



European Morocco and European Turkey: Two Identity Construction Cases on the Path to the EEC

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Abstract

This article analyzes Morocco's and Turkey's full membership application processes to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1987 from an identity perspective. The construction of both Morocco's and Turkey's European-ness are explored alongside aspects of postcolonial and modernization theories rooted in the poststructuralist approach by taking official discourses of the political leaders in the two states at the time of application into account. In the conventional narratives of the establishment of their modern states, Morocco perceived Europe as its other due to the history of European colonialism, whereas Turkey perceived Europe as its other considering it a threat to its national unity prior to the establishment of the Republic in 1923. In spite of this, two states tried to add European-ness into their national identities through their application to the EEC in 1987. In this way, Morocco and Turkey aimed at demonstrating not why European but how much European they were. In Morocco's case, an obligation for demonstrating one's European-ness is explained through the lens of postcolonial theory, and in Turkey's case, the modernization paradigm is applied. Departing from these theoretical standpoints, the study focuses on official European-ness discourses by Moroccan and Turkish leaders, which had taken place as dynamic processes. In this respect, the article unravels how Europe and European-ness that was once regarded as the other by Turkey and Morocco were tried to be included into Moroccan and Turkish national identities on the path to become a full member to the EEC.

Keywords: Morocco, Turkey, European Economic Community, Identity, European-ness

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Avrupalı Fas ve Avrupalı Türkiye: Avrupa Ekonomik Topluluğu Yolunda İki Kimlik Oluşumu Durumu

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Öz

Bu çalışma Fas'ın ve Türkiye'nin 1987 yılında Avrupa Ekonomik Topluluğu (AET)'na tam üyelik başvuru süreçlerini kimlik perspektifinden incelemektedir. Fas'ın ve Türkiye'nin AET'na tam üye olabilmek için göstermeleri gereken Avrupalılık kimliği, bu bağlamda, postyapısalcı yaklaşımın içinde barındırdığı postkolonyalizm ve modernizm teorileri temelinde, o dönemki iki ülke liderlerinin söylemleri temelinde incelenmiştir. Bu noktada Fas'ın Avrupalılığı Fransız sömürgeciliği temelinde boy gösterirken Türkiye'nin Avrupalılığı ise modernleşme çerçevesinde şekillenmiştir. Çalışmanın literatür için önemi ise bu iki ülkenin Avrupa'yı bu süreçlerde farklı nedenlerle “diğer” olarak görmesine rağmen AET başvuru sürecinde milli kimliklerine Avrupalılığı eklemeye çalıştıklarını göstermelerinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda ülkesindeki Avrupa simgesi Fransız sömürgeciliğine karşı direnen Fas ve Cumhuriyetin 1923 yılında ilanından önce milli bütünlüğü Müttefik Devletler tarafından tehdit altına alınan Türkiye kendilerini AET'na üye yapmak adına Avrupalı olduklarını iddia etmişlerdir ve bunu göstermeye çalışmışlardır. Makale bu bağlamda Türkiye ve Fas tarafından bir zamanlar “diğer” olarak kabul edilen Avrupa'nın AET'na tam üye olma yolunda Fas'ın ve Türkiye'nin ulusal kimliklerine dönemin liderleri tarafından nasıl eklenmeye çalışıldığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Fas, Türkiye, Avrupa Ekonomik Topluluğu, Kimlik, Avrupalılık

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1. Introduction

A column published in Turkish daily *Cumhuriyet* on 12 October 1987 was worthy to pay attention for scholars and students of European identity. Accordingly, *Cumhuriyet* referred to the Belgian journal *Le Soir*, which argued that the European Commission would reject the membership applications of Turkey and Morocco to the European Economic Community (EEC). The column directly quoted Claude Cheysson, the officer responsible for Mediterranean Affairs in the European Commission:

The membership applications of Morocco and Turkey, two countries from another world to Europe, are quite similar. The European Community believes that it is quite important to develop bilateral relations with Turkey and Morocco in the final analysis. However, the club of twelve, as the founders of the European Community, is deeply concerned about these states' membership applications to the organization. The application of Morocco, which is not geographically part of Europe, encountered judicial obstacles and therefore was rejected with no hesitation. The membership application of Turkey, on the other hand, was sent to the European Commission to be discussed in more detail. However, I do not believe that the Commission will respond to Turkey in a short time.¹

Cheysson's declaration about the future of the membership applications of Turkey and Morocco to European Community sounded quite pessimistic. All in all, he was a European bureaucrat who was working for a European organization. With this speech, Cheysson totally left Morocco out of the European context and opened Turkey's European being into discussion, which the European Commission would give a final decision later. However, at the time this speech was given, Turkey and Morocco were not European enough to be a member to the EEC in the short run.

As two states who applied for the EEC membership in the same year and month, this article aims at analyzing Morocco's and Turkey's membership application processes to the European Economic Community (EEC)² in

¹ "AET Fas'ın ve Türkiye'nin başvurularına hayır diyecek" *Cumhuriyet*, October 12, 1987 (Retrieved from Turkish National Library Archives).

² European Communities (EC) as consisting of three main bodies; European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) and the European Economic Community (EEC) was embedded into European Union (EU) in 1993. Membership to EC came through membership to the EEC. The article, thus, is meant to analyze the membership applications of Morocco and Turkey to the EEC in 1987, which is the today's EU.

1987. From a poststructuralist perspective, the analysis uncovers the discursive processes through which the political leaders in the two states argued for their European-ness in an attempt to become a member of the organization, which was clearly defined as a precondition by the article 237 of the Treaty of Rome implying that any European state might apply to become a member.

