



## Copenhagen University Islam Lecture Series

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# Turkey and the EU - Turks in the EU

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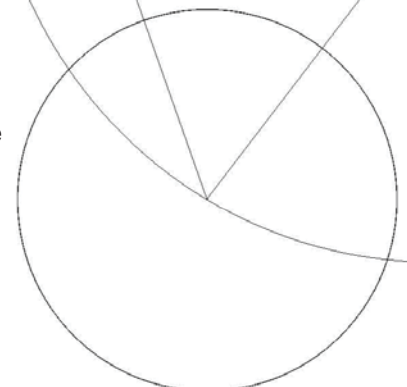
The lecture was held in cooperation with the Danish Foreign Policy Society and took place at the Danish National Museum



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## Turkey and the EU – the Turks in EU

*Ingmar Karlsson*<sup>1</sup>

- They are not only Europeans
- They do not have the will to take part in the European integration project
- Their membership will derail the European project
- USA and NATO are behind their membership application
- The country is too big. It will bring the institutional system out of balance
- Their agricultural sector is not compatible with the common agricultural policy.

This is a quote from a French president but it is not Sarkozy talking about Turkey. The words are de Gaulle's and they date from January 1963 when he vetoed a British membership in the then European Economic Community, a veto that was reiterated in November 1967.

On 12 September 1963 Turkey signed the so-called Ankara Treaty with its prospect of membership. That same year the first chairman of the European Commission Walter Hallstein made the following statement:

Turkey is part of Europe. This is the deepest possible meaning of this operation, which brings – in the most appropriate way conceivable in our time – the confirmation of a geographical reality as well as a historical truism that has been valid for several centuries.

Hallstein also made the following remarks regarding Turkey's convergence with Europe:

There has been nothing comparable in the history of influence of European culture and politics. Indeed we feel here an essential relationship with the most contemporary events in Europe. What is therefore more natural than for there to be an identity between Europe and Turkey in their actions and reactions: military, political and economic.

### ***Pacta non sunt servanda?***

The basic principle of Roman law – *pacta sunt servanda* - is part of the European cultural heritage. Anyone who ignores this principle with regard to Turkey loses political credibility and flouts official EU policy, according to which Turkey is to be treated like any other candidate.

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For more than 45 years Brussels has assured Turkey that it will one day belong to the European community. Turkey entered into a customs union with the EU in 1996 and its candidacy for membership of the EU was confirmed in Helsinki in 1999, and on October 3 2005 EU member states agreed to start formal membership negotiations with Turkey.

When the confirmation was made in Helsinki Turkey was in a deep economic and political crisis, and it is obvious that many member states then thought that the promise to open negotiations could be given since Turkey anyhow would not be able to fulfil the Copenhagen criteria. Those who are opposed to Turkey's membership were obviously surprised by the reform policy of the new AKP government and now talk less about the country's "EU maturity" and the fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria. Instead they argue that EU cannot absorb a new member of the size of Turkey, that Turkey is not a European country, that a Turkish membership would cause serious geopolitical and strategic problems and, last but not least, that EU is a community based on Christian values.

### ***The absorption capacity of the EU***

With 27 members the EU is said to be an over-extended structure, and that further geographical expansion can only take place at the expense of a deepening of political cooperation.

This line of argument – that Europe is not strong enough to absorb Turkey – can only be described as political tactics. If there was any truth in it, it should have been deployed more than 15 years ago when the EU's eastward enlargement process started. In those days the main opponents of Turkish membership, like the CDU/CSU in Germany, were the keenest advocates of enlargement.

The project of building a strong United States of Europe on the American model is no longer on the political agenda after the accession of ten new members in May 2004, and even more so when Bulgaria and Romania became members of the EU in January 2007. With the eastern enlargement the European Union in fact chose to become an all-European commonwealth and not a European superstate. The new enlarged EU will for the foreseeable future be a political and economic union with variable geometry, concentric circles and different speeds. What objection is there to Turkey's incorporation into such a union, particularly in view of the fact that, with its geographical location, its size and its decades-long membership of NATO, Turkey is a

strategically important partner which by itself would enhance the role of Europe in global politics more than the twelve new members combined?

