, it is doubtful whether centuries of European abode would in their future tradition be much more than a tale of Scheherazade. ... in order to understand and do justice to the Turk, we need a fourth dimension. He is our antipodes. (Sloane 1908, pp.298-299).

Another early 20<sup>th</sup> century American observer of Turkey, Ambassador Henry Morgenthau in Istanbul, argued that Turks had no civilization of their own, they had taken very little civilizational lessons from the Europeans, and whatever civilizational works they created, they borrowed them from their subject peoples:

Such graces of civilization as the Turk has acquired in five centuries have practically all been taken from the subject peoples whom he so greatly despises. His religion comes from the Arabs; his language has acquired a certain literary value by borrowing certain Arabic and Persian elements; and his writing is Arabic. Constantinople's finest architectural monument, the Mosque of St. Sophia, was originally a Christian church, and all so-called Turkish architecture is derived from the Byzantine. The mechanism of business and industry has always rested in the hands of the subject peoples, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, and Arabs. The Turks have learned little of European art or science, they have established very few educational institutions, and illiteracy is the prevailing rule. (Morgenthau n.d.).

Finally, Lloyd George, British prime minister at the onset of the First World War, said that the war should be used as an occasion to settle the account with the Turks:

The Turks are a human cancer, a creeping agony in the flesh of the lands which they misgovern, rotting every fibre of life ... I am glad that the Turk is to be called to a final account for his long record of infamy against humanity. (George, Lloyd D. 1914)

By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, following the end of the Cold War, the exclusionary views started to rely on the idea of "culture". This was an ambiguous idea on the boundaries of Europe, sometimes referring to historical boundaries (e.g., Europe consists of the territories of the Roman or Carolingian Empires); sometimes to the religious boundaries (e.g., Europe is Catholicism plus Protestantism, with the Orthodox church occupying an uncertain position in between); sometimes to the geographic ones (e.g., Europe is the landscape stretching from the Ural Mountains to the Atlantic ocean); sometimes to the economic ones (e.g., Europe is the land of welfare and prosperity); and sometimes to the political ones (e.g., the idea of "Europe of values", incorporating democracy, individualism, tolerance, human rights). However defined, though, this European culture is argued to leave Turkey outside of the cultural boundaries of Europe. Perhaps the most well-known

cultural exclusionary idea was spelled out in March 1997, when leaders of the conservative and Christian Democratic parties of the European Union (all belonging to the European People's Party, the EPP, in the European Parliament) issued a joint declaration against Turkey's membership in the European Union. Stephen Kinzer, the then Istanbul representative of the New York Times reported:

A group of powerful European leaders has dealt a sharp blow to Turkish hopes for admission into the European Union. At a meeting in Brussels last week, leaders of some of the Continent's most important center-right parties said they did not consider Turkey a serious applicant. 'Turkey is not a candidate to become a member of the European Union, short-term or long,' said Wilfred Maartens, the former Belgian prime minister and president of the European People's Party, which groups center-right political parties from various countries. 'We want the closest cooperation possible, but we are creating a European Union. That is a European project.' Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi said that at the Brussels meeting, which he attended along with other leaders including Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, 'it was unanimous against Turkish membership. (Kinzer 1997).

Culture-based exclusionary arguments against Turkey's membership in the European Union continued to be voiced even after Turkey had become an official candidate "destined to join the European Union" at the Helsinki Summit of the European Council in December 1999. Hence, Michael Glos, the then Chairman of the Christian Social Union Caucus in the German Bundestag, in a 2001 article entitled "Is Turkey Ready for Europe?" stated the following views:

In accepting new candidates we must expect them not only to meet the criteria laid down in Copenhagen, but also to integrate easily into this cultural context. Given the current state of affairs, precisely this capability is in doubt in the case of Turkey, a country which belongs to a different political and cultural sphere. (Glos 2001).

A recent version of culture-based European rejectionism vis-à-vis Turkey came from Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the former French President and the current head of the Convention on the Future of Europe, in an interview with the French newspaper *Le Monde* in November 2002, a month before the Copenhagen summit of the European Council:

Former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing touched off broad controversy in Europe today by openly stating a view that many Europeans hold but express only privately – that populous, Muslim Turkey will never be invited to join the European Union. ... In an interview with the French newspaper *Le Monde*, Giscard, 76, said that admitting Turkey 'would be the end of the European Union,' because unlike the current 15 members and 10 other countries likely to be invited to join, Turkey has 'a different culture, a different approach, a different way of life.' ... 'Its capital is not in Europe, 95 percent of its population live outside Europe, it is not a European country,' Giscard said. ... Many European officials have privately expressed doubts that Turkey, officially a candidate since 1999, could ever be allowed into the Union because, as one put it privately, 'it is too big, too poor, and too Muslim.'... Giscard 'is expressing indeed what many of our elite think,' said a senior official at the European Commission, the executive arm of the EU. 'Many people are delighted he said so. (Richburg, 2002).

Maps are important. In the minds of those who look at and believe in them, maps show the place one belongs to, distinct from other places; sometimes separated with gray dots, sometimes with a thick black line, and sometimes shown in a different color. This separate place becomes fixed as a geometric shape in the mind. This shape is then reproduced on weather graphics, flags and pennants, textbook covers, banknotes, and logos of research institutes. Thus, in time, it assumes the identity of a mythical object. On many European maps that have become mythical as such, for instance on the maps of Europe printed on Euro banknotes, the lands of Turkey have either not been included at all, or only the Western

tip, considered as belonging to Europe, has been included. In a similar vein, when the names of European cities are listed in weather reports on European television stations, the list includes either no Turkish cities, or maybe only Istanbul. Again, when festivals or exhibitions in Europe worth going to are listed on European television stations, a music festival in a remote Scottish town finds mention, for instance, but the Istanbul Music Festival or the Istanbul Biennale, are ignored. It must always be remembered that in the geography or history textbooks used in European schools, Turkey usually receives not even a passing mention, let alone being referred to as an indivisible part of European geography and history. In short, Turkey, that rectangular peninsula which was described by Nazım Hikmet as extending from Asia to Europe like the head of a mare, does not exist on the mythical map of Europe.

Since they constitute one of the most important historical factors in determining the inclusion or exclusion of Turkey in the map of Europe, an examination of World War I and World War II is a necessity. Perusing the paradigms these two wars destroyed, invalidated, and made indefensible, as well as those they established, disseminated, and made supreme, would make for a worthwhile exercise. What could be said in short is that while Turkey had been able to adapt to the European paradigm (political values, attitudes and institutions) that emerged after World War I, for the most part it remained outside the realm of the European paradigm that came to the fore following World War II. In other words, at the end of World War I, and during the interwar period, Turkey experienced a more or less complete paradigmatic synchronization with Europe, but entered a period of de-synchronization following World War II, and deviated from the European paradigm. Turkey, after World War I, and as a result of the Kemalist reforms, had adapted to the politico-cultural development of the Western Europe of the time, with its state institutions, education system, legislative system, symbolism and ideology. In fact, Western

authors writing on Turkey view the Turkey of Atatürk's time as the furthest point Turkey ever reached in terms of Westernization, and claim that after 1950 Turkey began to move away from Westernization with peripheral powers putting their weight on national politics, and that the political culture, institutions, and attitudes undergoing a process of re-traditionalization. Following World War I, what were the leading politico-cultural values and institutions in Western Europe? Primary among these were *étatisme* (construction of a modern state), nationalism (construction of a nation and a national economy by the state), republicanism (anti-monarchism), and secularism (deriving the main constitutive principles of the political community, and the major premises for knowing about and making sense of the world, not from religion but from reason). The 1920s and 1930s were the golden years of *étatisme* and nationalism, which reached their utmost pinnacle via fascism and communism. During that time, development and the state were in the forefront; not democracy and the individual. Again, during that time, in terms of politico-cultural and daily life values and institutions, synchronization had begun to be established between Kemalist Turkey and Western Europe. In its most distinct form, this synchronization made itself apparent in the fact that some basic laws were directly borrowed from Western Europe, especially the main body of the Civil Code. In fact, with regard to the area of women's rights that were put into effect within a framework reflective of the "First Wave Feminism" of the era, which was later dubbed Kemalist Feminism in Turkey, Turkey had then boasted legislature that was much more egalitarian than many European countries.

Following World War II, after fascism was defeated and the Soviet system closed upon itself after absorbing Eastern Europe, Western Europe began treading a new politico-cultural path that criticized the state, *étatisme*, nation, and nationalism, and brought to the fore human rights, minority rights, and democracy. One of the most

concrete indicators of this phase is the many declarations of “positive” rights, ratified through the 1960s and later by international organizations such as the United Nations and the European Council, such as economic and social rights, cultural rights, women’s rights and children’s rights, which went much further beyond the concept of basic rights or “negative” rights. In short, while the concepts of state, nation, development, and republicanism as anti-monarchism came to the fore following World War I, after World War II these were replaced by suspicion toward the concept of “raison d’état” and the state in general, anti-totalitarianism (anti-fascism and anti-communism), democracy, the individual, and sub-national minorities. And the basic concept underlying the political culture of Western Europe following World War II was, without a doubt, the concept of “rights,” or human rights.

It was during this phase that Turkey began to experience difficulty in adapting to Western Europe’s new political culture, and the gap between the political values and institutions of Western Europe and Turkey began to widen. This de-synchronization did not make itself apparent in every area to the same extent. Yet, it was blatant especially within the area of “rights.” The area of “rights” already constituted one of the most crucial dilemmas of Turkish democratization, due to the Tanzimat-Sèvres syndrome (Yılmaz 1997). The Tanzimat-Sèvres syndrome, with Cold War anti-communism added to it, made it difficult for a series of “negative” and “positive” rights, especially social and cultural rights, to be accepted by Turkish decision makers, who deemed these rights incorporated heavy risks. Turkey’s understanding of “Europe” and “Europeanism” became fixed on the European political culture of the era prior to World War I, defined with the concepts of étatism, nationalism and “raison d’état”, and encountered difficulties in adapting to the new, post-World War II European political culture based on the concepts of “rights” and “individual.” A great contradiction made itself apparent at this point. On the

one hand, there was talk to the effect that Turkey had not yet fully completed her state-building and nation-building processes, or in other words had not yet been able to resolve her pre-World War I issues, and thus embracing the post-World War II political culture would tear Turkey apart. Yet, on the other hand, it was also argued that Turkey had a historical right to enter the European Union that was being constructed precisely on these post-World War II values, which were viewed with much suspicion. The most important dimension of the process of becoming a part of the European Union, and the most crucial criterion in getting Turkey back onto the map of Europe, is re-synchronization in the area of political values. The new Civil Code, the legal reforms of August 2002 and all other subsequent reforms, dubbed “harmonization laws,” are the result of efforts toward fulfilling this said re-synchronization, at least in the area of law.

Re-synchronization efforts on the legal platform are necessary, but of course, not sufficient. Turkish scholars must spend earnest effort on each and every map that leaves Turkey outside the borders of Europe, and must be able to develop the critique of each European-based narrative that excludes Turkey. In undertaking this exercise, the aim must be to go beyond the two frameworks that immediately come to mind. The first is the “promotion” framework, which may be expressed as “making a better promotion of ourselves in Europe,” or “improving our image in Europe.” The second framework to overcome is that of “authenticity,” which dictates that the only contribution Turkey may be able to make to European culture is to offer to the European what could be found in Turkey but not in Europe. The handicap of the “promotion” framework is that campaigns made toward this end are perceived by both the European elite, and the masses, as merely propaganda, and thus are unconvincing. And efforts realized within the framework of “authenticity” strengthen opinions that Europeans already have, to the effect that Turkey is culturally outside the boundaries of Europe.

To be able to examine the issue of cultural perceptions between Turkey and Europe, the following points may act as a point of departure: The first is that European culture is a structure that is not completed, but one still in the process of being constructed. Thus, Turkish culture should be viewed not as a foreigner who wants to move into a finished, completed building; but as a neighbor who puts forth her own ideas about a building that is still being constructed, on issues such as its cement mixture, architecture, decoration, and inhabitants. Consequently, the opinions of both Europeans and Turks, pertaining to European culture and the place of the Turkish culture within it, must not be judged as proven facts, but as subjective “narratives.” Within this context, European culture must be considered as a variable and dynamic fiction, an arena where different answers to such fundamental questions as “Where does Europe begin, and where does it end?” and “Who is a European?” compete with one another. Embarking from these views, Turkey’s contribution to European culture must be to enter this arena with “different” narratives, and participate in the formation of this fiction with her own, “authentic” narratives.