Moroccan and Turkish cases provide us with unique cases of European identity construction for two reasons. First, Morocco and Turkey do not fit the traditional notion of European-ness. On the contrary, they have long constituted the 'other' in the European identity construction, and likewise have established their own national identities in contrast to what constitutes Europe. The postcolonial past of Morocco and the Turkish independence war fought against allied European powers bring about a historical exclusionary component to the identity formations of the two states vis-à-vis Europe. In this respect, the constructions of European-ness in Moroccan and Turkish leaders' discourses reflect the dynamic nature of identities by revealing how the former 'other' can become to define a part of the 'self.' Second, both Morocco and Turkey's applications did not result favorably. While the EEC flatly rejected Morocco's application on the grounds of not being European, Turkey's application was deferred in 1989. Later, Turkey received candidacy status from the European Council in 1999, and commenced accession negotiations with the EU in 2005. Since the end of 2018, negotiations have been left open without meaningful progress towards accession, while the European leaders and public are still questioning the European-ness of Turkey. In this respect, they define the European identity from the perspectives of states who were not accepted as European in the sense that the states that have been located in the European geography. In this context, we are arguing that even though rejected and still being discussed, the membership applications of Morocco and Turkey to the EEC signify two alternative definitions to the meaning of being European. All in all, the article is aimed at adding Morocco's and Turkey's applications to the EU enlargement literature by answering the identity dimensioned questions such as how did these two states justify their European-ness in order to become members of the EEC, and how was the Moroccan case different from the Turkish case in terms of their membership application processes.

1.1. Theoretical Model: Construction of the Self and the Other

Post-structuralism treats foreign policy as a discursive practice that constitutes state identity. The process of constructing a particular identity entails the redefinition of objectives, interests and values which in turn shape the foreign policy actions. By the same token, foreign policies and interests feed into the construction of identities. In this framework, leaders' discursive constructions of state identity become visible tools of understanding the states' actions at the international arena. Thus, Moroccan and Turkish applications to the EEC can be understood by analyzing the European identity construction processes.

Having said this, claiming that the leaders' discursive practices (re) structured European identity does not necessarily imply that the leaders really believed in the European-ness of their nations. It is highly likely that the politicians for political reasons, in an attempt to justify their foreign policy decision of applying for EEC membership, used such identity-related arguments instrumentally.³ The argument can be substantiated with the theoretical distinction between "subjectivities" and "subject-positions" a.k.a. the political actor and its discursive position, which suggests that "the material character of discourse cannot be unified in the experience or consciousness of a founding subject; on the contrary, diverse subject positions appear dispersed within a discursive formation."⁴ In this respect, studying how a European identity is constituted in discursive practices reveals the subject-positions but does not question the European-ness of the actors. From a discourse analytical point of view, then, the question is not whether Turkey and Morocco are really European but rather how they are constructed as European. Thus, for the purposes of this research, the European identity is a representation rather than an empirical category.⁵ The research is thus built upon the assertion that European identity is a

³ Eylem Yilmaz and Pinar Bilgin, "Constructing Turkey's "western" identity during the Cold War: Discourses of the intellectuals of statecraft," *International Journal* 6, (2006): 39–59. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40204128>.

⁴ Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (London and New York: Verso, 2001).

⁵ Thomas Diez, "Constructing the Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering "Normative Power Europe," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (2005): 613–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298050330031701>.

discursive construction and thus contributes to the literature on collective European identity formation through official narratives.⁶

The post-structuralist scholarship assumes that identity construction is an ongoing and dynamic constitutive process through which the “self”, a.k.a the original object, defines itself by differences to the “other”(s). As such, identities are not pre-given but are constructed in reiterated constitutive practices in relation to the “other.” From this perspective, the making of the self is a narrative, discursive and relational act which always require difference.⁷ In this respect, constitutive other is, in fact, internal to the self, as the particular identity that lies outside is integral to the constitution of that identity. Having said this, it should also be noted that the sine qua non relationship between the self and the other is also a discursive practice. Two points come out of this. First, constructing self through the other does not necessarily require exclusion of the other. Defining the other as exogenous is just one among many variants of contradictory self-other relationship. As Norton puts it, “collective identities are created not simply in the difference between self and other but in those moments of ambiguity where one is other to oneself, and in the recognition of the other as like.”⁸ Once conceptualized in this way, the other can very well serve the actors with a menu of characteristics that are desired for one’s self-identity. Lacanian psychoanalytical literature elaborates on the intermingling nature of self and other “by studying identity formation as

⁶ Gerard Delanty, “Is There a European Identity?,” *Global Dialogue* 5, no. 3/4 (2003): 76–86.; Thomas Diez, “Constructing the Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering “Normative Power Europe,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 33, no.3 (2005): 613-36; Klaus Eder, “Europe’s borders the narrative construction of the boundaries of Europe,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 41, no. 3 (2006): 255–71. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431006063345>; Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: ‘The East’ in European Identity Formation*, (Minneapolis:University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Ben Rosamond, “Discourses of globalization and the social construction of European identities,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 6, no. 1 (1999): 652–68. <https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343522>; Bahar Rumelili, “Constructing identity and relating to difference: Understanding the EU’s mode of differentiation,” *Review of International Studies* 30, (2004): 27-47. <https://10.1017/S0260210504005819>.

⁷ Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Stuart Hall, “Who Needs Identity?” in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, (London: Sage Publications, 2003), 1–17.