According to demographic prognosis Turkey will have a population of 82 million in 2015 and then be almost as big as Germany. Ten years later Turkey will be the largest member state with 87 million or 15.5 per cent of the population of the EU while Germany's share will be 14.3 per cent against 18.1% today. The Turkish part of the EU population will thus be smaller than that of Germany today. Demography is furthermore one of the most serious problems facing the EU, not least Germany, and Turkey, with its large, youthful population, could help to solve this problem.

In a system where the decisions are taken with double majorities – 55 per cent of the member states and 65 per cent of the population – a Turkish membership will in spite of the size of the country – not have a dramatic influence on how the union functions. A Turkish membership will imply changes in the European council and the European parliament but not in the commission where Turkey will have one post or become part of the same system of rotation as the other members.

Turkey will of course be an important actor and increase the possibilities for the other member states to make alliances to block or carry through decisions. Like other member states it will enter into alliances to promote its own national interests.

If the number of seats in the European parliament is limited to 750, Turkey and Germany would get at most 82 seats in a EU29 against Germany's 99 today with similar reductions for the other big member countries. Such a scenario implies long and difficult negotiations where not least the smaller member states will fight for their present number of seats.

### ***The geographic argument***

It is often said that Turkey has been in Europe but that it is not of Europe, but is there a European history without Turkey?

There are more Greek ruins in Turkey than in Greece. Herodotus, the father of history, was born in today's Turkey as well as Strabo, the first geographer. It was in Antakya that the followers of

Jesus first called themselves Christians, Saint Paul was born in Tarsus and made his first travels to spread the new faith in Anatolia, just to take a few examples

Europe cannot be defined from any absolute geographical, religious, cultural or historical criteria. The treaty of Rome states that any European country can become a member of the community not that hundred percent of the territory must be situated on the European continent. The Turkish territory there is furthermore with its 24 000 square kilometers substantially larger than EU-members such as Malta, Cyprus, Luxemburg and Slovenia and only marginally smaller than the Baltic states, the Netherlands and Belgium and the population on the European side is much bigger than that of Sweden and many other member states.

Giscard d'Estaing, one of the most pronounced opponents of a Turkish membership never gets tired of pointing out that he already in junior school learnt that Anatolia belongs to Asia. President Sarkozy is using the same argument but at the same time he neglects to mention that he was elected president of France by votes from French Guyana in South America, Tahiti in the Pacific ocean, Reunion in the Indian ocean, Guadeloupe and Martinique in the Caribbean Sea and the islets of Saint Pierre and Miquelon off the Canadian Atlantic coast

Volia les frontières de l'Europe!

Furthermore, Ankara lies west of the member state Cyprus which in its turn like Malta lies south of Tunisia. In this context it is also worth noting the comments made by the French foreign minister Kouchner during the armed conflict between Russia and Georgia over South Ossetia when he stressed that the EU could not tolerate an attack against another European country.

Giscard d'Estaing also uses language as a dividing line with the argument that Turkish is not an Indoeuropean language but this argument also applies to Finnish, Estonian and Hungarian which are closer related to Turkish than to the Indoeuropean Germanic and Slavonic languages. Maltese, another official European language, is furthermore Semitic and thus closer related to Arabic than to any European language.

### ***Security and geopolitical arguments***

The geopolitical and strategic arguments that were used in favour of the accession of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and the Baltic states are valid for Turkey too, in fact even more so than was the case in Central and Eastern Europe in the early 1990s.

Some day the enlargement process will come to an end, but terminating it without admitting Turkey would be a serious mistake and an unwise policy. Those who are opposed to a Turkish membership seem to think of the EU as an “island in the sun”, a Switzerland surrounded by good, friendly neighbours. But Europe’s geostrategic location is far from idyllic. Europe must stabilize its own periphery to ensure that it is not affected by the problems that exist there. Turkish membership of the EU would strengthen Europe on its most vulnerable front.