At this point, one must distinguish “different narratives” from “counter-narratives.” Especially in countries that have been influenced by European colonialism, constructing “counter-hegemonic narratives” within the post-colonial paradigm, claiming that they embody a culture that is fundamentally opposed to the hegemonic European culture and that these two cultures are by nature opposed to each other, has become common practice. The common aim of such efforts is to embark from a religion (e.g. Islam), a nationality (e.g. Arab), or a cultural geography (e.g. the Mediterranean), and create a new hegemonic narrative that will overthrow and replace the hegemony of European culture. The handicap common to these types of alternative narratives is that they secretly acknowledge and internalize the exclusionary theses concerning non-European

cultures put forth by the very European orientalism they purport to reject. Therefore, post-colonial counter-hegemonic narratives usually become transformed into a mirror image of colonial hegemonic narratives, and cannot go any further than becoming “derivative narratives.” A distinct contribution Turkey, which has felt but not experienced European colonialism, would be able to make to debates on European culture is her ability to present the historical and intellectual grounds necessary to move beyond the post-colonial framework. On such grounds, it is possible to participate in debates on the foundations and boundaries of European culture with different, but not opposite, narratives. It is also possible to offer an insider’s critique of approaches that constrict and make European culture superficial and thereby to deepen, diversify, and truly enrich European culture.

In the present work, the way Europeans view Turkey in relation to the following areas of cultural encounters (everyday life, folklore, archaeology, literature, and the plastic arts) were examined. Hakan Yılmaz’s work, entitled “European Narratives on Everyday Turkey: Interviews with Europeans Living in Turkey”, is based on a series of interviews conducted in the fall of 2001 with Europeans who have resided in Turkey, and aims at delineating the underlying themes of ordinary Europeans’ narratives on Turkey. The findings have shown that ordinary Europeans’ narratives on Turkey are shaped on two main binary oppositions: one being inequality and heterogeneity (Turkey) versus equality and homogeneity (Europe); and the other, community (Turkey) versus individual (Europe). Another finding of Yılmaz’s work is that almost every European narrative on Turkey, but especially those of ordinary people, reflects themes in a dialectical interplay between exclusion and inclusion, rejection and acceptance. Yılmaz states that Europeans’ and especially ordinary Europeans’ attitudes toward Turkey are neither outright rejection nor unconditional acceptance; “hesitation” seems to be the concept most fitting to explain their attitude. In

his second contribution to this volume, in which he analyzes the “Turkish Public’s General Attitudes towards the European Union”, Hakan Yılmaz examines the different sources and manifestations of Eurosupportiveness and Euroskepticism in the Turkish public opinion. The data that are analyzed here are drawn from a public opinion survey that was conducted in May and June, 2002, over a national sample of 3060 people. In his essay, Yılmaz first focuses on Eurosupportiveness and examines it in relation to four interrelated issues: voting tendencies in a hypothetical referendum on Turkey’s EU membership, expectations with regard to the likely changes in people’s lives in case of membership in the EU, expected benefits from EU membership, and readiness to share sovereignty with the EU organs. Secondly, he analyzes Euroskepticism as revealed in two important topics: perceptions of the EU as a Christian Club and expected drawbacks of EU membership. Yılmaz argues that that Eurosupportiveness and Eurooptimism in Turkey tends to increase as we move along from modernizing to modernized strata of the society. The one big exception to this general trend is the subgroup associating itself with Kurdish culture and identity. Though, sociologically speaking, they in general have the characteristics of traditional or modernizing life styles, they tend to give overwhelming support to the cause of the EU, which may be because they may think that Kurdish cultural and political rights will be best served in a more democratized and liberalized Turkey in line with the pre-conditions of EU membership. A similar turnaround towards greater Eurosupportiveness could also be observed in those social groups for whom Islam constitutes the primary basis of self-identification. The generally traditional or less modernized Islamic-identity groups, very much like the Kurdish ones, might decide to give much greater support to the cause of Turkey’s membership in the EU, if they perceived that they would find greater religious and political freedom in a Europeanized Turkey. Perhaps the most striking observation that can be

drawn from the 2002 research, according to Yılmaz, is that in Turkey there are varying degrees and types of Euroskepticism, but almost no Eurorejectionism, as can be found in certain other candidate or even member states of the EU. The third and brief essay by Hakan Yılmaz will be devoted to the presentation of the basic findings of a research project entitled “Euroskepticism in Turkey: Manifestations at the Elite and Popular Levels”, which was run by Hakan Yılmaz with the assistance of Nazan Maksudyan and Zeynep Özgen. This study will identify the following major areas of “popular anxiety”, in relation to Europe and the European Union: exclusion anxiety (being excluded, avoided, put off by the Europeans); historical anxiety (stemming from the historical memory); religious anxiety (perceiving the EU as a “Christian Club”); separatism anxiety (fearing the risk of the breakdown of national unity); and, finally, moral anxiety (being scared by the likely erosion of moral values).

Arzu Öztürkmen’s article in this volume, “The European Impact on the Early Turkish Folklore Studies”, explores the discovery, by the Ottoman intellectuals of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, of the ideas of nation and nationalism through their readings of the pioneers of the folklore studies in Europe, like Johann Gottfried Herder, Arnold Van Gennep and Elias Lönnrot. Based on the folklore studies of European thinkers, Ottoman intellectuals developed their own ideas of “language”, “nation”, “motherland” and “civilization”. Öztürkmen argues that for the Ottoman intellectuals, the interest in the culture of the folk and the attempt to use that culture for the construction of a Turkish national culture, was part of their overall endeavor of change of civilization, westernization and Europeanization.

In “Anatolian Civilizations? Turkey’s Ancient Cultures from a European Perspective,” Aslı Özyar attempts to reveal Europe’s different visions concerning ancient Anatolia. According to Özyar, archaeology is to understand and record ancient life patterns and artifacts correctly, so

as to be able to make deductions about the intellectual structure of a given period and reconstruct a world that existed in the past. Özyar is of the opinion that such an exercise would also reflect our present-day identity and expectations. Looking at the issue from this point of view, European archaeological perspectives that focus on Anatolia's distant past tell us a lot about European culture rather than Anatolian cultures themselves, and reflect how Europe defines her own identity, how she views herself, and where she sees her own future. In her paper, Özyar examines in which contexts Turkey's ancient history has been constructed by European archaeology, and she investigates what images exist in the minds of the Europeans in relation to Turkey's distant past. As an extension of this investigation, she also analyses the term "Anatolian Civilizations," an established part of the historical discourse in Turkey.

Duygu Köksal's paper, "Turkish Voices in European and World Literature: From Yaşar Kemal to Orhan Pamuk and Latife Tekin," examines the transformation Turkish literature has been experiencing since the early 1980s, and the changes in European perceptions of Turkish literature in relation to this transformation. According to Köksal, the increase in the number and variety of Turkish novels translated into Western languages shows that we are facing a new Turkish Novel, the readership of which is on the rise across the world. In her paper, Köksal touches upon the fact that in the 1980s and 1990s, preferences of the European readership overlapped with what Turkish novelists were offering to them, and that the Turkish and European agendas in the area of literature and culture intersected for the first time. In recent times, as was the case in earlier eras, the European reader is still looking for the "other" in the Turkish novel. However, as Köksal also notes, the "other" found in the new Turkish novel, represented by Orhan Pamuk and Latife Tekin, is an "other" translated into the global language: In Pamuk, into the

language of post-modern sensitivities, and in Tekin, into the non-globalization language of the popular and the local.

And finally, in his paper on “Turkish Plastic Arts in Europe,” Ali Akay argues that Turkish plastic artists have found the environment suitable to carry them onto the international arena only in the 1990s, after the Istanbul Biennale embraced European curators. Akay states that with the acceleration of globalization, the expansion of postmodernism, the questioning of the hierarchy between low and high art, the rising popularity of Third World art, the proliferation and diversification of large-scale biennales across the world, and the growing importance of global-cities, non-Western artists in general, and Turkish artists in particular, have become better known in Europe. Akay also posits that since recently, Turkish artists no longer pursue an aim of creating anti-Western, Third World, traditional art, but in its stead, have begun to develop new creation strategies via employing Western techniques and ideas. The older type of Turkish artist, who lives and creates in the West and conveys his/her Third World experiences and sensitivities to a Western audience, is now being replaced by a new type of artist who lives and works both in the West and in his/her own country, who creates works of art in both languages and both cultures, who is bilingual and bicultural, and who has gained the ability to look at both Turkey and the West with a critical eye. In his paper, Akay emphasizes that Turkish artists who have achieved success in Europe have always done so on their own, and that should the government provide financial, political, and intellectual support, Turkey’s existence in European art circles would reach levels incomparable to its present state.

With the present work, comprised of this introductory essay and the articles summarized above, we have stepped into a difficult and complex terrain, the roots of which are planted in the distant past: that of the cultural perceptions between Turkey and the European Union. Contrary to some contentions, European culture is not a structure

that is completed and done with. Issues such as where the boundaries of Europe begin and end, the historical sources of European culture, the new forms this culture will assume in the near future and under the roof of the European Union, are presently all being debated by European bureaucrats, politicians, intellectuals, artists and ordinary citizens both within and outside of the European Union. Turkey wishes to and is on the brink of becoming a part of the European Union, and for Turkish scholars to participate in debates concerning the sources, boundaries, and future of the European culture, and bring their own perspectives and perceptions to the discussion, is a must. Unless this is realized, the place of Turkish culture within European culture will be discussed and decided by others. In fact, the outcome of such discussions that have until now been undertaken by others has generally been that Turkish culture is outside the realm of European culture, and even that it is Europe's "inferior other" (Europe's "superior other" being the United States of America). It is our belief that this book will contribute to efforts pertaining to understanding the true nature of cultural perceptions between Turkey and the European Union, creating an effective critique of European narratives that exclude Turkey, and placing Turkey on the map of Europe.

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# European Narratives on Everyday Turkey: Interviews with Europeans Living in Turkey

***Hakan Yılmaz***

## **Introduction**

This paper will examine European narratives on everyday Turkey, based on seventeen in-depth interviews that were carried out in the fall of 2001 with citizens of the EU member countries who have stayed in Turkey at various lengths of time. The interviews were conducted around the following themes: What are the boundaries of the European culture? What is the cultural distance between Europe and Turkey? Does the cultural distance between Turkey and Europe pose an obstacle to Turkey's accession to the European Union? What are the prospects of cultural contributions, between Europe and Turkey, in the process of Turkey's accession to the European Union? The following table summarizes the basic characteristics of our sample of interviewees:

<b>Nationality</b>	
British	5
French	3
German	4
Spanish	4
Italian	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Gender</b>	
Men	9
Women	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Age</b>	
Aged between 21-30	6
Aged between 31-40	5
Aged between 41-50	3
Aged between 51-60	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Place of Stay in Turkey</b>	İstanbul
<b>Most Common Reasons for Living in Turkey</b>	Business, Marriage
<b>Minimum Duration of Stay in Turkey</b>	6 months
<b>Average Income Group</b>	Upper-Middle Class

The first remark be made regarding the interviews is that not all of them were made within the general guidelines of the discipline of oral history, which tells the researcher to focus on the life story and personal experience of the person one talks to and to ask the more specific questions in that experiential context. Our interviews were of a mixed character, combining life story

and a rather journalistic type of question and answer sessions. Needless to say, and as it goes with many similar qualitative researches, the findings of this survey can in no way be claimed to represent the points of view of all the Europeans living in Turkey, let alone of those Europeans who had not had a direct experience with Turkey. However, in place of speculations and unwarranted generalizations about what the ordinary men and women in Europe think about Turkey, which unfortunately dominate the discourses of many politicians and journalists now in Europe, these interviews do provide us with some interesting and realistic clues to start to understand common European perceptions with regard to everyday life in Turkey, its places and people, its culture and traditions, and its history and politics.

The narratives of common European men and women (as can be found in the travelers' accounts in the earlier centuries as well as in the interviews that we have conducted today with the EU citizens visiting or residing in Turkey), based on their everyday experiences of the people and the places in Turkey, are truly dialectical ones. In such narratives, themes of exclusion and inclusion, rejection and acceptance, understanding and dismissal play themselves out in an utterly intermingled, mixed, and often confusing manner. This confusion, manifested in the complexity and dialectical uncertainty of the cultural narratives, is to be welcomed rather than dismissed, because only confusion makes dialogue possible and meaningful. Confusion, and the sincere acceptance of it, is a good starting point to talk, with the purpose of clarifying the mind and having a clearer picture of the human condition.