⁸ Anne Norton, *Reflections on Political Identity* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 7.

an attempt to overcome a lack, as a process of desire for the power of the other that produces an image of the self.”⁹ Secondly, the ongoing nature of the identity construction process entails that the identities are not static, but instead are in a process of constant redefinition. If identity is a “never-ending and self-defeating quest to project the self into the (...) order of the Other,”¹⁰ difference between the self and the other cannot be permanent and the collective identity can possibly be redefined in a way “to include what was previously its constitutive other.”¹¹

The article puts forward the discourses at the time of Morocco’s and Turkey’s applications to the EEC as integrated to their ongoing identity construction processes. The context of membership application provides the countries with a mode of communication in which leader discourses construct the collective identity (the applicant) vis-à-vis the constitutive other (the EEC). It is in this respect that we analyze the representations of Turkey and Morocco as European states in terms of historically continuous discursive practices in which they construct their identities vis-à-vis their previous others; namely, the enemy against which a war of independence was fought in the former case and the colonizer in the latter. The leader discourses are analyzed in continuity with the Republican Westernization project in the case of Turkey and with the postcolonial nationalism process in Morocco.

The literature on Morocco’s membership application to the EEC, on the other hand, revolves around its reasons rather than identity. The literature suggests that the EEC membership would help to modernize Morocco and to find new alliances in Moroccan foreign policy and to overcome economic difficulties, which are by that time identified as the reasons of Morocco’s membership application to the EEC. Being a full member to

⁹ Iver B. Neumann, “Self and other in international relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 2, no. 2 (1996): 139–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066196002002001>

¹⁰ Charlotte Epstein, “Who speaks? Discourse, the subject and the study of identity in international politics,” *European Journal of International Relations* 17, no.2 (2011): 327–50. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066109350055>

¹¹ Bahar Rumelili, “Constructing identity and relating to difference: Understanding the EU’s mode of differentiation,” *Review of International Studies* 30, no.1 (2004): 27–47.

the EEC was a means to modernize the political life and monarchy.¹² This modernization was also done to stabilize the religious faith of the people who could use Islam as a challenge to the government.¹³ In terms of foreign policy, the support of EEC member states for Morocco against Algeria and the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic's membership admission to the Organization of the African Union was the primary motivation. The Moroccan state was also concerning that Europe would have isolated Morocco upon the accession of Greece in 1981, the accession of Spain in 1986, and the membership seeking of Turkey and Cyprus' in 1987. The probability of not to be able to sell its citrus fruit, tomatoes, table grapes, wine, and olive oil to Europe after 1981 was the greatest concern of the Moroccan state.¹⁴ To get some funds from the European Community (EC) as did Spain in 1981 and to close the government deficit was a second motivation following economic reasons.¹⁵

The literature on what the EEC/EU membership constitutes for Turkish national identity is twofold. On the one hand, there is considerable scholarly work arguing that Turkey's bid for EEC/EU membership poses a challenge regarding the actors' identity, which is claimed to have been constructed in opposition to the European other. According to Sener Aktürk, "no official or popular discourse that imagines the Turkish nation as part of a European family of nations has existed in Turkey in the 20th century; nor does any such discourse exist today."¹⁶ The second track in the literature claims that application for EEC/EU membership is actually in line with Turkey's constructed Western identity.¹⁷ The main concern of this article is not to

¹² Marc Tessler, *Morocco: Institutional Pluralism and Monarchical Dominance* (New York and London: Longman, 1982), 8-15.

¹³ Mansour El Ahmadi, *La monarchie et l'Islam* (Najah el Jadid: Ittissalat el Salon, 2006), 45.

¹⁴ Ahmed Aghrout and Keith Sutton, "Source in Regional Economic Union in the Maghreb," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 28, no.1 (1990): 115-39.

¹⁵ Richard Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), 20-32.

¹⁶ Şener Aktürk, "National Identity in Turkey and the European Union," *European Journal of Sociology* 48, no.2 (2007):347-72. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975607000409>

¹⁷ Eylem Yılmaz and Pınar Bilgin, "Constructing Turkey's "western" identity during the Cold War Discourses of the intellectuals of statecraft," *International Journal* 61, no.1 (2005): 39-59. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40204128>; Pınar Bilgin, "The 'Peculiarity' of Turkey's Position on EU-NATO Military/Security Cooperation:

find out whether Turkey and Morocco were/are Europeans. It also does not argue that the European/Western identities were the motives in Turkey's and Morocco's application to the EEC membership. The argument is rather that Turkish and Moroccan leaders engaged in a process of European identity construction parallel to their application to the EEC membership. This was primarily because at the time of their application the membership criterion was defined as being a European state. In this respect, the European identity was perceived by the two applicants to be the entrance ticket to the Community, and relevant discourses were adopted. As such, this research contributes to the literature by adding an applicant-centric approach to the identity dimension of the European enlargement process. It presents an account on European-ness from the eyes of the 'others.'