Turkey now has three geostrategic choices: affirmation of its European identity, rapprochement with the Arab and Muslim world, and integration with the Turkic-speaking peoples of Central Asia.

There is no doubt that the present Turkish government has chosen the first of these three options and that the country’s political and economic elite are playing the European card. If this fails because the EU defers its decision or refuses to admit Turkey to the Union, both the other options would become more feasible. In that case, the friends of modernization would probably not be able to persist in their pro-European stance.

Both the pro-Islam and the pan-Turkic option would entail serious consequences for the stability of Europe. Even though Turkey is not likely to achieve a dominant position in the Central Asian republics, the mere attempt to do so would have a destabilizing effect and also exacerbate the existing problems in the Caucasus. It is in Europe’s vital interests to see to it that the problems in the Middle East, including Iraq, and the southern periphery of the former Soviet Union do not converge. A Turkish membership in the EU would have a stabilizing effect and open the door to Europe not only for Georgia and Armenia but also for Azerbaijan and thus not only solve the bilateral Turkish-Armenian problems but also the conflict about Nagorno-Karabakh in a European context.

The second option, i.e. rapprochement with the Arab and Muslim world, would have an adverse affect on Europe too. One argument against Turkish membership is that in that case part of the EU’s external frontier would abut on the most crisis-ridden and troubled region in the world and

that Europe should at all costs keep away from the problems of the Muslim world in general and the Middle East in particular.

But we cannot escape this part of the world and its problems, and therefore the opposite conclusion is the most credible one, i.e. a rapprochement between Turkey and this region would bring its crises closer to us. The idea that a Turkey excluded from the European Community could be a firewall against the crises in the Middle East is politically naïve. All the crises in the Middle East so far have directly affected Europe, and they will affect us even more in future. If Turkey were a member, this would increase the EU's opportunities for pursuing a proactive policy in the Arab world. This is not without risks, but if Turkey remains outside the Union this will have serious consequences. A stable democracy in a Muslim society, on the other hand, could stand as a model for a Muslim world that badly needs such models. The Turkish membership of the EU would demonstrate the falsity of the argument that Islam and democracy cannot mix and help to bring about favourable changes in the Islamic world's attitude to Europe.

A no to Turkey would on the other hand have a radicalizing effect both in the Muslim world at large and within Turkey itself. It will strengthen the argument of the fundamentalists that the Muslim world must turn inwards because the rest of the world conspires against it and it will strengthen those in Turkey who question the reform policies of prime minister Erdogan.

### ***The identity factor – is the EU a Christian community?***

The resistance to Turkish membership is not only motivated by fears about the EU's lack of absorption capacity and about the risk of importing problems and disturbances, but also by vague qualms about a culture that is regarded as alien. One argument that is now gaining ground, especially in Catholic Europe, is linked to identity, namely Europe's Christian values, which are mentioned as a reason for keeping Turkey out. In that case it might just as well be argued that Greece should not have been admitted to the EU because of its Eastern Orthodox roots, that "semi-Orientals" such as Romanians and Bulgarians should be kept out too and that Albania and Bosnia are forever doomed to be Muslim ghettos in Europe.

What will happen if the secularization process in Europe continues? Where do the limits of identity go? Will a secular country such as Sweden have to leave the EU in the not too distant future when the number of Muslims who go to mosques for Friday prayers is larger than the number of churchgoers on Sundays?

There have never been any religious criteria for membership of the EU. To refuse Turkey admission on religious grounds would send a false and dangerous signal, especially after 11 September 2001. Such a decision would ignore the fact that Islam is a mainstream religion in Europe today. There are today at least 15 million Muslims in the EU, which is more than the number of Protestant Scandinavians, and the number will increase as immigration continues.

Islam is thus already today an integral part of Europe and a European religion and as we have been talking about Eastern Christianity we will soon be talking about Western Islam. Islam must therefore be recognized and regarded as a “domestic” European religion.

A no to Turkey on religious and cultural grounds would be disastrous for Europe since it would send an immediate and strong message to the fastest growing segments of the European population that they will always be considered unwelcome and second-class citizens also if they chose a secular way of life.