## **B) European Narratives on Everyday Turkey: General Observations**

Unlike the written words of the European intellectuals, the spoken words of common Europeans regarding Turkey are not internally consistent, they lack precision, and they

reveal confusion. Almost all of the interviews exhibit an interplay of exclusionary and inclusionary views. What lies between exclusion and inclusion, acceptance and rejection can be best captured by the notion of “hesitation.” Hence, ordinary Europeans, speaking about the European identity of Turkey, based on their everyday experiences of Turkish people and places, expressed a deep-seated “hesitation,” which rarely gave way to unconditional acceptance or outright rejection.

### ***Turkey’s Image in Europe is Negative***

The first point to make regarding the respondents concerns the general images of Turkey they had in mind, where these images came from and how they were transformed throughout their stay in Turkey. It is not surprising to hear that most of the respondents had a very negative image of Turkey before coming to this country, and that their negative image partly turned to positive after their arrival. This “before and after” pattern shapes almost all of the responses regarding the changes in the mental images of Turkey. Back in Europe, the respondents seemed to have three major sources of image-formation regarding Turkey. One is the historically formed negative image of Turkey, whose sources go back to the Ottoman conquests in Europe, which was shared unquestionably and uncritically by most Europeans, and which became part of the European common sense. The second source of the negative image lies in the encounters of the Europeans with Turkish guest workers and illegal immigrants since the 1960s. Still a third source of the negative image consists of the well-covered and well-mediated anti-democratic policies and human rights violations of the Turkish state, with graphic descriptions of torture, police brutality, inhuman prison conditions, political repression and occasional military coups. Hence, in the words of a Spanish respondent, “People in Spain don’t know anything about Turkey, but they all have an opinion about the

Turkish people. ... The image of Turkey, of the Turkish people is not positive.” (SPANISH-W-32). The words of a French respondent confirms this general tendency of getting an opinion about Turkey without feeling the need to know about it: “What I thought when I was in France was the idea that people had [about Turkey] at the beginning of the century. ... In the 19th century the European countries wanted to show that the Ottoman Empire was something bad and in Europe there is still this kind of feeling [about Turkey], which means that when you think of Turkey, even if you don’t know [anything about Turkey], immediately it is something negative. ... You don’t know but there is a general feeling about it and it is very negative. For example, people think that you speak Arabic, that, you know what I mean.” (FRENCH-M-30).

***Turkey’s Negative Image Generally Turns Into Positive in the Course of the Daily Life Experiences in Turkey***

Once the respondents started to live in Turkey, their image of Turkey began to change towards the positive. Their spontaneous experiences of the daily life in Turkey, rather than any academic or intellectual exposure, seem to be the main factor behind this change. Regardless of whether they were talking about the similarities or the differences between Turkey and Europe, almost all of the respondents talked about the daily life, drew their examples from their intimate encounters and experiences with Turkey and the Turks. In the words of a British respondent, what matters is “the ‘social world’ people inhabit; the way people shop in the supermarkets; get their cars washed; the clothes they wear; the movies they watch; the music they listen to. ... The social world people inhabit here is very familiar to me. All the reference points that I need in my life are here.” (BRITISH-M-43). The Spanish respondent, who reported above the generally negative image of the Spaniards about Turkey, said: “Many friends of mine from Spain who come here, when they live in Turkey, they say ‘Ah, people here

are so nice, I didn't expect that!'" (SPANISH-W-32). The same shattering of the stereotypical Turkish image can also be observed in the words of the French respondent referred to above, when he said that "People are very surprised when they came here ... To see Turkish guys with blonde hair and blue eyes. ... For example if you came to France, people would say 'no, you are not Turkish', because we are expecting people with dark hair and moustache." (FRENCH-M-30). A German respondent contrasted her image of the Turks she had seen in Germany and the Turks she was acquainted with in Turkey: "It's more the Turkish working class which came to Germany. So it's the working class I got to know. When I came to Turkey I got to know the higher class. For me, it was a big difference. All my friends who come to Turkey are very surprised actually." (GERMAN-W-55). The same respondent also contrasted daily life in Turkey with daily life in Singapore, finding the Turkish one much closer to home: "For the first time I've come [to Turkey], I felt good, I felt proper. ... In Singapore, for instance, I did not have this feeling. ... They had a different mentality, these Asian people. They did not welcome me, as I was welcomed here." (GERMAN-W-55).

***Positive Changes in Turkey's Image Does Not Always Lead to Increased Knowledge of and Heightened Interest in the Turkish Culture***

Although the respondents' daily life experiences brought about positive changes in their image of Turkey, this does not, however, seem to have generated a heightened interest in Turkish language, culture, and art, the latter including literature, music, plastic arts and architecture. In fact, more than half of them did not even respond to questions concerning their information and interest in Turkish art. Most of those who answered questions of this type mentioned only the most visible, the most audible, and the most widely marketed products of Turkish art, and these included, invariably, the pop singer Tarkan, the

novelist Orhan Pamuk and the Topkapi Palace, residence of the Ottoman Sultans until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Only three (two Spanish and one French) respondents expressed a significant amount of information and interest in other, slightly less visible objects and creators of Turkish art, and they mentioned names like the Seljuk and Ottoman architecture, Sufi music and Mevlana, Yashar Kemal, Nazim Hikmet, Ferzan Özpetek and Sezen Aksu.

***Normative Differences and Material Similarities  
between Turkish and European Cultures***

On the issue of the responses regarding the differences and similarities between Turkey and Europe, one can observe that, first, the responses that touched upon the differences between Turkey and Europe were far more than those pointing out the similarities between the two. Secondly, while similarities are generally expressed in terms of material culture (such as food, dress, urban structure, shopping habits), differences are mostly articulated in terms of values, norms and mentalities (such as different concepts of work, leisure, friendship and family). Most respondents talking about the similarities between Turkey and Europe framed those similarities within a discourse of modernization, Westernization and Europeanization of Turkey. Hence, they claimed that Turkey was not “naturally” similar to Europe but that it has become similar as a result of a process of Westernization set out by Atatürk. As one of the respondents said, “The Turkey we are accepting is the Turkey after Ataturk’s reforms, which is secularized and Westernized. Arabic culture was influential on the ancient culture of Turkey; the real change came with Atatürk. ... Atatürk was trying to Westernize Turkey ... I enjoy Turkey’s Westernization because it makes Turkey familiar to me.” (ITALIAN-M-42). The only “natural” similarities between Turkey and Europe, according to some respondents, are the ones that exist between Turkey and

the other countries of Mediterranean Europe, such as Greece, Italy, Spain and southern France. As a French respondent remarked: "I am from south of France, from the Mediterranean Coast, and ... my parents came here and they really liked the Mediterranean part because it is the same culture in a way, the same food, the same landscape. ... For them it was not a foreign country, ... except the language, but for the rest everything was the same."(FRENCH-M-30). Hence, when asked which countries of Europe were most similar to Turkey in cultural terms, almost all of the respondents unhesitatingly said that these were the countries of Mediterranean Europe, particularly Greece.

***Is the Turkish Culture an Obstacle for Turkey's Integration with Europe?***

The respondents were asked whether they thought Turkish culture constituted an obstacle for Turkey's entry into the European Union. Only a few of them answered this question. This silence could be interpreted in two ways, either as a unanimous agreement that culture should not be a factor in Turkey's accession to the EU or as an unspoken supposition that Turkish culture does indeed inhibit Turkey's membership in the EU. Of the three respondents who actually made a comment in that regard, a Spanish respondent unequivocally said that Turkish culture should not be a factor in Turkish-EU relations: "I don't think that the culture of a country can be an obstacle for anything; maybe the politics, maybe the economy can be an obstacle, but not the culture, never the culture." (SPANISH-W-32). A British and a German respondent, on the other hand, gave more cautious answers. The British respondent pointed out the cultural differences within Turkey: "From what I have seen ... in Istanbul, no, it doesn't. ... In terms of everyday life and people's values in Istanbul, I think, no obstacle. I do not know about eastern Turkey." (BRITISH-W-21). The

German respondent, on the other hand, underlined the problems that might be created by the politicization of religion: “So long as religion stays as religion, it should not constitute an obstacle for Turkey’s admission to the EU. ... Islamic religion may be an obstacle if it is misused and abused for political purposes.” (GERMAN-M-50).

***What Could Be Turkey’s Cultural Contributions to Europe?***

Another question that was raised for the respondents was what they thought Turkey could contribute to Europe in the area of culture. The issue of cultural contribution, like the issue of cultural obstacle, was again passed in silence by many respondents. Those who gave any answers to this question brought up two very general areas of cultural contribution, without entering into any specifics: first, Turkey’s adding to the cultural diversity of Europe; second, Turkey’s being a bridge between the East and the West, linking Europe to Islam, and acting as a model of secularism for the Islamic world. The most frequently mentioned area of Turkish cultural contribution to Europe was making Europe culturally more diverse: “There are many restaurants in London offering different national cuisines, such as Mexican, Chinese, Indian, etc. Every culture is being represented in London, in Europe. The Turkish culture can therefore find a place for itself in Europe among others.” (BRITISH-M-26). In addition to the general issue of adding to the diversity, a second area of cultural contribution referred to by the respondents is Turkey’s being a bridge between the East and the West, reconciling Europe with the Islamic world. Hence, in the words of a German respondent, “Turkey can play the role of a bridge between the Arabic-Persian world and Europe, because it has links with both worlds.” (GERMAN-M-50). Similarly, a Spanish respondent emphasized the role of Turkey acting as a model of secularism for the Islamic world: “Turkey is a bridge between East and West. Other

Islamic countries can see that it is possible, like Turkey, to separate religion and the state.” (SPANISH-M-36). With regard to the specific cultural contributions of Turkey to Europe, one area that was mentioned with some frequency was food and culinary culture. Turkish food was mentioned by quite a few respondents as the most attractive Turkish cultural export to Europe. Hence, a German respondent said: “Turkey’s food culture ... would certainly enrich European culture.” (GERMAN-W-55). In a similar vein, a Spanish respondent also praised Turkish food: “Another contribution may be the food. The food is excellent, marvelous ... in Turkey.” (SPANISH-M-59). As for the other areas of culture and arts, no respondent said anything positive or negative, and this is probably due to the fact, mentioned above, that a great majority of them had no specific knowledge about and interest in the Turkish culture, apart from their spontaneous encounters with it in daily life.

### **C) Two Dimensions of Categorical Rejectionism vis-à-vis Turkey: Geography and Religion**

Although most of the respondents underlined the differences rather than the similarities between Turkey and Europe, only a handful of them expressed a certain categorical rejectionism vis-à-vis Turkey. Two factors were highlighted as the main categories of exclusion of Turkey from Europe: geography and religion.

#### ***Turkey Is Out of the Geographical Boundaries of Europe***

The categorical rejections referring to Europe’s geographical boundaries claimed that, except for that part of its territory around the city of Istanbul, Turkey was not part of the European landscape. Hence, in the words of a German respondent, “Only the tip of Turkey belongs to Europe. ... You know, which is just Istanbul, Edirne. ... When the European idea was started, the Middle East was

not considered. ... It [Turkey] was never then really thought of [as belonging to] Europe.” (GERMAN-W-55). A similar European map is drawn by a French respondent: “Geography is easy. ... It goes to Russia and yet Russia is ... the beginning of Asia. Greece because of its history ... but I don’t know anything about the modern culture of Greece. ... Maybe Istanbul, and that is all. Spain, of course, and not much more than that.”(FRENCH-M-30). Finally, a British respondent argued that Turkey is not part of Europe because of the bi-continental, Eurasian character of its territory: “Turkey is not Europe, so how do you say that you are European? OK, we are now in Europe at the moment. I am sitting in Europe. If I take an hour’s journey, a boat journey, I’m gonna be in Asia. So, Turkey was not thought about for EU membership.” (BRITISH-W-38).