Given that the enlargement literature generally focuses on the countries whose applications are accepted by the EEC/EU, this study contributes to the literature by focusing on two countries' application processes. Despite the proliferation of scholarly work on Turkey within the enlargement literature, they focus on analyzing Turkey's accession in the post-1999 period. By focusing on Turkey's European identity construction process parallel to its –later rejected- application for EEC membership in 1987, this study provides an extended scope for enlargement studies. Further, by also analyzing Morocco's application process from an identity perspective, the study adds an actor that has long been neglected by European enlargement scholars. As such, the proposition is that both Turkey and Morocco can be evaluated in the scope of European enlargement due to the Europe definitions they developed in 1987, which is something that was all denied until now. The analysis reveals that Turkey and Morocco have built narratives on being European, which creates two entrance stories to the European Union today when the literature vastly discusses the exits. The argument put forward in this article is that Europe, being a traditional other in both Turkish and Moroccan cases, has become a point of reference of similarity in the identity construction processes in line with the actors' foreign policy objective of an EEC membership. Adopting the post-structural approach

A Rejoinder to Missiroli," *Security Dialogue* 34, no.3 (2003): 345–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09670106030343010>; Zeynep Arkan, "Imagining 'Europe': Constituting Turkey's Identity on the Path to EU Membership," *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 107, no. 2 (2016): 134–46. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tesg.12180>

to identity, the research underscores the leaders' discursive practices in reconstructing the self-identities of states by redefining their relationship with their previous other. In this way, the article presents an optimistic and constructive approach to the future of European integration.

1.2. The Case of Morocco¹⁸

Morocco's quest to become a member of the EEC is a clear example of King Hassan II's attempt to justify why Morocco was European according to the article 237 of the Treaty of Rome. It highlights how Morocco defines itself with respect to Europe as the other, on the basis of its perception of France and Spain that comes from the colonial period. Morocco's quest to become a member to the EEC is also a direct reflection of postcolonial nationalism, which attempts to analyze the ongoing impacts of the former colonizer over former colonized states after their independence, with the themes of critique to colonial, in-betweenness and admiration to Europe. According to postcolonial nationalism, critique to the colonial involves the efforts of state and non-state actors to nullify the impacts of the former colonizer in a certain period of time. However, the in-betweenness that was created in the society of the former colonized state by the former colonizer state does not let a full adoption of the rejection of the colonizer despite critique to the colonial because it automatically operates the admiration to Europe implying that state leaders of the former colonized state feel a political and also cultural rapprochement to the former colonizer state that ruled them.¹⁹ In-betweenness is the main responsible for this transition between critique to colonial and admiration to Europe in the postcolonial episode of the former colonized state.²⁰ The Moroccan case shows the

¹⁸ This part has been produced out of the PhD dissertation of Volkan İpek.

¹⁹ Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1991); Guy Martin, *African political thought* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); James Harbeson & David Rotchil, *Africa in the world politics* (London & New York: Westview Press, 2013); Montserrat Guibernau, *Nationalisms: The nation-state and nationalism in the 20th century* (London & New York: Polity Press, 1996); Rupert Emerson, *Sömürgelelerin Uluslaşması* (İstanbul: Türkiye Siyasi İlimler Derneği, 1959).

²⁰ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994); Homi Bhabha, "The Location of Culture," (New York: Routledge Classics, 1991); Nicholas Dirks, *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1993).

instrumentalization of the in-betweenness or hybridity as Homi Bhabha calls it between the French and the locals created during the French Protectorate onto postcolonial Moroccan national identity to assert how European Morocco was by King Hassan II. The King's tree metaphor that described Morocco with roots in Africa and leaves in Europe that comes before he had sent the application letter to the EEC is a direct practice of this hybridity. As he first said in 1976, and repeated in the interview with the French journalist Eric Laurent in 1993:

*Morocco looks like a tree whose roots could be found in the land of Africa, and who breathes by its leaves that are turned to Europe by the wind. For this reason, life in Morocco is not vertical. It also goes horizontally to the Orient where we unite ourselves through cultural links and secular cults. We want not, we cannot break up with them.*²¹

By defining Morocco via a sense of belonging to Africa and France at the same time, King Hassan II was reconstructing a self-identity for Morocco in a way to cooperate the previous other, the colonizer France. In a statement, in which the impacts of in-betweenness and admiration for Europe were observed, he said:

*I want to tell the French people that I am closer to them more than they imagine as state and nation. Some of my attitudes that were commanded by the notion of state, I govern it without a spirit, I govern a state. I have some reactions, many times, that might seem absurd to the French people. As I was just saying, the French have absurd reactions to us as well. These are visceral reactions. Why? Because half of my culture is French. Half of my language is French, and when I started to speak my first words, I spoke both French and Arabic at the same time, with my Moroccan nanny and French governess.*²²

Redefining the Moroccan identity as half-French provided the ground for the King to argue for the European-ness of Morocco. In a letter addressed to the Head of Enlargement Uffe Elleman Jansen, King Hassan II justified how Morocco corresponds to Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome by arguing that Morocco was a European state because it shared a common culture and history with Europe. He was indirectly referring to France while

²¹ Eric Laurent, *Le génie de la modération: Réflexions sur les vérités de l'Islam* (Paris: Editions Plon, 1993).

²² King Hassan II, Interviewed by *Le Club de la presse du tiers monde*, April 9, 1980 (Retrieved from Rabat National Library Archives).

talking about Europe since the interpenetration of civilizations, history and destinies were determined by the French during the Protectorate. He wrote:

Mister President,

On 15th of June 1984, we sent a letter to President François Mitterrand, the President of the European Council by that time, in which we talked about the wish of Morocco to adhere to the Treaties that institute the European Community.

Apparently, we were guided by our conviction that it was then essential to give an institutional framework to ancient, multiple, and privileged links that unite the European Community and the Kingdom of Morocco, within the context of sustainability and intensification of the relations between the two sides.

...

Close geographically, Europe [France] and Morocco have been so united by history, our civilizations are so interpenetrated, and our destinies are so maintained.

Two world conflicts showed in this century that Morocco, crossed by the Mediterranean and Atlantic on the doors of the Arab world and Africa, integrates perfectly in the same place of peace and stability with European nations.