Sending such a message could, before we know it, lead to the emergence of a ghetto Islam in Europe instead of a modern tolerant European Islam. Radical mullahs all over Europe are already doing their best to exploit Muslim immigrants’ psychological, cultural and material problems for their own purposes, and this message would only make their work easier.

A Turkish membership in the European union will facilitate a necessary integration process and thus counteract a development fraught with momentous consequences for Europe. In a more and more globalised world it is not possible to draw borders based on a static view of history and an identity that has been constructed and decided from above by politicians. Europe is tantamount to democracy, rule of law, separation of state and church, equality between sexes, freedom of speech, dissociation from ideological salvation doctrines and a functioning market economy.



A membership in the European Union is therefore not predestinated and given by nature but a result of a social, political, cultural and economic process that brings together peoples who see themselves as Europeans as a broad majority of Turks do.

### ***The Turk as a threat and Europe's "other"***

For most Europeans however the words Turk and Turkey have negative associations. A fear of Turks was impressed on western minds during the long period when the Turks governed a large part of Europe and seemed to threaten the existence of Christianity. The comment made in the autumn of 2004 by the then EU Commissioner, Bolkestein, in the discussion about whether or not Turkey should be given a negotiation date shows the persistence of this threat scenario. In case of a yes, he warned, the victory over the Turks outside the gates of Vienna in 1683 would have been in vain. Instead, we would see the Turks rioting inside the gates of Brussels.

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 aroused a fear of Turks that was later augmented and was symbolised by names of battlefields and conquered and besieged cities such as Mohács, Peterwardein, Vienna and Belgrade.

The Archbishop of Prague, for example, ordered that the city's church bells should toll at nine o'clock every Friday to remind people of the Turks' painful victory over the Christians. After the Turks had been driven away from Vienna in 1683, the bells were instead tolled as a mark of thanksgiving that the danger from the Turks was over and, in this way, the threat was kept permanently alive in people's consciousness.

As early as the mid-1400s special *missa contra turcas* were celebrated with the message that victory over the Turks was only possible with the help of God. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century about 2,500 publications about Turks, over a thousand of which were in German, were spread around Europe and in these too the image of the bloodthirsty Turk was imprinted. In the period 1480 to 1610, twice as many books were published about the Turkish threat as about the discovery of the continent of America. Claims were spread that the Turks were the descendants of the son, Ismael, whom Abraham had with his Egyptian slave Hagar. In the first book of Moses 16:12 it says: "He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him. And he will live to the east of all his brothers."

Just about all the vices in the world were associated with the Turks. In Italy phrases such as *bestemmia come un Turco* (he swears like a Turk) and *puzza come un Turco* (he stinks like a Turk) were used. The French called rude behaviour, cruelty and greed *turquerie* and when the Spanish wanted to make disparaging remarks about a person, he/she was called *turco*. The English expression “to talk turkey to somebody” means to give a frank opinion to the opposite party.

The German repertory ranged from *Türkenhund* (Turkish dog) to *Türkenknecht* (Turkish farm-hand), *Kümmeltürke* (caraway Turk) and *er qualmt wie ein Türke* (he smokes like a Turk). Both the pipe and tobacco came from the Turks. In the Austrian countryside you can still hear today how children are called in from play: *Es ist schon dunkel. Türken kommen. Türken kommen* (It’s already dark, The Turks are coming. The Turks are coming).

Luther’s closest associate, Philip Melanchton, claimed that the Turks were red Jews. Jews because they circumcised their sons and had taken over other Jewish manners and customs. Red because they were bloodhounds that murdered and warred. According to other theologians the word Turk came from *torquere*, torture, and according to another popular theory the Turks were identical with the Scythians who were considered a particularly cruel race. Military power and cruelty were recurring attributes in all these claims about the origin of the Turks.

In Luther’s view, the Turks’ invasion was God’s punishment of Christianity because it had allowed the corruption of both the Holy See and the Church. In 1518 when he defended his 95 theses, Luther claimed that God had sent the Turks to punish the Christians in the same way as he had sent war, plagues and earthquakes. The reply of Pope Leo X was the famous papal bull in which he threatened Luther with excommunication and attempted to portray Luther as a troublemaker who advocated capitulation to the Turks.