### ***Turkey Is Out of the Religious Boundaries of Europe***

The religious version of categorical rejectionism is interesting, in that it underlines not so much the theological variations between Christianity and Islam but the social and cultural disparities between Turkey and Europe, which they believe have been emanating from the different roles religion plays in the two societies. The respondents interpreted religion not so much as a theological system, but as a way of life. What they were opposed to in Islam was not its theological system but the way of life it breeds. As far as religion was concerned, for the modern Europeans, in contrast to their medieval counterparts, what really mattered was not so much differences in the ways people understood and prayed for God. They were not opposed to Islam as a belief system, and they did not necessarily consider Muslims as infidels and unbelievers. Actually, they did not appear to know much and care much about the theological aspects of religion, whether it be Christianity or Islam. As one of the respondents said, “Most of Europe is Christian, even though Christianity is ignored.” (SPANISH-M-59). What

they really cared for and were most sensitive about was the ways in which religion shaped and influenced people's social and political lives. In that sense, almost all European respondents said that religion was important but that it must stay in its proper place, which is the personal sphere, and it must not be allowed to play a role in politics, law and society. In the words of a Spanish respondent, "People in Europe don't want ... religion, ...whether Islamic or Catholic, to be fundamentalist. ... Religion must be soft, important but soft." (SPANISH-M-36). They said that they were opposed to Islam so long as it is mobilized as a social, political and cultural force to deny the rights of women and to drive people away from a modern life. The problem with Turkey was that, despite decades of modernization, Islamic religion has not been completely relocated to the personal sphere and that it still continues to play an important social role. Hence, in the words of a British respondent, "I guess Islam is quite a big part of Turkey." (BRITISH-W-21). The respondents expressed their fears that, given the growing significance of the role Islam plays in Turkish society and the increasing strength of Islamist parties in Turkish politics, one should not discount the likelihood that Turkey might one day put an end to the painful process of Westernization and decide to turn back to its "true" Eastern self.

#### **D) Two Themes of European-Turkish Cultural Differences**

The main cultural differences between Turkey and Europe, as mentioned by the respondents, can be summed up in the following table, as a series of binary oppositions:

<b>TURKEY</b>	<b>EUROPE</b>
DIVIDED-HETEROGENEOUS-UNBALANCED SOCIETY	UNIFIED-HOMOGENEOUS-BALANCED SOCIETY
Class Imbalances	Class Balance
Regional Imbalances	Regional Balance

Ethnic Imbalances	Ethnic Balance
Religious Imbalances	Religious Balance
<b>COMMUNITARIAN</b>	<b>INDIVIDUALISTIC</b>
Family-oriented	Independent
Patriarchal	Egalitarian
Hospitable	Inhospitable
Emotional-Anarchic	Rational-Rule-abiding
Communal Pride	Self-Pride
Iconolatric	Iconoclastic

***Divided-Heterogeneous-Unbalanced Society (Turkey)  
 versus Unified-Homogeneous-Balanced Society  
 (Europe)***

The respondents unanimously agreed that the single most important difference between Turkey and Europe is that the Turkish society is gravely divided along economic, regional, ethnic and religious lines, whereas the European societies are more or less balanced in these respects. The asymmetries of the Turkish society are so large and so visible that the respondents said that there are “two Turkeys” instead of one and that it is difficult to decide which one of these is the “real Turkey”. These “two Turkeys,” the respondents said, are incompatible with one another, they are incommensurable, and there are unbridgeable gaps between the two.

The first gap separating the two Turkeys is reported to be the class gap. Hence, according to a British respondent, Turkey is divided between the very rich and the very poor, with no middle class in between: “The fourteen million population of Istanbul is so heavily divided between the below below working class and the mega mega rich people ... There is no middle class. The poor workers wouldn’t follow an intellectual conversation like this, and the mega rich wouldn’t care about such topics. There is no middle class which one can feel at one wave with.” (BRITISH-W-38). A similar observation was also made by a Spanish interviewee: “In Spain you have a middle class and this is

the majority. Here the middle class is very small, and there are very rich people and very poor people, and between these two extremes everything is frustrating.” (SPANISH-W-32).

Differences between the social classes is said to be aggravated by differences between the regions: “An ‘average’ is virtually meaningless in Turkey, because you get so many extremes. ... Turkey is a land of extremes in terms of differences between regions ... of the country.” (BRITISH-M-43). In the opinion of many respondents, Istanbul and the western part of Turkey look pretty much European, but there is also an Eastern part, with Middle Eastern styles and standards of life: “Turkey is a country of big differences. Istanbul is Europe. ... But if you go the East or to the center of Turkey, it is completely different.” (FRENCH-M-30).

The two Turkeys are, arguably, also separated by an ethnic line: “This country is a European-Arab country. ... There are two groups in Turkey: European looking people and Middle Eastern looking people. Which one of these groups represents the real Turkey?” (ITALIAN-M-42). This observation of ethnic dualism is also shared by a Spanish respondent: “When I see people from Anatolia, I think they must be from Asia or Africa. ... It doesn’t seem like Europe. ... For example, every person in Sultanahmet looks like African or Asian, not like European. ... Also in Taksim, in Istiklal, everything is very much mixed: people who look very Anatolian, people who look very European...” (SPANISH-M-36).

The final dividing line of the Turkish society, according to many respondents, passes through people’s relation to the Islamic religion. This point can be exemplified by the following words of a British interviewee: “How strange is to be in a country where some people wearing hats, going to the mosque everyday and some people are going out, drinking, partying. ... Two things happening at the same time. That’s strange for me.” (BRITISH-W-21). Similarly, in the words of a Spanish interviewee, “There are two different cultures in Turkey.

One very Islamic, another more or less like European culture.” (SPANISH-M-36).

***Community (Turkey) versus Individual (Europe)***

The community versus individual distinction is said to be a second general cultural distinction between Turkey and Europe. Hence, Turks are argued to have such communitarian values as being family-oriented, patriarchal, hospitable, emotional and anarchic, taking pride in membership of a community rather in one's own performance, and iconolatric. Europeans, on the other hand, are said to be characterized by the opposite qualities of individualism, such as independence, male-female egalitarianism, inhospitability, rationality and rule-abiding, taking pride in one's own achievements rather in one's belonging to a group, and iconoclasm.

Family orientation is reported by the respondents to be an essential characteristic of the Turkish culture, and they contrast this to the decline of family life and family values in Europe. In the words of a British respondent, “In Turkey family connections are much stronger than in England. I think that is one of the biggest differences. ... In Turkey, you spend a lot more time with your family.” (BRITISH-W-21). A French respondent makes similar observations: “In Turkey people really like to ... sit and to talk about ... whatever you want ... and there is real social life. In Europe, especially in the big cities, this is disappearing completely. The feeling of the family, of the group is much stronger than ... Europe.” (FRENCH-M-30).

Although the Turkish family has the virtue of offering a loving and caring environment to the individuals, the other side of the picture is that it is also perceived to be a patriarchal institution, in which men do not share the household's burdens with women: “In Turkey men don't expect to do things about the house, about the child, whereas in Britain men share those responsibilities.” (BRITISH-M-43). The patriarchal family also restrains

women's liberty and makes them dependent on men: "No matter how much you are educated, certain traditions or ways of life still go on in the home. I mean it can be quite acceptable for the man to hit the woman. ... The family of the woman would say to her 'Do not get divorced, because you know you'll be on your own. What are you gonna do? You've got children to look after.' So this poor woman put up with being beaten. This still happens despite all these sorts of things, the law system, the education system..." (BRITISH-W-38).

The generally communitarian and other-oriented values and attitudes of the Turks seem to bring about in the minds of the European observers a general perception of Turkish hospitality: "Turks are very hospitable. They like very much new people and they welcome all of them." (SPANISH-W-34). A similar observation comes from a British respondent: "Turkish hospitality is the first thing I think of as a difference between Turkey and England. ... Having guests in Turkey is a very different thing than having guests in England." (BRITISH-W-21).

To be hospitable, available, and always open to others is usually associated, in the minds of the European respondents, with an emotional and "hot" rather than rational and cold, personality. Hence, "Turks are definitely more emotional than the British", a British respondent said (BRITISH-M-26), and "Turks are hot-blooded", a French respondent observed (FRENCH-M-21). In the words of a German respondent, "Turks are very lively and close to one another. Germans are not that close and they are very cold. Germans have a hard time in accepting a foreign culture. Turkey is much better in terms of human relations." (GERMAN-W-51).

There is also a downside of emotionality and hot-bloodedness as it implies, for the European respondents, "thinking Turkish", i.e., over-reaction, erraticness, unpredictability, disrespect for time and disrespect for rules. Emotionality, and all that goes with it, i.e., "thinking Turkish", is then contrasted to "thinking European", i.e.,

rationality, cold-bloodedness, doing things on time and rule-abiding. Hence, in the words of a British respondent, “thinking European, [is] having things on time, working to a standard, working to a set of rules.” (BRITISH-W-38). A similar line of thought comes from a German respondent: “Thinking European is to have forms and work according to rules. Not trying to deviate to find an easier way out. No, you’ve got the rules, you’ve got to stick to them. Germans are particularly known for this. You know, they have a regulation and they go according to this regulation. ... Hence, are Turks thinking European?” (GERMAN-W-55).

A communitarian culture is generally accompanied by a system of identity building in which members of the community submerge their selves in the collective self of the community. This collective identity implies a conception of communal pride, in which membership in a community rather than individual performance is the primary source of individual pride, prestige and honor. In such a cultural code, pride emanates from belonging to a prestigious identity club, and it is relatively independent of what an individual has actually done or accomplished in life by his/her own efforts. Many European respondents observed a somewhat inflated sense of national pride in the Turks. In the words of a British respondent, “Turks are very proud to be Turkish and in a way, unless perhaps you are a football hooligan or something, you are not necessarily proud to be British to the same extent. ... There is a strong sense of nationalism that seems quite apparent in the way people hang up flags for celebrations.” (BRITISH-W-21). A similar observation of an off-the-limits national pride comes from a French interviewee: “Turks [are a] very, very proud people. ... Proud of themselves, proud of their country. Which can be good, but when it is too much it can be bad.” (FRENCH-M-30). A British respondent notes that this inflated sense of national pride might have led Turks to over-react to the Europeans, when the latter criticized them on the issue of the human rights: “Turks, maybe because the Turkish Republic is still young,

are too proud of being Turks and they hate that others want to give them advice, for example in the area of human rights. A smoother approach might work better with the EU.” (BRITISH-M-26).

Communal identity and a system of communal pride led the Turks, according to the respondents, to be iconolatric rather than iconoclastic like the Europeans. The first sign of the iconolatric character of the Turkish culture, a French respondent observed, is power worshipping and a general submissiveness in the face of the wrongdoings of the authorities: “Turkish people do not rise up against the things that they do not approve of. They passively accept what is happening to them. They either wait or escape.” (FRENCH-W-35). Another sign of Turkish iconolatriy is, according many interviewees, the overwhelming presence of the pictures and statues of Atatürk. Hence, “There are Ataturk’s pictures everywhere,” a British respondent said (BRITISH-M-26). In the words of another British respondent, “Ataturk is a major part of Turkey.” (BRITISH-W-21). The lack of self-questioning and self-criticism is yet another aspect of iconolatric culture, and this is what was reported by a German respondent: “Turks fail to accept when they do something wrong, because of lack of self-criticism. For Germans, it is much easier to apologize and to correct their mistakes.” (GERMAN-M-50). A similar unquestioning and uncritical attitude, this time towards science and knowledge, which makes Turkish students accept as true whatever they read in the books, is pointed out by a French respondent: “As a teacher I would say that we don’t have the same mentality about knowledge. ... Maybe in relation to Islam, it is the idea that knowledge is set, it was invented by tremendous people and there is nothing to change. You have to learn it by heart, a little bit like the Koran, and there will be nothing to change. ... In France, the thing is different. Knowledge is something that you have to ... create every time and ... change every time. ... For the Turkish students [their] only interest is in getting a result. They say ‘it is like that’. But saying ‘it is

like that' is not enough. It is why it is like that and trying to explain why it is like that." (FRENCH-M-30).

### **E) Concluding Remarks**

Themes that are extracted from the interviews made with common Europeans are far from being internally consistent, lack precision and specificity, and tainted with confusion. Moreover, as it was stated in the introduction, almost all of the interviews were in the form of a dialectical interplay of exclusionary and inclusionary views. Hence, ordinary Europeans, speaking about their everyday experiences of Turkish people and places, had no doubt their "hesitation" on the issue of the European identity of Turkey, but this hesitation rarely gave way to outright exclusionism and rejectionism. It is precisely this "confusion" and "hesitation," becoming apparent in the interviews and in some of the intellectual texts, that can be used as a starting point for a Turkish-European intercultural dialogue.