Strong of its fundamental choices, the Kingdom of Morocco did never stop to consolidate and deepen a democratic and liberal experience that, not only approaches to free Europe, but also that leads herself to adopt an institutional analogy that was created between the government systems of Europe and Morocco.

...

Please accept our best salutations, Mister President²³

King Hassan II's emphasis on the unity between Morocco and Europe was reiterated in an interview he gave to the BBC Channel, where he insisted that Morocco must have been regarded as a European state: King Hassan II emphasized that membership to the EEC would mean the reattachment of Morocco to Europe which he thought Morocco was always and a natural part of it. In-betweenness and admiration for Europe were one more time

²³ General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Transparency Service, Access to documents, 1049/2015. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/general-secretariat/corporate-policies/transparency/>.

observable in his speech, in which he stated that Morocco is the assurance of a fixed relation between Africa and Europe:

Interviewer: You are always a long term candidate...

King Hassan II: More than ever, we cannot imagine a fixed relation between Europe and Morocco and Africa without trying to reattach Morocco to the European Communities, from one perspective to another.²⁴

Four days later, King Hassan II gave another speech that supported the political agenda of which he was trying to make Morocco an EEC member. By referring to concepts like democracy, liberalism and richness that were created by and against the French Protectorate, he asked for the support of the United Kingdom for the acceptance of the application, which he believed, was a valid one on the basis of the common past with Europe since 12th century:

Our democracy, our liberalism, our potentials, our richness lead us to become a member of the EEC. Our ambition for Europe is even bigger than it seems for Europe. We have been a part of Europe since the 12th century [The French activities and the French Protectorate]. We personally addressed a demand to the ex-president of the Community and we wish that it will contribute our ambition to convince the United Kingdom to support our demand and we become a member of the EEC.²⁵

King Hassan II justified the European-ness of Morocco by references to a Mediterranean identity he claims to share with the then new members of the Community; Spain and Portugal. The construction of the shared Mediterranean identity with Spain and Portugal, in return, enabled him to argue for Morocco's eligibility for an EEC member:

Morocco [as a part of French history] is a European state eligible for the European Economic Community that was actually divided into two parts. One part is composed of southern states, and the other part is northern states. We, Morocco, are similar to the southern states of the Common Market. Today, if the E.E.C accepts Spain and Portugal as members, we also must be accepted as member. If we cannot be a member of the E.E.C as Spain and Portugal are now, how will our commercial relations be with these two countries? It would be difficult to speak of justice.²⁶

²⁴ King Hassan II, Interviewed by *Le Matin de Sahara*, Rabat, July 12nd 1987 (Retrieved from Turkish National Library Archives).

²⁵ King Hassan II, Interviewed by *Le Matin de Sahara*, Rabat, July 17th 1987 (Retrieved from Turkish National Library Archives).

²⁶ Press declaration of King Hassan II, *Le Matin de Sahara*, October 2nd 1987 (Retrieved from Rabat National Library Archives).

He repeated the same argument to *Le Matin de Sahara* on October 9, 1987:

*Morocco estimates to be the closest to Europe, more than Greece. It is certain that the states of the Common Market are divided into two groups: the Southern group and the Northern group. Climatically, the states of the Southern group are concurrent with Morocco. Northern states are another subject. We have a geopolitical ambition to bring Southern Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa to Europe via the Mediterranean Sea.*²⁷

Discourses of King Hassan II on Morocco's quest to become a member of the EEC are also drastic reflections of how European-ness was tried to be incorporated into Moroccan national identity in the postcolonial episode. Accordingly, the narratives with reference to the colonial past especially with France used by King Hassan II before his step to apply for the EEC membership are substantiating the argument that a political discourse constructing a European identity for Morocco was preferred to support Morocco's foreign policy objective of entering the EEC. Besides, discourses of King Hassan II referring to the importance of France to justify why Morocco was European shows the non-static identity of Morocco in the postcolonial episode. The interpenetration between critique to the colonial and admiration for Europe that were reflected by the King's discourses shows how a nation that had regarded Europe as the other tried to add it into its national identity. Such an interpenetration shows that critique to the colonial clearly defined the difference between self and other, whereas admiration for Europe removed these differences. A European Morocco for King Hassan II, therefore, is the direct reflection of the Nortonian ambiguity. It is parallel to the in-betweenness of postcolonial nationalism that created by the French in Morocco's Protectorate period.

2. The Case of Turkey

Modernization was traditionally equated to Westernization in the Turkish case. The establishment of the Republic of Turkey brought about a consistent, carefully planned state policy of Westernization, which was accompanied by an allied national identity construction. The founder of the Republic Mustafa Kemal Atatürk took the Western civilization as a

²⁷ Press declaration of King Hassan II, *Le Matin de Sahara*, October 7th 1987 (Retrieved from Rabat National Library Archives).

whole including its culture in line with his determination that “western civilization was of one cloth and had to be adopted as a unit or not at all.”²⁸ The Kemalist elites believed that the only way to adopt the Western cloth on people, that is to say, to accommodate modernist principles into the society was the massive prohibition of historical and traditional culture²⁹ while the empire legacy was perceived to be the major obstacle in the Turkish nation’s inevitable path towards civilization:

*The Turkish nation is ready and resolved to advance, unhalting and undaunted, on the path of civilization.*³⁰

This was striking as the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and the foundation of the Republic of Turkey were indeed a result of a war of independence fought against the European states of the Allied Powers. In this sense, the civilization that the Republican elite wanted to embrace initially belonged to the ‘others’ of the war of independence. Accordingly, in the discourses of the Republican elite, the past and the other were constructed to be the Ottoman Empire rather than Europe. “The fervent desire to break with the past”³¹ was soon evident in the Republican reforms of secularization including the abolition of the caliphate, disestablishment of state religion, closure of shrines, and dissolution of brotherhoods and dervish orders. Such institutional transformation was consistent with the ultimate goal of replacing the previous multi-national Ottoman identity with a coherent, homogenized modernist national identity. Thus, the nation-state was expressly built as a distinct category from the Empire:

*The new Turkey has no relationship to the old. The Ottoman government has passed into history. A new Turkey is now born.*³²

In this respect, the categories such as “old” and “new” or “traditional” and “Western” were extensively incorporated into new Republican

²⁸ Şerif Mardin, *European Culture and the Development of Modern Turkey* (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1990), 13–24.