However, in time Luther developed his own grounds for war against the Turks. The Christians could make war against the Turks but must first do penance and reform their lives and their church. Since the Turks were God’s punishment, the Christians must first eradicate the grounds for this punishment. When that had been done, they could start a war of defence which would then be justified: “This struggle must begin with penance and we must change our lives or we will fight in vain.”

In Sweden too, the Turks were designated the arch-enemy of Christianity. In the sermons the clergy preached about the Turks’ general cruelty and bloodthirstiness and of how they systematically burned and

plundered the areas they conquered. In a Swedish school book published in 1795 Islam was described as “the false religion that had been fabricated by the great deceiver Muhammad, to which the Turks to this day universally confess”.

Stories of the dog-Turk also contributed to this negative image. The dog-Turk was claimed to be a man-eating being, half animal half human with a dog’s head and tail. King Charles XII had got into its debt during his stay in Bender in the Ottoman empire and to settle his debt he had to pay a certain amount of human flesh every year. This debt was said to have been taken over by the freemasons who were also considered a threat to the church.

After the defeat of the Turks outside Vienna in 1683, the image of the dog-Turk began to change. He was no longer as dangerous but changed into a ridiculous figure. In carnival processions and masquerades from Bohemia to the Tyrol from Vienna to the Rhineland, the dog-Turk appeared alongside witches, clowns and other popular comic figures. The Turks were generally ridiculed and the noble European character emphasised. This did not change the image of the brutal Turk but fear of this barbarian lessened and a feeling of superiority emerged that has lasted to the present day.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire began to establish permanent diplomatic missions in London, Paris, Vienna and Berlin. As a result of these contacts all things Turkish became exotic, not least the dress fashion, *turquoise*. Sultans and pashas were often portrayed as noble and enlightened people in contrast to European rulers. At the Prussian and Saxon courts, feasts, processions and weddings were held *à la Turc* and Turkish manners became a way for the upper classes to distance themselves from common people. Turkish kiosks were erected in Swedish manorial parks too and Gustav III built a Turkish pavilion at Haga Park.

Turkish Janissary music inspired among others Mozart and Schubert to compose music *à la turca*. And with the age of enlightenment and Romanticism there was increased interest in the exotic and greater tolerance of and curiosity about other religions and cultures, which was reflected in the image of the Turk who now came to be regarded in many quarters as the “noble savage”.

Voltaire, however, did not hide his hatred of the Turks whom he characterised as “tyrants of the women and enemies of arts”. These “barbarian usurpers” must be chased out of Europe. He accused them of having destroyed our ancient heritage from “the Orient’s Christian realm” and wrote:

“I wish fervently that the Turkish barbarians be chased away immediately out of the country of Xenophon, Socrates, Plato, Sophocles and Euripides. If we wanted, it could be done soon but seven crusades of superstition have been undertaken and a crusade of honour will never take place. We know almost no city built by them; they let decay the most beautiful establishments of Antiquity, they reign over ruins.”

There are countless similar quotations from publications from other 18<sup>th</sup> century writers. The Turks were perceived as usurpers of the classical heritage that Europe’s identity was said to be built on while they themselves were not considered to have a culture worth the name.

In the 1850s Czar Alexander of Russia talked of Turkey as the sick man of Europe, an expression that stuck in public consciousness and gave the impression that the Ottoman Empire had always suffered under the reign of hopeless, cruel, dissolute and incompetent sultans. A negative image of the Turks and the Ottoman Empire now evolved in Europe, an image that was largely based on prejudice, contempt and fear.