### **F) List of the Interviewees**

All the interviews have been conducted by the students of my course POLS 245, Introduction to Turkish Politics, as part of their term papers, during the Fall 2001 semester at the Department of Political Science and International Relations of Boğaziçi University. I extend my sincere thanks to my students. The names of the persons interviewed are not disclosed, as they requested.

<b>1) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>GERMAN-M-24</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Vepaguli Nazarov
Date and Place of the Interview	25.October.2001, İstanbul
<b>2) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>BRITISH-M-43</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Süleyman Cenan Batur
Date and Place of the Interview	30 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>3) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>SPANISH-M-36</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Özer Yördem
Date and Place of the Interview	26 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>4) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>ITALIAN-M-42</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Pittaya Tawantarong
Date and Place of the Interview	26 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>5) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>SPANISH-W-34</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Sedef Işıldak
Date and Place of the Interview	18 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>6) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>GERMAN-M-50</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Ülgen Köse
Date and Place of the Interview	16 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>7) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>SPANISH-W-32</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Pınar Doğan
Date and Place of the Interview	22 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>8) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>BRITISH-M-26</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Burcu Şahinalp
Date and Place of the Interview	17 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>9) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>GERMAN-W-51</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Miray Tanışkan
Date and Place of the Interview	31 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>10) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>BRITISH-W-38</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Işık Üzel
Date and Place of the Interview	28 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>11) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>GERMAN-W-55</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Işık Üzel
Date and Place of the Interview	28 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>12) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>SPANISH-M-59</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Nükhet Nur Arpacı

Date and Place of the Interview	26 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>13) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>FRENCH-M-30</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Ramazan Arıkan
Date and Place of the Interview	23 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>14) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>BRITISH-W-21</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Ceren Yücelen
Date and Place of the Interview	24 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>15) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>FRENCH-W-35</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Gökçen Öğrük
Date and Place of the Interview	17 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>16) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>FRENCH-M-21</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Mehmet Peker
Date and Place of the Interview	27 October 2001, İstanbul
<b>17) REFERENCE CODE</b>	<b>BRITISH-W-21</b>
Name of the Interviewer	Asuman Çetiner
Date and Place of the Interview	27 October 2001, İstanbul

# Swinging between Eurosupportiveness and Euroskepticism: Turkish Public's General Attitudes towards the European Union

***Hakan Yılmaz***

## **A) Introduction**

This paper will examine the different sources and manifestations of Eurosupportiveness and Euroskepticism in the Turkish public opinion. The data that will be analyzed here are drawn from a public opinion survey that was conducted in May and June, 2002, over a sample of 3060 people. The research was commissioned and sponsored by TESEV (The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation) and conducted by four Boğaziçi University professors: Ali Çarkoğlu (Political Science and International Relations), Refik Erzan (Economics), Kemal Kirişçi (Political Science and International Relations) and Hakan Yılmaz (Political Science and International Relations). The objectives for undertaking the said survey was to shed a light on the Turkish public's and its significant subgroups' general attitudes towards and expectations from the EU, the perspectives on the reforms that must be made as part of the Accession Partnership and the National Program, the positions on the issue of the right to use a non-Turkish local language in broadcasting

and self-education, the approaches towards the abolishment of the death penalty, and the general level of support for membership in the EU.

Here, we will first focus on Eurosupportiveness and examine it in relation to four interrelated issues: voting tendencies in a hypothetical referendum on Turkey's EU membership, expectations with regard to the likely changes in people's lives in case of membership in the EU, expected benefits from EU membership, and readiness to share sovereignty with the EU organs. Secondly, we will analyze Euroskepticism as revealed in two important topics: perceptions of the EU as a Christian Club and expected drawbacks of EU membership. The section will end with concluding remarks on certain general tendencies as can be observed in the research data regarding the general attitudes of the Turkish public towards the EU.

### **B) The Level of Eurosupportiveness among the Turkish Public:**

#### **Positive Attitudes towards Membership in the European Union Voting Tendencies in a Hypothetical Referendum on Turkey's EU Membership**

The first remark to be made regarding the Eurosupportive attitudes of the Turkish public is that there is an undisputable majority - 64% - who said they would vote "yes" in a referendum on Turkey's membership in the European Union, in contrast to the 30% of would-be naysayers. The 64% approval rate is somewhat lower than the corresponding figures found in previous researches. This decrease can be explained by a number of factors. The first factor could be that at the time this poll was taken - May and June, 2002 - there was a heightened negative campaign regarding the political costs of meeting some of the Copenhagen political criteria. This campaign, partly led by a coalition partner, MHP, was centered upon

three nationally sensitive issues: first, the need to find a political settlement to the Cyprus problem (“giving concessions over a land filled with the blood of the martyrs”); second, the need to abolish the death penalty (“forgiving Abdullah Öcalan, the public enemy number one”); and third, the need to lift the restrictions on radio and TV broadcasting in Kurdish and other local languages and to do away with the ban on teaching and learning Kurdish and other local languages (“endangering the unity of the nation”).

Other factors that could possibly explain the relative decrease in the rate of the “yes” votes in a hypothetical referendum on Turkey’s membership in the EU can be found in the answers to two other questions of this poll. Thus, when asked whether there was a generally positive or negative change in the EU’s attitude towards Turkey compared to the last year, 40% of the public said that the change was definitely in a negative direction while only 20% said that the change could be considered as positive. Similarly, to the question of whether the constitutional and legal reforms, which had been previously undertaken as part of the National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis, were in general beneficial or harmful for Turkey, those who said that the reforms were harmful (35%) were almost as large as those who said that they were beneficial (37%). The apparent decline in the ratio of the would-be “yes” sayers in a referendum on EU membership was therefore expectable, given a public that was subjected to an intensified anti-EU campaign that included even a member of the governing coalition, and a public that generally believed that the EU’s attitude towards Turkey was changing in a negative direction and that the reforms made by the Turkish government for membership in the EU were as harmful as they were beneficial.

The single-most important observation related to the subgroups’ support rates for EU membership in a hypothetical referendum is that no subgroup’s support rate was below 50%, with the exception of the potential

voters of pro-Islamic SP, whose “yes” rate for the EU remained at 39% and their “no” rate fared at 57%.

When analyzed at the subgroup level, it turned out that the subgroups can be neatly distributed into three categories:

First Category: High Eurosupporters, whose support level in a hypothetical referendum on EU membership would be higher than the average figure of 64% by more than 5 percentage points;

Second Category: Moderate Eurosupporters, whose support level in a hypothetical referendum on EU membership would be higher than the average figure of 64% by 5 percentage points or less;

Third Category: Low Eurosupporters, whose support level in a hypothetical referendum on EU membership would be higher than 50% but lower than the average figure of 64%.

The first subgroup category of High Eurosupporters, whose support level in a hypothetical referendum on EU membership would be higher than the average figure of 64% by more than 5 percentage points, includes the following:

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1. Locating oneself on the left side of the ideological spectrum (between 72% and 79%)

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2. Locating oneself on the low-religiosity side of the religiosity scale (between 69% and 76%)

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3. Being associated with Kurdish culture and identity:

a) Voting for the pro-Kurdish HADEP 85%

b) Speaking Kurdish 72%

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4. Being a potential voter of the center-left and center-right parties:

a) Voting for CHP 78%

b) Voting for ANAP 78%

c) Voting for DSP 75%

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- 
5. Belonging to high income groups:
- a) Having a total monthly household income of 2-3 billion TL 81%
  - b) Having a total monthly household income of 1-1.5 billion TL 78%
  - c) Having a total monthly household income of 750 million-1 billion TL 73%
  - d) Having a total monthly household income of 1.5-2 billion TL 73%
- 
6. Being highly educated:
- a) Having a university education or above 74%
- 
7. Identifying oneself primarily in non-ethnic and non-religious terms:
- a) Identifying oneself primarily as a citizen of the Republic of Turkey 72%
- 
8. Being familiar with European countries and languages:
- a) Having visited a European country 71%
  - b) Speaking English, French or German 70%
- 

The second category, Moderate Eurosupporters, whose support remains slightly above (by 5 percentage points or less) the average number of 64%, includes the following subgroups:

- 
1. Locating oneself on the center-left or on the center-right of the ideological spectrum (between 67% and 68%)
- 
2. Locating oneself on the moderate-religiosity side of the religiosity scale (between 66% and 67%)
- 
3. Being a potential voter of Turkish nationalist parties:
- a) Voting for MHP 69%
  - b) Voting for DYP 65%
-

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4. Identifying oneself primarily in non-religious terms:

- a) Identifying oneself primarily as a Turk 65%

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5. Belonging to middle-income groups:

- a) Having a total monthly household income of 550-750 million TL 68%
- b) Having a total monthly household income of 450-550 million TL 67%
- c) Having a total monthly household income of 3-5 billion TL 67%
- d) Having a total monthly household income of 350-450 million TL 65%
- e) Being a low-to-middle level employee in the public bureaucracy 69%

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6. Having a middle-level education

- a) Having a high-school education 68%
- b) Having a middle-school education 66%

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7. Having regular access to printed information

- a) Reading a newspaper regularly 69%
- 

Combining the characteristics of the High and Moderate Eurosupportiveness, one can observe that both of these attitudes have a strong positive correlation with an ideological disposition towards the left, a religiosity of low to moderate intensity, non-Islamic self-identification, being a potential voter of the secularist (center-left or center-right, nationalist right) political parties, being associated with Kurdish culture and identity, middle-to-high income levels, middle-to-high education levels, being a low-to-middle level employee in the public bureaucracy, having regular access to printed information, and familiarity with European countries and languages.

The third subgroup category, named as Low Eurosupporters, is characterized by a lower support rate for the EU membership, which remains below the

average figure of 64% but still well above the 50% threshold. Included in this category are those subgroups which are oriented towards the right of the ideological spectrum, which locate themselves on the high-religiosity side of the religiosity scale, which are not related to Kurdish culture and identity, have an Islamic political preference, declare Islam as their primary identity, belong to lower income groups, are illiterate or have little formal education, do not have regular access to printed information, are employed in low-tech or traditional sectors, and are unfamiliar with European countries and languages. A tabulation of the third category of Low Eurosupportive groups yields the following:

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1. Locating oneself on the right of the ideological spectrum (between 52% and 61% Yes, between 40% and 34% No)
2. Locating oneself on the high-religiosity side of the religiosity spectrum (between 57%-61% Yes, between 35% and 32% No)
3. Being unrelated to Kurdish culture and identity:
a) Not speaking Kurdish (63% Yes, 31% No)
4. Identifying oneself primarily in religious terms:
a) Identifying oneself primarily as a Muslim (54% Yes, 35% No)
5. Being a potential voter of Islamic-oriented parties:
a) Voting for AKP (52% Yes, 42% No)
6. Being unfamiliar with European countries and languages:
a) Not having visited a European country (63% Yes, 30% No)
b) Not speaking English, French or German (62% Yes, 31% No)

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7. Belonging to lower income groups:

- a) Having a total monthly household income of 250-350 million TL (62% Yes, 31% No)
- b) Having a total monthly household income of less than 150 million TL (60% Yes, 33% No)
- c) Having a total monthly household income of 150-250 million TL (57% Yes, 35% No)

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8. Being occupied in low-tech or traditional sectors:

- a) Being self-employed in jobs that do not require expertise (62% Yes, 34% No)
- b) Being employed as a worker in the private sector (62% Yes, 32% No)
- c) Being employed in agriculture and animal husbandry (60% Yes, 34% No)

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9. Being illiterate and having no or little formal education:

- a) Having an elementary-school education (68% Yes, 34% No)
- b) Being illiterate (56% Yes, 32% No)
- c) Being literate with no formal schooling (55% Yes, 25% No)

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10. Not having regular access to printed information:

- a) Not reading a newspaper regularly (56% Yes, 34% No)
- 

***EU Membership Is Perceived by the Public to Be a State Project, an Elite Project, and a Project of the Secularist-Centrist Political Establishment***

Although the Turkish public gives its full support to EU membership, it still perceives the EU as a project not of the people but of the state, and not of the masses but of the elites. Thus, whereas in the opinion of only 48% of the respondents the Turkish people in general are willing to join the EU, 65% of the respondents perceive the Turkish state as being eager to enter the EU. The other subgroups which scored as high as the Turkish states in terms of

their perceived willingness to make Turkey an EU member were all part of the economic, political or cultural elites: Owners of the Big Corporations (73%), Politicians (72%), Banking and Finance Community (67%), Students (63%). In the thinking of our respondents, such low-status and low-income groups as workers (47%), government employees (44%), owners of small and medium size enterprises (35%), and farmers and peasants (30%) are much less willing than the state and the upper classes to see Turkey as a member of the EU. An interesting point to be made in this regard is the neat distinction that the respondents made between the state in general and the armed forces, in terms of their perceived willingness for Turkey to become an EU member. Hence, while the state in general is thought to be well disposed towards EU membership, the armed forces is believed to be not as much willing, scoring only a meager 46%, falling behind not only the Turkish state but also the Turkish people.