²⁹ Kevin Robins, *Interrupting Identities: Turkey/Europe in: Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage Publications 1996), 61–86.

³⁰ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968): 401.

³¹ Ayşe Kadioğlu, “The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 32, no.2 (1996): 177-193. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4283799> reprinted in *Turkey: Identity, Democracy, Politics* (London: Portland or Frank Cass, 1998): 188.

³² Mustafa Kemal Atatürk quoted in Robins: 68.

discourses on identity and in this vein enabled the Kemalist elites to represent themselves as the sole bearers of progress.³³ The elites thus argued that progress would be possible by providing Turkish society with a new Western national identity that would replace the traditional identity of religion.³⁴ Hence the social revolution was an attempt for a thorough transformation of Turkish society towards a Western ideal, in which the traditional basis of individual identification was subjected to change. In his speeches, Atatürk reflected not only the desirability but also the exigency of becoming civilized; while he interchangeably used civilization with Westernization. He set the Republican resolution that modernization was required for the survival and permanence of the state:

*We cannot close our eyes and imagine that we live apart from everything and far from the world. We cannot shut ourselves in within our boundaries and ignore the outside world. We shall live as an advanced and civilized nation in the midst of contemporary civilization.*³⁵

The determination to reach the level of contemporary civilization resulted in the Western-oriented foreign policy. The post-structuralist framework enables the researcher to treat foreign policy within a co-constitution process with identity in which not only the dominant narratives of foreign policy construct a self-identity but also the constructed identity shapes the foreign policy of the states. The analysis suggests that the early Republican foreign policy objectives were thence shaped in line with the fledgling modernist identity. Befittingly, on the day of founding the Republic, Mustafa Kemal unambiguously set the goal as having a close relationship with the European states:

*Our object now is to strengthen the ties that bind us to other nations. There may be a great many countries in the world, but there is only one civilization, and if a nation is to achieve progress, she must be a part of this one civilization... The Ottoman Empire began to decline the day when, proud of her success against the West, she cut ties that bound her to the European nations. We will not repeat this mistake.*³⁶

³³ Reşat Kasaba, *Kemalist Certainties and Modern Ambiguities in Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 15–36.

³⁴ Yücel Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity: A Constructivist Approach* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003): 46.

³⁵ Robins, *Interrupting Identities*, 67.

³⁶ Yücel Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity: A Constructivist Approach* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003): 51.

Subsequently, Western-identity-seeking Turkey's objective of securing closer ties with Europe has shaped its foreign policy. In the early years of the Republic, Turkey was mainly preoccupied with balancing revisionist powers' measures and conducting a series of agreements and pacts of non-aggression with its neighbors as well as European powers with the ultimate aim of maintaining the status quo and consolidating the security of the new Turkish state. Although Turkey refrained from becoming dependent on the West, either economically or militarily in the interwar period, even then a Western inclination can be traced in the friendly relations with the European powers.³⁷ The 1939 Treaty of Alliance signed by Turkey, Britain, and France at the brink of the World War I was the herald of the future foreign policy trend to become a formal ally of the West. Although the İnönü government carefully shifted alliances to remain non-belligerent throughout the war, Turkey neither abandoned the Western alignment in foreign policy, nor the Westernizing trend of its internal development.³⁸

After the Second World War, Turkey institutionalized its Western-oriented foreign policy by becoming member of the Western organizations; namely of the OECD in 1948, the Council of Europe in 1949, and the NATO in 1952. The establishment of political, economic and cultural relations with the West through the membership of these organizations thus enabled Turkey more than anything to institute itself as a "European power."³⁹

The historical context provides that the search for the EEC membership has been a consistent indication of the dominant pro-Western approach in Turkish foreign policy. It is in this respect that by the 1980s, the Turkish policymakers saw the eventual integration into the EEC not only as the sole viable option but also as the end result of a long process of westernization. At this point, it is important to note that from the 1950s to 1990s such arguments were facilitated by the Cold War conjuncture, in which the Western European states and Turkey were allies against the Soviet Union. This principally security-based relationship was institutionalized under the

³⁷ Mustafa Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish foreign policy: changing patterns and conjunctures during the Cold War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no.1 (2006): 103–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263200008701300>.

³⁸ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 302.

³⁹ Meltem Müftüleri-Baç, *Turkey's Relations with a Changing Europe* (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 53.