The image of the brutal Turks was further impressed by the fight for independence waged by the Christian peoples in the Balkans during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and which gave rise to the so-called “Eastern question”. Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian nationalists attacked Muslim villages in the hope that this would trigger counter-measures on such a scale and of such brutality that the western powers would be induced to intervene on the side of the Christians. Lord Byron’s death in Greece from fever in 1823 shortly after he had joined the Greek forces set off a wave of anti-Turkish feeling all over Europe. In spite of the fact that outrages were committed on both sides – the Greeks started their war of independence in 1821 by massacring thousands of Turkish men, women and children at Morea – western public opinion only reacted to Muslim outrages. The Muslims on the Balkans were regarded by their neighbours as *turci* and hence as traitors who had chosen to throw in their lot with the conquerors. Ethnic cleansing of predominantly Muslim areas was carried out by the Serbs as early as the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Turks were pushed back. On old copperplate from Belgrade, you can see countless minarets. The mosques were levelled to the ground when the Turkish troops left the country.

When, in 1876, Ottoman troops put down a Bulgarian revolt with great brutality and massacred 15,000 men, women and children, the event was used in British domestic politics. William Gladstone wrote a lampoon directed against his rival Benjamin Disraeli – *The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* – 200,000 copies of which were sold in two months and cemented the image of the brutal Turk.

The rhetoric increased during the first world war. The British prime minister Lloyd George instructed those responsible for British war propaganda on the aim and direction of anti-Turkish propaganda: “The Turks’ inability to govern, their misrule and above all massacres of the hardworking population must be emphasised. I hardly need to point out that this should be done gradually and the articles spread over a long period so that our purpose is not too obvious. Even the young historian Arnold J Toynbee was involved in the campaign and wrote a book entitled *The Murderous Tyranny of the Turks* in which he claimed that throughout their history the Turks had “lamed and beguiled more gifted nations”. After the 1912-1913 Balkans wars the Turks had wiped out all Greeks, Albanians and Slavs that were left on their territory. The Turks were simply uncivilised: “They have nothing other than a military tradition of violence and cunning.”

In spite of the change of direction that took place after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and, following Kemal Atatürk’s secular revolution, the expressed will to integrate Turkey into the western world, the image of the Turks in Europe remained negative. Not least the fact that the new republic inherited the blame for the fate of the Armenian population during and after the First World War was a contributory factor and continues to be so.

Membership of the Council of Europe and NATO after the Second World War did not lead to any fundamental change in the image of the Turk which acquired a further dimension when in the early 1950s the Turks began to emigrate to Europe, primarily to Germany, which at that time was in great need of labour. Simple farmers left Anatolia in the hope of returning when they had earned sufficient money. They could not speak the languages of their new home countries and never integrated. They lived in the same areas and were not open to their surroundings. They were unaware of the negative image the Turks already had to deal with in Europe and they did not know enough about their own culture and history to be able to defend themselves against prejudice. Gradually a new image of the Turk emerged – pleasant, rather boring, not afraid to undertake work but a person at whom you turned up your nose. The word Turk now had the same pejorative meaning in Europe as it had had among the elite of the Ottoman Empire.

Prejudices were reinforced elsewhere too. The film *Midnight Express*, which was a box-office success all over the world after its première in 1978, has contributed perhaps more than anything else to the negative image of the Turks and Turkey.

The film is about a young American who has been given a long prison sentence after being arrested for possession of hash. All the Turks in the film are portrayed as bloodthirsty and sadistic torturers with homosexual inclinations, unshaven and swarthy with unkempt moustaches. However, if you look at the cast it shows that none of the actors were Turkish and many of the most obnoxious roles were played by Greek and Armenian actors. Istanbul is also changed beyond recognition. All the buildings are dilapidated, washing hangs over dark and ominous alleys full of people of menacing appearance and on the pavements idle men with dull eyes sit smoking their hookahs. This European metropolis has been changed into a third world city characterised by violence, disorder and chaos. All through the film, the imprisoned Billy Hayes and his family talk of the Turks as “pigs”.

A reviewer in *Le Monde* wrote that the action arouses such feelings of hatred in the audience that when they leave the cinema they wish that such a nation did not exist. There is simply no justification for it.

Oliver Stone received an Oscar in 1979 for his film script. When, during a visit to Turkey in December 2004 immediately after Turkey had been given the go ahead for EU membership negotiations, he admitted he had overdramatised what Billy Hayes had told him in interviews which were the basis for the film, this received much publicity and was regarded as a kind of belated national redress.