In a like manner, the Turkish public tends to perceive EU membership as a project of the secularist political parties of the center-right and center-left. Hence, those political leaders which are perceived to be very much willing to join the EU appear to be, in a descending order, the leaders of DSP (78%), ANAP (77%), DYP (70%) and CHP (61%). Leaders of the parties which are perceived to be on the far right or on the far left of the political spectrum, as well as those with ethnicist or Islamist leanings, are believed to lend much less support to the cause of the EU. Thus, only 39% of the respondents think that the leader of pro-Kurdish HADEP really wants EU membership. The corresponding figure for the leader of Turkish nationalist MHP is 37%, for the leader of Islamic-oriented AKP is 29%, and for the leader of another Islamist party, SP, 23%.

***Eurooptimism and Europessimism: How Are the Lives Expected to Change with Membership in the EU?***

42% of the respondents said that their lives will be better off in the event of Turkey's EU membership, while less than half of this crowd, 21%, said that their lives will be worse off. Among the subgroups, potential supporters of pro-Islam SP constituted the only group in which the percentage of people who thought that EU membership would make their lives worse off (43%) was more than twice the ratio of those who said the change will be in a positive direction (21%). In all the other subgroups, the ratio of the optimists exceeded that of the pessimists. When ranked according to the differences between the percentages of the optimistic and pessimistic answers, we get three categories, very similar to the one that emerged in relation to the referendum question analyzed above:

First Category: High Eurooptimists, for whom the difference between the optimistic and pessimistic responses exceeded the average difference of 22% by 10 percentage points or more;

Second Category: Moderate Eurooptimists, for whom the difference between the optimistic and pessimistic responses exceeded the average difference of 22% by less than 10 percentage points;

Third Category: Low Eurooptimists, for whom the difference between the optimistic and pessimistic responses remained above zero but less than the average difference of 22%.

The first category of High Eurooptimists, for whom the difference between the optimistic and pessimistic responses exceeded the average difference of 22% by 10 percentage points or more, includes the following subgroups:

- 
1. Being associated with Kurdish culture and identity:
    - a) Voting for pro-Kurdish HADEP 55%
    - b) Speaking Kurdish 33%
-

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2. Being a potential voter of the center-left and center-right parties:

- a) Voting for ANAP 44%
  - b) Voting for CHP 40%
  - c) Voting for DSP 37%
- 

3. Belonging to high income groups:

- a) Having a total monthly household income of 2-3 billion TL 55%
  - b) Having a total monthly household income of 1-1.5 billion TL 46%
- 

4. Being highly educated:

- a) Having a university education or above 33%
- 

5. Being familiar with European countries and languages:

- a) Having visited a European country 40%
  - b) Speaking English, French or German 33%
- 

The second category of Moderate Eurooptimists, for whom the difference between the optimistic and pessimistic responses exceeded the average difference of 22% by less than 10 percentage points, includes the following subgroups:

---

1. Being a potential voter of the center-right and Turkish nationalist parties:

- a) Voting for MHP 27%
  - b) Voting for DYP 25%
- 

2. Identifying oneself primarily in non-religious terms:

- a) Identifying oneself primarily as a citizen of the Republic of Turkey 28%
  - b) Identifying oneself primarily as a Turk 26%
-

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3. Belonging to middle-to-high income groups:

- a) Having a total monthly household income of 1.5-1 billion TL 31%
- b) Having a total monthly household income of 750 million-1 billion TL 30%
- c) Having a total monthly household income of 5 billion TL or more 29%
- d) Having a total monthly household income of 550-750 million TL 27%
- e) Having a total monthly household income of 450-550 million TL 27%

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4. Having a middle-level education

- a) Having a high-school education 26%
  - b) Having a middle-school education 23%
- 

The third category of Low Eurooptimists, for whom the difference between the optimistic and pessimistic responses remained above zero but less than the average difference of 22%, includes the following subgroups:

---

1. Being unrelated to Kurdish culture and identity:

- a) Not speaking Kurdish 20%

---

2. Identifying oneself primarily in religious terms:

- a) Identifying oneself primarily as a Muslim 11%

---

3. Being a potential voter of Islamic-oriented parties:

- a) Voting for AKP 4%

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4. Being unfamiliar with European countries and languages:

- a) Not having visited a European country 19%
  - b) Not speaking English, French or German 18%
-

- 
5. Belonging to lower income groups:
- a) Having a total monthly household income of less than 150 million TL 19%
  - b) Having a total monthly household income of 250-350 million TL 15%
  - c) Having a total monthly household income of 150-250 million TL 14%
- 
6. Being illiterate and having no or little formal education:
- a) Being illiterate 17%
  - b) Having an elementary-school education 15%
  - c) Being literate with no formal schooling 15%
- 

Combining the characteristics of the High and Moderate Eurooptimism, one can observe that both of these attitudes have a strong positive correlation with non-Islamic self-identification, being a potential voter of the secularist (center-left, center-right, nationalist) political parties, being associated with Kurdish culture and identity, middle-to-high income levels, middle-to-high education levels, and familiarity with European countries and languages. The third category, named as Low Eurooptimists, includes those subgroups which are not related to Kurdish culture and identity, have an Islamic political preference, declare Islam as their primary identity, belong to lower income groups, are illiterate or have little formal education, and are unfamiliar with European countries and languages.

***Eurooptimism and Europessimism: Expected Benefits from EU Membership***

The principal benefits expected from EU membership, as perceived by all of the respondents, fall into five general categories, in a descending order of preference:

*Economic benefits:* economic growth; decreasing rates of inflation and unemployment (27%);

*Social benefits:* decreasing corruption (19%), increasing social stability and peace (6%);

*Political benefits:* a more advanced democracy and a wider participation of the people in government (17%); a fairer treatment of the people by the authorities (6%); Freedom of movement of the Turkish citizens in the EU countries (11%);

*International benefits:* Turkey's rising power and prestige in the international arena (10%).

When analyzed at the subgroup level, we do not obtain a clear-cut concentration of subgroups around one or the other of the above-mentioned categories, as it was the case with the previously analyzed issues of voting in a referendum regarding EU membership and assessing the overall positive or negative impact of EU membership on the lives of the respondents. However, some meaningful generalizations can still be made, if we rank the subgroups according to whether they scored higher than the average figure in a given category.

Hence, in the category of economic benefits, we can observe that among the potential voters of the political parties, only those of the secularist parties of the center-right and far-right scored significantly higher than the average figure of 27%: ANAP (33%), MHP (32%) and DYP (30%). Other subgroups that ranked higher than the average were those who declared a non-religious primary identity, namely those who said that their primary identity was citizen of the Republic of Turkey (30%) and those who declared "Turkish" as their primary identity (28%). Other than that, quite unrelated income and education groups ranked higher than others in terms of their penchant for economic benefits as the principal expected utility of EU membership. Moreover, there seems to be no correlation between prioritizing economic benefits and locating oneself on the left-right spectrum or on the low-high religiosity scale.

19% of the respondents pointed out an essentially social benefit, "decreasing corruption", as the principal benefit to be expected from EU membership. There seems

to be a weak correlation between prioritizing social benefits and locating oneself on the right-wing of the left-right spectrum and on the high-religiosity side of the low-high religiosity scale. It should also be noted the potential voters of all parties, except those of MHP and CHP, scored higher than the average. Among the subgroups that scored higher than the average in this category four meaningful constellations can be observed:

- 
1. Those with the lowest levels of education:
    - a) Being literate with no formal schooling 28%
    - b) Having an elementary-school education 24%
    - c) Being illiterate 22%
    - d) Having a middle-school education 19%
- 
2. Those at the lowest levels of income:
    - a) Having a total monthly household income of less than 150 million TL 26%
    - b) Having a total monthly household income of 250-350 million TL 21%
    - c) Having a total monthly household income of 150-250 million TL 20%
- 
3. Those who define themselves in non-citizenship terms, by declaring "Muslim" or "Turkish" as their primary identity:
    - a) Identifying oneself primarily as a Muslim 24%
    - b) Identifying oneself primarily as a Turk 19%
- 
4. Those who are not familiar with European countries and languages:
    - a) Not speaking English, French or German 21%
    - b) Not having visited a European country 19%
- 

Political benefits, a more advanced democracy and a wider participation of the people in government, was shown by 17% of the respondents as the principal benefit to be

expected from EU membership. There seems to be a strong correlation between prioritizing political benefits and locating oneself on the left-wing of the left-right spectrum and on the low-religiosity side of the low-high religiosity scale. One can also pinpoint the following five meaningful constellations of the subgroups in this category:

- 
1. Those with middle-to-high levels of education:
    - a) Having a university education or above 27%
    - b) Having a high school education 19%

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  2. Those at middle-to-high levels of income:
    - a) Having a total monthly household income of 2-3 billion TL 35%
    - b) Having a total monthly household income of 1-1.5 billion TL 27%
    - c) Having a total monthly household income of 1.5-2 billion TL 23%
    - d) Having a total monthly household income of 750 million-1billion TL 21%
    - e) e Having a total monthly household income of 450-550 million TL 19%

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  3. Those who are associated with Kurdish culture and identity:
    - a) Voting for the pro-Kurdish HADEP 27%
    - b) Speaking Kurdish 21%

---

  4. Those who identify themselves primarily in non-religious terms:
    - a) Identifying oneself primarily as a citizen of the Republic of Turkey 18%
    - b) Identifying oneself primarily as a Turk 18%

---

  5. Those who are familiar with European countries and languages:
    - a) Having visited a European country 25%
    - b) Speaking English, French or German 23%
-

The respondents placed freedom of movement in the EU countries in a distant fourth place, with a score of 11%, in their ranking of the expected benefits of EU membership. As with the category of economic benefits, diverse groups scored higher than the average figure of 11%, coming from low as well as high educational and income backgrounds. The most obvious constellation is familiarity with European countries and languages, as both previous visitors to a European country and speakers of a major European language scored higher than the average with a preference rate of 13%. Among the self-identification categories, only those who said they did not speak Kurdish (11%) and those who declared their primary identity as Turkish (11%) were placed slightly above the average. Finally, potential voters of only three political parties, SP (13%), AKP (11%), and CHP (11%), believed more than the average respondent that the principal benefit of EU membership is the freedom of movement in Europe. Examining the correlations between the preference of the freedom of movement and the low-high religiosity axis, we can say that those who placed themselves on the low-religiosity side of the axis have a slightly greater tendency to point to freedom of movement as their primary expected benefit from EU membership. Interestingly, however, those who located themselves on the right-wing of the left-right axis exhibit a slightly greater tendency to choose freedom of movement as the number one benefit of membership in the EU.

#### ***Trust in the EU: Readiness to Share Sovereignty***

Sharing sovereignty with a supra-national entity like the EU has been a key area of nation-state resistance to the EU. Our respondents were asked to identify the one policy area which they deemed sovereignty sharing with the EU would be most unacceptable. 49% of the respondents pointed to defense and foreign policy, 31% to economic and social policy, and 13% to educational and cultural

policy. What is to be noted is that even in a very sensitive area like defense and foreign policy, we have not observed a majority of the respondents being opposed to sharing sovereignty with the EU organs. In the two other areas, which can be considered as less sensitive when judged by the logic of the nation-state, the level of popular opposition to sovereignty sharing with a supra-national entity did not go beyond that of a sizeable minority.