NATO umbrella, and was considered by Turkish leaders as a more profound bond than a plain defense alliance between Turkey and the West. That is, from the perspective of Turkish statecraft, NATO was also “a community that manifested the common values shared by its members”⁴⁰ and Turkey’s NATO membership correspondingly meant value-based belongingness to Western civilization. The common values that Turkish actors claimed to share with NATO members normalized Turkey’s quest for closer relations with the political and economic organizations of the West, such as the Council of Europe and the EEC. For instance, in 1984 the opposition leader Necdet Calp declared: “Turkey, as an indispensable member of the democratic club, has to operate regularly with the Council of Europe.”⁴¹ In a similar manner in 1987 Halefoglu justified the government’s decision of application to the EC by referring to the value-laden dimension of relations with the West. The foreign minister claimed that “the elements that brought Turkey closer to Western Europe were not simply defense cooperation, but also parliamentary democracy ideals because Turkey and Western European countries were sharing the same political values.”⁴²

As such, the formulation of Turkish national identity towards the ideal of a Western nation has unavoidably resulted in a Turkish bid for membership in the EEC, precisely like it had resulted in the Turkish bid for membership in the NATO, the Council of Europe or any other Western organization. Such continuity manifests itself in political discourses on Turkey’s application for EC membership throughout the 1980s. For instance, when the ANAP⁴³ government was considering applying for membership in 1985, the Foreign Minister Halefoglu justified the policy as follows:

*The dreams of those who think that Turkey can be removed from Western Europe are condemned to be wasted.*⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Eylem Yılmaz and Pinar Bilgin, “Constructing Turkey’s “western” identity during the Cold War: Discourses of the intellectuals of statecraft,” *International Journal* 61, no.1 (2006): 52.

⁴¹ Press release, *Cumhuriyet*, January 25th 1984 (Retrieved from Turkish National Library Archives).

⁴² Press release, *Milliyet*, April 15th 1987 (Retrieved from Turkish National Library Archives).

⁴³ ANAP (The Motherland Party) was founded by Turgut Ozal in 1983 and served as the governing party from 1983 to 1991.

⁴⁴ Press release, *Cumhuriyet*, July 22nd, 1985 (Retrieved from Turkish National Library Archives).

On the one hand, this statement revealed the Turkish government's perception of an EEC membership as a part of the Western-oriented foreign policy. On the other hand, it engaged in the construction of a Western identity for Turkey by portraying it as a natural member of the Western European family. That is, while Halefoglu stated that the ultimate goal of Turkey was full membership, he also argued that Turkey already belongs to Western Europe. In a similar vein, one year before the application, then Prime Minister Ozal expressed his determination for membership as he claimed:

*Turkey would never give up its effort to take its natural place in Europe.*⁴⁵

Such statements operated on an already established Turkish understanding that Turkey belongs to Europe. Hence, the leaders were taking upon the aforementioned Republican discourse and emphasizing the Western modernist dimension of Turkish national identity in justifying their decision to apply for the EC membership.

Likewise, when Prime Minister Ozal announced Turkey's application for the EC membership, he explicitly referred to the Republican project of modernization. According to Ozal, the application was part of Westernization, while Westernization was an ideal of Atatürk and a track that Atatürk guided them [Ozal and his party] towards.⁴⁶ Akin emphasis was also embedded into ANAP's election manifesto in the same year. While the membership application stood out as one of the chief elements of the party program, in its foreword Ozal heralded the fulfillment of a national liability as he presented the application as:

*The target of the contemporary level of civilization that Ataturk set, a long-desired step that nobody had previously dared to take due to Turkey's earlier troubles.*⁴⁷

In doing so, Ozal constructed the EEC membership application as a momentous point in a continuous path of Turkey's Westernization. As such, the ideal of the EEC membership was perceived as a part of the

⁴⁵ Press release, *Hürriyet*, October 7th 1986 (Retrieved from Turkish National Library Archives).

⁴⁶ Press release, *Milliyet*, April 15th 1987 (Retrieved from Turkish National Library Archives).

⁴⁷ *Electoral Manifesto of the Motherland Party* (Ankara: Tisa Matbaası, 1987), 2.

larger civilization project to which Turkey was devoted. At this point, it is important to note that although the Westernization project has its roots in the early Republican era and the Western-oriented foreign policy of the Republic has been claimed to be shaped accordingly, the EEC membership is not a natural but rather a constructed ideal.

From a post-structuralist approach, neither identity nor policy is structural but rather are (dis) continuously constituted in an overflowing and incomplete web of discourses.⁴⁸ That is, there are different actors producing discourses through which roles, identities, policies are constructed accordingly. Thus, one would expect some discourses to overlap while the others would eventually contradict with each other. This assumption opens up the scholarly inquiry for hegemonic discourses. In this context, the dominant discourses are subject to variance and discontinuity and thus are historically contingent.⁴⁹ This is so, not only because dominant actors change, but the discourse of the very same actors may also change throughout time in line with changes in policies and values, images that the actors choose to identify with.

This is indeed the case when we compare Ozal's speeches and ANAP's election manifesto of 1987 to those of 1983. In the 1983 party program of ANAP,⁵⁰ the word Europe was not uttered once, revealing a relative disinterest towards Europe in contrast to the 1987's discourse of being a natural part of Europe. Instead, the program revealed that ANAP was committed to developing ties with the West, as a more general concept in the Cold War context. In this type of interest-based relationship, the role that the Turkish government envisaged for Turkey was restricted to being a bridge between the West and the Middle East. ANAP's 1983 election manifesto⁵¹ referred to Europe in a similarly limited manner and reiterated the bridge identity for Turkey between Europe and the Middle East. In

⁴⁸ Roxanne L. Doty, *Imperial Encounters* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 6.

⁴⁹ Jennifer Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods," *European Journal of International Relations* 5, no.2 (1999): 225–54, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066199005002003>.