However, the prejudices still lie deep which may be illustrated, for example, by the definitions of the word Turk in some of our most frequently used dictionaries:

*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*: One who is cruel or tyrannical

*Concise Oxford Dictionary*: Ferocious, wild or unmanageable person

*Random House Dictionary*: A cruel, brutal or domineering man

In Norstedt's *English-Swedish Dictionary* you can read; *Turk, bråkstake, vilddjur*; a regular young Turk, *en riktig bråkstake*; turn Turk, *bli vild, börja gorma*

The states that have risen out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire each have their own national liberation legend and their own national historiography and even today there is a tendency to blame all shortcomings and wrongs in present-day society on the earlier Ottoman rulers rather than on the 45 years of communism. In Hungary and the Balkans, the image of the Turk as an oppressor has become part of

these countries' folklore. "500 years under the Turkish yoke" is still to this day the explanation for practically all problems from shortages of food, to explaining why the lift does not work and why corruption is so widespread with an equivalent version in Bulgarian, Serbian, Romanian and Greek.

The negative image has also been self-inflicted through the economic and political crises and recurring military coups. You have to have lived in Turkey for some time to realise how deeply rooted is the so-called Sèvres complex. The 1920 Peace Treaty of Sèvres would have reduced the Turkish Republic to the areas around Ankara on the Anatolian Plateau and part of the Black Sea coast. With his war of liberation Kemal Atatürk tore this up and by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 the Republic of Turkey was established. However, many Turks still have a deeply rooted conviction that underlying the world's interest in human rights and the situation of minorities in Turkey there is a hidden agenda set by Sèvres, which has led to an often aggressive and contra-productive attitude of self-defence which in its turn has been reinforced by continuous Greek, Armenian and Kurdish anti-Turkish propaganda.

This mentality which is reflected in the phrase *Türkiün Türkten baska dostu yoktur* (The Turk is the Turk's only friend) is now in process of changing. Dramatically improved Greek-Turkish relations are an example of this. Turkey's popularity as a tourist country and the hospitality, openness and friendliness with which all visitors are received has also contributed to a gradual dismantling of the negative image of the Turk which was impressed on Europe for centuries. As a result, more and more elderly Europeans are now settling in the coastal areas of Turkey as they find the environment there friendlier and more attractive than on the increasingly crowded Costa del Sol or in Algarve.

More and more Europeans will realise that Istanbul is not a Cairo which happens to partly lie on the continent of Europe but an international metropolis comparable with New York, ("the coolest city in Europe", to quote a cover story in *Newsweek* from August 2005) that not just Ankara and Izmir are modern cities with millions of inhabitants but also towns in central Anatolia such as Kayseri and Malatya compare favourably as regards their European characteristics with the major cities of the new member states. Above all it will emerge that the Turkey that exists today in European ghettos such as Kreuzberg in Berlin belongs to the past and has not taken part in the development which the Republic of Turkey is undergoing today.

The comment by former EU commissioner Bolkestein quoted at the beginning of this lecture shows however that we have not reached that point yet. In many cartoons concerning Turkey's European ambition you still see Turkey depicted as a backward peasant society in sharp contrast to a modern

Europe. References are still often made to Turkey as "the sick man of Europe " and as a monolithic reactionary Islamic society unable to recover without Europe's helping hand. The Turkish characters are often distorted and described as fat, bearded, cunning creatures with oriental costumes and fez in spite of the fact that the fez was forbidden by Atatürk 80 years ago and that the French secular state has been a model for the Turkish society ever since.

The EU membership negotiations will result in increasing and ever broader areas of contact and as a result of this process prejudices on both sides will decline. Europeans will return from Turkey with the same experience as a French traveller in 1652:

“There are many in Christendom who believe that the Turks are great devils, barbarians and people without faith but those who have known them and talked to them have a quite different opinion. It is certain that the Turks are good people who follow very well the commandment given to us by nature, only to do to others what we would have done to us”.