The subgroups which scored higher than the average figure of 49% in highlighting defense and foreign policy as the most unacceptable area of sovereignty sharing with the EU do not exhibit clear party preferences. However, there is an unambiguous pattern in terms of income groups and education levels, in that the higher is a respondent's income group and education level, the higher is his/her tendency to show defense and foreign policy as the most undesirable area of sovereignty sharing. In addition to belonging to middle-to-high income and education groups, those who appear to be more sensitive than the others to the issue of defense and foreign policy have also defined their primary identity in non-religious terms, did not have an apparent connection with Kurdish culture and identity, and were familiar with European languages and countries. When the matter is examined along the scales of left-right orientations and low-high-religiosity, it can be observed that the percentages of those who think that defense and foreign policy is the first policy area in which sovereignty sharing with the EU would be most unacceptable appear to be slightly greater on the left-wing of the ideological spectrum and on the low-religiosity side of the religiosity scale. These points are detailed in the following tabulation:

---

**1. Income Levels: Middle-to-high**

- a) Total monthly household income more than TL 5 billion 71%
  - b) Total monthly household income between TL 2-3 billion 69%
  - c) Total monthly household income between TL 3-5 billion 67%
  - d) Total monthly household income between TL 1.5-2 billion 62%
  - e) Total monthly household income between TL 750 million-1 billion 57%
  - f) Total monthly household income between TL 550-750 million 56%
  - g) Total monthly household income between TL 250-350 million 53%
  - h) Total monthly household income between TL 450-550 million 51%
- 

**2. Education Levels: Middle-to-high**

- a) University and above 58%
  - b) High School 55%
  - c) Middle School 51%
- 

**3. Primary Identity: Non-religious**

- a) Primary self-identification: Turkish 54%
  - b) Primary self-identification: Citizen of the Rep. of Turkey 50%
- 

**4. Kurdish Identity and Culture: No**

- a) Does not speak Kurdish 50%
- 

**5. Familiarity with Europe: Yes**

- a) Visited a European Country 60%
  - b) Speaks English/French/German 55%
- 

The subgroups which scored higher than the average figure of 31% in underlining economic and social policy as the most unacceptable area of sovereignty sharing with the EU do not exhibit clear party preferences, and they appear to be evenly distributed along the left-right and

low-high religiosity scales. We can however discern some constellations in terms of income groups, education levels, and ethnic and religious identity declarations. Hence, more sensitivity on sovereignty sharing in the area of economic and social policy came from those who belonged to low income groups and low education levels. Moreover, their primary self-identification was expressed in religious terms, they had connections with Kurdish culture and identity, and they were not familiar with European cultures and languages. Details of this account can be found in the following tabulation:

---

1.	Income Levels: Low	
	a)	Total monthly household income less than TL 150 million 36%
	b)	Total monthly household income between TL 150-250 million 35%
	c)	Total monthly household income between TL 350-450 million 33%
	d)	Total monthly household income between TL 250-350 million 32%
<hr/>		
2.	Education Levels: Low	
	a)	Illiterate 42%
	b)	Elementary School 35%
	c)	Literate with no formal schooling 33%
	d)	Middle School 32%
<hr/>		
3.	Primary Identity: Religious	
	a)	Primary Self-Identification: Muslim 33%
<hr/>		
4.	Kurdish Identity and Culture: Yes	
	a)	Speaks Kurdish 38%
	b)	Potential Voters of Pro-Kurdish HADEP 36%
<hr/>		
5.	Familiarity with Europe: No	
	a)	Speaks English/French/German: No 33%
	b)	Visited a European Country: No 32%

---

Finally, a higher sensitivity towards educational and cultural policy, as measured by scoring more than the average 13% in pointing out that particular policy area as the most inconvenient area of sovereignty sharing, brings together a rather unexpected coalition of subgroups including those at middle-to-high income and education levels, those with Islamic cultural and political orientations, and those who expressed affinity with Kurdish identity. The percentages of those who think that educational and cultural policy would be the first policy area in which sovereignty sharing with the EU would be most unacceptable appear to be more or less equal on the left and right wings of the left-right spectrum. However, when it comes to the low-high religiosity scale, the ratios of those prioritizing educational and cultural policy appear to be slightly greater on the high-religiosity side. An examination of the following tabulation will give more details on these points:

---

1. Income Levels: Middle-to-high

- a) Total monthly household income between TL 1-1.5 billion 21%
- b) Total monthly household income between TL 3-5 billion 17%
- c) Total monthly household income between TL 450-550 million 15%
- d) Total monthly household income between TL 350-450 million 15%
- e) Total monthly household income between TL 550-750 million 14%

---

2. Education Levels: Middle-to-high

- a) University and above 16%
- b) High School 14%

---

3. Primary Identity: Religious

- a) Primary Self-Identification: Muslim 14%

---

4. Kurdish Identity and Culture: No

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a) Does not speak Kurdish 13%

---

5. Political Party Preferences: Islamic-oriented Parties

a) Potential Voters of SP 23%

b) Potential Voters of AKP 13%

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### **C) The Level of Euroskepticism among the Turkish Public:**

#### **Negative Attitudes towards the European Union Is the EU a Christian Club?**

The Christian roots and identity of Europe have often been invoked by European conservative circles to deny Turkey a place in the EU. We wondered whether these and similar Christianity-based European exclusionary views targeting Turkey have found an echo among the Turkish public, leading them to view the EU as a Christian Club. It turned out that, partly echoing European exclusionary narratives against Turkey using the motive of Christianity, and partly being rooted in Turkey's own history and culture, 49% of the respondents said that they viewed the EU as a Christian Club, while 42% of them believed that there was place in the EU for a Muslim country like Turkey.

When we examine the subgroups who scored more than the average figure of 49% in identifying the EU as a Christian Club, we find that the first places are occupied by the potential voters of the Islamic-oriented parties and by those who express their primary identity as Muslim. Similarly, an examination of the low-high religiosity scale shows that the percentage of those who perceive the EU as a Christian Club steadily decreases as we move along from the low-religiosity to the high-religiosity side of the scale, starting with 32% at the lowest degree of religiosity and ending with 51% at the highest. A confirming outcome emerges from an observation of the left-right spectrum. Hence, the ratio of those who think that the EU is a Christian Club steadily increases as we move along from the left to the right-wing of the ideological spectrum,

starting with 37% at the extreme left and ending with 67% at the extreme right. Not surprisingly, therefore, those respondents who tend to view their own identity primarily in religious terms also tend to characterize Europe with reference to religion. In addition to Islamic and generally right-wing cultural and political affiliations, perceiving Europe as a Christian Club is also correlated with lower income levels, lower education levels and unfamiliarity with European countries and languages. The following tabulation offers more details regarding these conjectures:

---

1. Income Levels: Low

- a) Total monthly household income between TL 350-450 million 55%
  - b) Total monthly household income between TL 150-250 million 51%
  - c) Total monthly household income between TL 250-350 million 51%
  - d) Total monthly household income of less than TL 150 million 50%
- 

2. Education Levels: Low

- a) Illiterate 52%
  - b) Literate with no formal schooling 51%
  - c) Elementary School 50%
- 

3. Primary Identity: Muslim

- a) Primary Self-Identification: Muslim 58%
- 

4. Political Party Preferences: Islamist-Turkish Nationalist

- a) Potential Voter of Saadet P. 69%
  - b) Potential Voter of AKP 68%
  - c) Potential Voter of MHP 51%
- 

5. Familiarity with Europe: NO

- a) Speaks English/French/German: NO 67%
  - b) Visited a European Country: NO 65%
-

In contrast to those who view Europe as a Christian Club, those who think more than the average figure of 42% that the EU may open its doors to a Muslim country like Turkey come mainly from among the respondents who expressed their primary identity in non-religious terms, either as a citizen of the Republic of Turkey or as Turk, and who tended to vote for secularist parties of the right and the left. An assessment of the low-high religiosity scale and the left-right ideological spectrum yields data supporting these observations. Hence, the percentage of those who think that the EU can open its doors to Muslim countries such as Turkey steadily decreases as we move along from the low-religiosity to the high-religiosity side of the low-high religiosity scale, starting with 62% at the lowest degree of religiosity and ending with 41% at the highest. Similarly, the ratio of those who think that the EU can open its doors to Muslim countries such as Turkey steadily decreases as we move along from the left to the right side of the left-right spectrum, starting with 58% at the extreme left and ending with 28% at the extreme right. In addition to secular and generally left-leaning cultural and political affiliations, the perception that the EU can accept a Muslim country into its ranks is also correlated with affiliation with Kurdish culture and identity, higher income levels, higher education levels, and familiarity with European countries and languages. These points are illustrated in the tabulation that follows:

---

 1. Income Levels: Middle-to-high

- a) Total monthly household income between TL 750 million-1 billion 53%
  - b) Total monthly household income between TL 1-1.5 billion 51%
  - c) Total monthly household income between TL 1.5-2 billion 50%
  - d) Total monthly household income between TL 3-5 billion 50%
  - e) Total monthly household income between TL 2-3 billion 46%
  - f) Total monthly household income between TL 550-750 million 45%
  - g) Total monthly household income between TL 450-550 million 45%
  - h) Total monthly household income than TL 5 billion 43%
- 

## 2. Education Levels: Middle-to-high

- a) High School 45%
  - b) University or above 44%
  - c) Middle School 44%
- 

## 2. Primary Identity: Non-Religious

- a) Primary self-identification: Citizen of the Rep. of Turkey 49%
  - b) Primary self-identification: Turkish 44%
- 

## 3. Kurdish Identity and Culture: Yes

- a) Potential Voter of Pro-Kurdish HADEP 65%
  - b) Speaks Kurdish 44%
- 

## 4. Political Party Preferences: Secularist Center-Left, Center-Right, Far Right

- a) Potential Voter of ANAP 59%
  - b) Potential Voter of DSP 56%
  - c) Potential Voter of DYP 52%
  - d) Potential Voter of CHP 52%
  - e) Potential Voter of MHP 43%
- 

## 5. Familiarity with Europe: YES

- a) Speaks English/French/German: YES 47%
-

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b) Visited a European Country: YES 46%

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***What Harms Could be Expected from EU Membership?***

64% of the respondents think that the biggest disadvantage of EU membership will be felt in the area of culture, in terms of a weakening of national or religious values. On the other hand, those who think that economic and political difficulties (such as the weakening of the economy, the constriction of national independence, the breakup of national unity and the violation of the secular social and political order) will constitute the most serious problems as might be caused by EU membership remained at a much lower ratio of 29%.

A closer examination of those who pointed to culture more than the average figure of 64% as the biggest problem area in case of EU membership reveals that they tend to express their primary identity in religious terms and tend to vote for far-right (Islamic-oriented and Turkish nationalist) political parties. These observations are confirmed by data coming from an analysis of the low-high religiosity and left-right scales. Hence, the percentage of those who think that the biggest harm of EU membership will be felt in the area of national and religious values steadily increases as we move along from the low-religiosity to the high-religiosity side of the religiosity scale, starting with 31% at the lowest degree of religiosity and ending with 64% at the highest. In a parallel manner, the ratio of those who believe that the most serious problems of EU membership will be felt in the area of cultural values steadily increases as we move along from the left to the right side of the ideological spectrum, starting with 44% at the extreme left and ending with 74% at the extreme right. Affiliation with Kurdish culture and identity is also a

factor that leads a respondent to be more sensitive than the average towards the problems that the EU membership might cause in the area of national or religious values. As expected, other correlated factors are lower education levels, lower income levels and unfamiliarity with European countries and languages. The tabulation below gives more details in that regard:

1. Income Levels: Low	
a)	Total monthly household income less than TL 150 million 74%
b)	Total monthly household income between TL 250-350 million 68%
c)	Total monthly household income between TL 150-250 million 66%
d)	Total monthly household income between TL 350-450 million 65%
2. Education Levels: Low	
a)	Literate with no formal schooling 72%
b)	Illiterate 71%
c)	Elementary School 70%
d)	Middle School 67%
3. Primary Identity: Muslim	
a)	Primary Self-Identification: Muslim 75%
4. Kurdish Identity and Culture: Yes	
a)	Speaks Kurdish 71%
b)	Potential Voter of Pro-Kurdish HADEP 67%
5. Political Party Preferences: Islamic-oriented and Turkish Nationalist Right	
a)	Potential Voter of Saadet P. 85%
b)	Potential Voter of AKP 78%
c)	Potential Voter of MHP 71%
d)	Potential Voter of DYP 69%
6. Familiarity with Europe: NO	
a)	Speaks English/French/German: NO 67%
b)	Visited a European Country: NO 65%

On the other hand, those who underlined economic and political difficulties more than the average figure of 29% as the most likely problem areas that might be aggravated by EU membership tend to express their primary identity in non-religious terms and tend to vote for secularist center-left and center-right parties. An analysis of data coming from an observation of the low-high religiosity and left-right scales confirms these points. Hence, the percentage of those who think that the biggest harm of EU membership will be felt in the area of economic and political values steadily decreases as we move along from the left to the right side of the left-right axis, starting with 45% at the extreme left and ending with a meager 17% at the extreme right. In a like manner, the ratio of those who think that the biggest problems of EU membership will be experienced in the area of economic and political values steadily decreases as we move along from the low-religiosity to the high-religiosity side of the religiosity scale, starting with 56% at the lowest degree of religiosity and ending with 25% at the highest. Non-affiliation with Kurdish culture and identity is also a factor that leads a respondent to be more sensitive than the average towards the difficulties that the EU membership might cause in the area of economic and political values. Other factors that help explain the inclination towards economic and political difficulties in case of EU membership are, as expected, higher education levels, higher income levels and familiarity with European countries and languages. These conjectures are illustrated in the tabulation that follows:

---

**1. Income Levels: Middle-to-high**

- a) Total monthly household income than TL 5 billion 72%
- b) Total monthly household income between TL 2-3 billion 54%
- c) Total monthly household income between TL 1.5-2 billion 52%
- d) Total monthly household income between TL 550-750 million 38%
- e) Total monthly household income between TL 1-1.5 billion 36%
- f) Total monthly household income between TL 450-550 million 35%
- g) Total monthly household income between TL 750 million-1 billion 32%

---

**2. Education Levels: Middle-to-high**

- a) University and above 46%
- b) High School 36%

---

**3. Primary Identity: Non-Religious, Turkish**

- a) Primary self-identification: Citizen of the Rep. of Turkey 37%
- b) Primary self-identification: Turkish 31%

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**4. Kurdish Identity and Culture: No**

- a) Does not speak Kurdish 29%

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**5. Political Party Preferences: Secularist Center-Left and Center-Right**

- a) Potential Voter of CHP 45%
- b) Potential Voter of ANAP 31%

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**6. Familiarity with Europe: YES**

- a) Speaks English/French/German: YES 39%
  - b) Visited a European Country: YES 34%
-

### **Concluding Remarks**

As a general remark, we can say that Eurosupportiveness and Eurooptimism in Turkey tends to increase as we move along:

- ✓ from lower to higher income groups,
- ✓ from lower to higher education levels,
- ✓ from less to more access to written information,
- ✓ from less to more familiarity with European countries and languages,
- ✓ from traditional, rural and low-tech to modern, urban and high-tech occupations,
- ✓ from ethnic and religious self-identification to the one based on Republican citizenship,
- ✓ from less to more association with Kurdish culture and identity,
- ✓ from higher to lower degrees of religiosity,
- ✓ from the right-wing to the left-wing of the ideological spectrum,
- ✓ from the support base of Islamic-oriented to the support base of secularist political parties, and from the support base of extremist to the support base of centrist political parties.

There is no need in saying that Euroskepticism and Europessimism would tend to increase as we moved along in the opposite directions along all these axes.

Running the risk of over-generalization, we can argue that Eurosupportiveness and Eurooptimism in Turkey tends to increase as we move along from traditional to modern life styles, or to put it in more precise terms, from modernizing to modernized strata of the society. The one big exception to this general trend is the subgroup associating itself with Kurdish culture and identity. Though, sociologically speaking, they in general have the characteristics of traditional or modernizing life styles, they

tend to give overwhelming support to the cause of the EU, which may be because they may think that Kurdish cultural and political rights will be best served in a more democratized and liberalized Turkey in line with the pre-conditions of EU membership. A similar turnaround towards greater Eurosupportiveness could also be observed in those social groups for whom Islam constitutes the primary basis of self-identification. The generally traditional or less modernized Islamic-identity groups, very much like the Kurdish ones, might decide to give much greater support to the cause of Turkey's membership in the EU, if they perceived that they would find greater religious and political freedom in a Europeanized Turkey.

Perhaps the most striking observation that can be drawn from the current research is that in Turkey there are varying degrees and types of Euroskepticism, but almost no Eurorejectionism, as can be found in certain other candidate or even member states of the EU. First of all, every subgroup, except the rather small crowd of the supporters of Islamic-oriented SP, were reported to be ready to vote in favor of EU membership by a decisive majority. In other words, there are high, moderate and low Eurosupportive groups in Turkey, but no group takes an open and decisive position against the country's EU membership. Secondly, and again with the exception of the potential voters of SP, people in general expected better lives in a Turkey embarked onto the EU. Hence, for the great majority of the subgroups the ratio of people who thought that EU membership would make their lives better off far exceeded the ratio of those who said the change will be in an unwelcome direction. In other words, there is high, moderate or low Eurooptimism in Turkey, but no sizeable and significant Europessimism. Third, in line with its general Eurosupportiveness and Eurooptimism, Turkish public does not seem to have much of a problem in sharing sovereignty with the EU organs. Hence, even in a very sensitive area like national defense, we have not observed a majority of the respondents being opposed to

sharing sovereignty with the EU organs. In the two other areas, which can be considered as less sensitive when judged by the logic of the nation-state, the level of popular opposition to sovereignty sharing with a supra-national entity did not go beyond that of a sizeable minority.

The virtual absence of a meaningful Turkish Eurorejectionism strikingly contrasts with ever growing European exclusionism and outright rejectionism directed against Turkey. This European rejectionism targeting Turkey, which can be observed among both the elites as well as the common people of Europe, and which uses historical, geographical, civilizational, religious, cultural or political motives, stands in dramatic contrast with the almost non-existent Turkish rejectionism aimed at Europe. We should not draw from this observation the conclusion that there is need for a Turkish rejectionism of Europe, but this certainly means that there is need for a healthy and vigorous Turkish critique of the not so infrequently unfair and unmerited European treatment of Turkey.

# Indicators of Euroskepticism in the Turkish Public Opinion by the end of 2003: Basic Findings of a Survey

***Hakan Yılmaz***

This brief paper will be devoted to the presentation of the basic findings of a research project on Euroskepticism in Turkey, directed by Hakan Yılmaz, with the assistance of Nazan Maksudyan and Zeynep Özgen. This project was co-sponsored by the Open Society Institute Assistance Fund and Bogazici University Research Fund and conducted between July 2003 and July 2004. Its aim was to explore doubts, anxieties and fears of the Turkish public concerning Europe and the European Union, both at the elite as well as popular culture levels. To that purpose, the researchers combined qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry. Hence, they made in-depth interviews with over 80 people during the summer of 2003 and conducted a nation-wide survey in November 2003 over a sample of 2250 people. In addition, they scanned the major newspapers and surveyed a large body of literature to discover Euroskeptic beliefs and attitudes. In what follows, popular Euroskeptic attitudes, as revealed by the public opinion poll, will be summarized.

The first major finding of the survey, regarding the attitudes of the Turkish public towards membership in the European Union, is that there is an undisputable majority - 74% - who said that they would vote "yes" in a

referendum on Turkey's membership in the European Union, in contrast to the 17% of would-be naysayers. It should be noted that this "Yes" rate of 74% in November 2003 represents a 10% increase over the comparable figure of 64% that we had found out in our TESEV survey of May 2002. In a similar vein, the "No" rate fell to 17% in November 2003 from its level of 30% in June 2002. These significant changes in the public attitudes towards the EU can be attributed, we believe, to the equally significant change in the government's policy towards the European Union. Hence, the government of Prime Minister Erdogan, which came to power after the November 2002 elections, embraced the cause of Turkey's accession to the EU with such a degree of enthusiasm and determination that was in sharp contrast to the hesitant, timid and undecided stance of the previous governments.

Among the political party constituencies, no subgroup's support rate was below 50%. Interestingly, the highest "Yes" rate, 86%, came from the supporters of the center-left Republican People's Party, which has been the main parliamentary opposition party since November 2002. This overwhelming pro-EU attitude of the RPP voters stood in sharp contrast with the RPP leadership's rather lukewarm and halfhearted position in the area of political reforms. This halfheartedness reached the dimensions of an all-out opposition on certain issues in the government's reform agenda, particularly as regards the government's efforts to find a solution to the Cyprus question within the framework of the Annan Plan. Hence, while the government came with a plan to re-start the Cyprus negotiations under the auspices of the UN Secretary General, the spokesmen of the RPP, in a language no different from Rauf Denktaş's, vehemently attacked the Annan Plan as a doomsday scenario that would have brought the end of the Turkish existence on the island. Closely following the supporters of the RPP were the supporters of the pro-Kurdish Democratic People's Party, who said, by a margin of 84%, that they

would “Yes” in a referendum on Turkey’s membership in the European Union. The lowest “Yes” rates belonged to the constituencies of the two far-right parties: that of the Nationalist Action Party (60%) and that of the Felicity Party (58%). The 71% “Yes” rate of the JDP (Justice and Development Party) voters remained slightly below the national average. When we have a look at the differences between the language groups, we can observe that the “Yes” rate of the Kurdish speakers, 78%, was slightly above the national average of 74% while that of the speakers of Turkish only, 73%, remained slightly below the national average. However, it should be noted that these differences remained within our margin of error of 5% and that they did not represent meaningful deviations from the overall trend.

In the area of the interplay of national and European identities, the first question we asked to our respondents was the typical Eurobarometer question. In other words, we requested to choose between European and Turkish identities. 54% of them said that they would keep their national identity only, with no blending of it with a European identity. This is significantly higher than the EU-15 average of 38% as found in the Eurobarometer 57 (Spring 2002), but it is still lower than the corresponding figures for the United Kingdom (62%), Finland (55%) and Sweden (54%). “Turkish and European” turned out to be the desired identity combination for about 31% of our respondents, “European and Turkish” for 5% and “European Only” for a mere 4%. The corresponding figures for the EU-15 were 48% (Nationality and European), 7% (European and Nationality), and only 4% (European Only). When asked whether Turkey is a part of Europe in terms of geography and history, a decisive majority, around 60% of the respondents, said “Yes” in each count. However, the “Yes” rate remained at only 25% when the same question was asked in relation to the economy and culture, and it sharply fell to 7% on the criterion of religion. We asked the people whether they felt themselves, as individuals, as

belonging to Asia, Europe, the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Balkans. 33% said they felt belonging to Asia, 22% to Europe, 18% to the Mediterranean, 7% to the Middle East and only 2% to the Balkans. When we add up “Asia” and the “Middle East” and call it the “East” and bring together “Europe”, the “Mediterranean” and the “Balkans” and name it the “West”, then it turns out that exactly the same rates of the respondents, 40%, felt inclined towards the East and towards the West as the cradle of their self-identifications.

Our study has singled out the following five major areas of anxiety, as regards the Turkish public’s perspectives on the European Union:

1. Exclusion Anxiety: Being Excluded, Avoided, Put off by the Europeans.
2. Historical Anxiety: Stemming from the Historical Memory (The Tanzimat And Sèvres Syndromes).
3. Religious Anxiety: Is the EU a “Christian Club”?
4. Separatism Anxiety: The Risk of the Breakdown of National Unity.
5. Moral Anxiety: Erosion of Moral Values.

The feelings of being excluded, avoided or put off by the European Union are predominant among the respondents. Hence, 60% believed that the EU has treated Turkey with double standards, that it imposed on Turkey conditions that it had not demanded from the other candidate states, and that it has not viewed Turkey as part of the European family of states. On the question of whether the human rights, minority rights and other political reforms being demanded from Turkey by the EU were nothing but a repetition of history, complete with the capitulations, the unilateral concessions of the Tanzimat era, and the terms of the Sèvres Treaty, the respondents were roughly divided into three equal chunks: approximately one third said that they shared this view; the second third said that they disagreed with

this interpretation; and the remaining one third said that they did not know about those historical events to come to a judgment. Close to 55% of the respondents were reported to have said that the EU had been founded on Christian values, while 30% of them did not share this view. However, when asked whether the EU, know, is an exclusively Christian Club with no place for a Muslim country like Turkey, then only 40% of the people agreed with this view while those who disagreed reached more than 45%. In other words, while people generally believe that Christianity lies at the origins of the EU, they do not believe that that makes the EU a closed Christian Club. The fourth area of anxiety was the fear of separatism. We asked whether the people associated Turkey's EU membership with the splitting up of national unity and the rise of ethnic separatism, as has been long claimed by nationalist politicians and intellectuals. People believe, 45% as against 20%, that ethnic separatist movements will increase as Turkey joins the EU. However, they do not believe, 35% as opposed to 50%, that EU membership will result in a disintegration of Turkey along ethnic lines. Finally, in the area of Moral Anxiety, we asked people whether they believed that Turkey's EU membership will bring about an erosion of the moral values in the following areas: neighborly relations, family structure, language, religion, and the values of the young people. It turned out to be that people, 55% worried as opposed to 40% non-worried, were most wary in two of these areas: the negative impact of the EU membership on religious values and on the values of the youth.