⁵⁰ *Party Program of the Motherland Party* (Retrieved from <https://acikerisim.tbmm.gov.tr/xmlui/handle/11543/609?show=full>).

⁵¹ *Electoral Manifesto of the Motherland Party* (Ankara: Tisa Matbaası, 1983).

this sense, before the policy to apply for the EC membership was on the table, Turkey was not represented as inherently European but rather as a state not within but close to Europe with a unique capacity to tie Europe to the Middle East. In such a discourse, Turkey was neither European nor Middle Eastern. This is in clear contrast with the 1987 election manifesto of ANAP, which depicts Turkey as a European state in statements such as:

*Turkey has been pursuing a different policy from those of other south European countries.*⁵²

The shift in the geographical categorization of Turkey in ANAP's official discourse is a manifestation of historical contingency of identity construction processes. According to Campbell "[h]uman collectivities are in constant need of aligning their various domains, including their identity, in line with their respective imagined communities in order to exist, and experience in an inherent tension between such alignment and the claim that this is a response to a stable and prior identity core."⁵³ That is, notwithstanding the consistency of the EC membership goal has been consistent with Republican foreign policy goals, the government reconstructed the discourse on the European-ness of Turkey at the time of the application in a manner that presented the particular policy as a response to a stable European identity. Hence, although Ozal and his party ANAP present the application to the EC as a natural outcome of a continuous process of Westernization, it is indeed a tool over which a Turkish national identity is (re)constructed by consciously highlighting certain shares of the Republican past.

3. Conclusion

Turkey and Morocco are two states that wanted to be part of the EEC in 1987. They developed a European-ness argument that explained why they had to be considered as European states according to Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome that said only European states could apply for membership. Both Turkey and Morocco defined their European-ness through their quests to become a part of the EEC. As a result, membership to the EEC

⁵² *Electoral Manifesto of the Motherland Party* (Ankara: Tisa Matbaası, 1987), 4.

⁵³ David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 12.

triggered King Hassan II and Turgut Ozal to justify the European aspect of their states' national identity, and the two men settled their European-ness arguments on historical ties with Europe. Nonetheless, a significant difference prevails in these two states' membership applications. Turkey perceived Europe as the continuum of the Turkish civilization's orientation that goes back to its foundation, whereas Morocco perceived Europe as the impact of the French Protectorate on the postcolonial Moroccan national identity. The fact that Turkey was not colonized or protectorated plays an essential role in the occurrence of this difference.

Moreover, the European-ness of Turkey is stronger as its application was welcomed with more optimism, whereas Morocco's one was rejected within three months after it had submitted the application. Deliberately, the EEC/EU's perception of Turkey has identity and foreign policy basis, whereas the perception of Morocco has only foreign policy basis in the post-1987 period. The non-availability of discourses that locate European-ness into the orbit of the Moroccan national identity from King Hassan II and King Mohamad VI, in addition to recent developments such as the agreement of fishery between Morocco and the EU on 16 November 2018, shows the foreign policy dynamics of bilateral relations rather than identity.

The article focuses on the processes of the European identity constructions parallel to the foreign policy goal of EEC membership. Accepting the rationality of developing a justification to add European-ness to the national identity for Morocco and Turkey in a period when EEC was defining the criterion for membership via European identity, the article does not claim that these two countries were/are European but instead treats the European identity as a social construct rather than an objective condition. That is, European-ness was perceived as an entrance ticket to the community by the two states that were seeking membership at the time. Thus, in line with Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome, Turkey and Morocco managed to come up with two distinct discursive practices on why they were European. The argument can further be substantiated with the divergence in the two states' identity construction processes in line with the post-1987 developments in their relations with the EEC/EU. Following the rejection of its membership application in 1987 for not being a European state, Morocco's relations with the EEC were completely separated from the enlargement path and

settled on the basis of economic relations. When the membership goal was forsaken, the accompanying discursive practices on the European-ness of Morocco were also abandoned, revealing the relationship between the processes of identity construction and foreign policymaking. Turkey, on the other hand, continued its EU accession process, albeit slowly. In response to Turkey's application, the European Commission gave a negative opinion in 1989, referring to the political and economic situation in Turkey and the EEC's inability to become involved in new accession negotiations right after the southern enlargement. As such, the Commission endorsed Turkey's eligibility for membership without questioning its European-ness, still rejected the application on the grounds that both actors were not yet ready for each other. Hence, such a rejection did not completely vanish Turkey's membership ideal. In this vein, Turkey carried on with its path towards membership, achieved candidacy status in 1999, and started the 'open-ended' accession negotiations in 2005. In the meantime, Turkish leaders continued to (re)construct a European identity for Turkey. However, the de facto freezing of negotiations due to member state vetoes and the fading of the credibility of the membership objective resulted by 2012 in replacement of the Europe-oriented democracy narrative with an authentic Muslim identity discourse which "boiled down to a rejection of the Western hegemony in world politics and the legacy of Westernization, including the pro-Western secular societal sectors, in domestic politics."⁵⁴ To put it in simple terms, while Moroccan leaders abandoned European identity discourses after the definite rejection of Moroccan application for EC membership, Turkey loosened the related discourses and distanced itself from the Western identity, suggesting a process of European identity construction, which is shaped by the foreign policy objective. This substantiates the argument that Turkish and Moroccan leaders have perceived the European identity as the entry permit to the Community. Further, it reveals the contextual and relational character of identities on the foreign policy axis.

⁵⁴ Menderes Çınar, "Turkey's 'Western' or 'Muslim' identity and the AKP's civilizational discourse," *Turkish Studies* 19, no.2 (2018): 176–97.

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