

**THE AFFECTIVE TRANSFORMATION IN EU-TURKEY  
RELATIONS: FROM RESENTMENT TO RESENTIMENT  
(2002-2020)**



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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines the affective underpinnings of European Union (EU) and Turkey relations during the Justice and Development Party's (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP) rule between 2002-2020. By analyzing the discourses and narratives of the Turkish political elites, this thesis argues that during the AKP's rule, Turkey's initial feelings of resentment towards the EU between 2002-2005, transformed into resentment after 2005. The transformation from resentment to resentment has been concluded by a transvaluation process which played out in two stages: an initial 'weak' resentment between 2006-2011, followed by a 'strong' resentment after 2011. The political consequences of this affective transformation are demonstrated with an analysis of first, Turkey's policy preferences during the 2014 Ukraine Crisis and second, the 2016 Turkey-EU 'Refugee Deal'. This thesis aims to make a contribution to the literatures on emotions and Turkey-EU relations with the argument that taking into consideration Turkey's emotional context towards the EU allows us to have a better understanding of Turkey's policy preferences in the above-mentioned cases, which were highly criticized and initially perceived as quite ambiguous by the EU.

**Key Words:** Affective Transformation, Emotions, Resentment, Resentiment, EU-Turkey Relations, Transvaluation

# AB-TÜRKİYE İLİŞKİLERİNDE DUYGUSAL DÖNÜŞÜM: İÇERLEMEDEN HINCA (2002-2020)

## ÖZET

Bu tez, 2002-2020 yılları arasında Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin (AKP) iktidarı döneminde Avrupa Birliği (AB) ve Türkiye ilişkilerinin duygusal temellerini incelemektedir. Bu tez, Türk siyasi seçkinlerinin söylemlerini ve anlatılarını analiz ederek, AKP iktidarı döneminde Türkiye'nin 2002-2005 yılları arasında AB'ye yönelik hissettiği içerlemenin, 2005'ten sonra hınç duygusuna dönüştüğünü savunuyor. İçerlemeden hınca dönüşümün, iki aşamada gerçekleştiği iddia edilmektedir: 2006-2011 yılları arasında “zayıf” hınç, 2011'den sonra ise “güçlü” bir hınç. Bu duygusal dönüşümün siyasi sonuçları, 2014 Ukrayna Krizi sırasında Türkiye'nin politika tercihlerinin ve 2016 Türkiye-AB 'Mülteci Anlaşması'nın analizi ile ortaya konmaktadır. Bu tez, Türkiye'nin AB'ye yönelik duygusal bağlamını dikkate almanın, yukarıda bahsedilen iki vaka için Türkiye'nin eleştirilen ve oldukça muğlak olarak algılanan politika tercihlerini daha iyi anlamamıza olanak sağladığı argümanı ile, duygular ve Türkiye-AB ilişkileri literatürüne katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Duygusal Dönüşüm, Duygular, İçerleme, Hınç, AB-Türkiye İlişkileri, Yeniden Değerleme

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Fikret Abdullah İDİL

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1.INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION**

#### **1.1. Introduction**

Since the beginning of Turkey-European Union (EU) relations in 1959, the relationship between Turkey and the EU has progressed as an emotionally charged process, represented by different emotions at different periods. In general, periods dominated by optimism and hope were followed by periods dominated by disappointment (Davutoğlu, 2001). Since Turkey and the EU signed the Ankara Agreement in 1963, the relationship has not progressed smoothly due to the fact that both the European Economic Community (EEC) and Turkey had mutual reservations during the implementation of the agreement in these early days of the relationship. Import substitution, which was the basic economic development model of Turkey in those years, was not suitable for integration with the EEC as Turkey's industry was incapable of competing with advanced European products which would be introduced to the Turkish market as envisioned by the Ankara Agreement. The EEC had a reservation for the free movement of labor/people. Thus, both sides had its own priorities, and the execution of the agreement was moving slowly. But since the 1980s, in which Turkey switched to a new economic model based on export-oriented development, relations with the EU have been reshaped and entered into a new era. Turkey applied for full membership to EU in 1987. However, Turkey's membership application was rejected in 1989 which caused disappointment in Turkey. The Customs Union Agreement (CU), which came into force in 1996, was launched with extreme optimism and brought a renewed hope for Turkey's accession to the EU (Davutoğlu, 2001). Even though the launch of the CU was considered as the beginning of a new era, full of hope and optimism, Turkey was openly excluded from the EU's

enlargement strategies in 1997, which once again caused a sharp disappointment and anger towards the EU. However, just two years later, in 1999 in the Helsinki Summit, Turkey was granted a candidate country status, and this time, the disappointment felt in the previous era was abruptly replaced by optimism and hope again. Declaration of a schedule for the opening of the membership negotiations with Turkey in 2004, elevated hope and optimism to the highest level among Turkish policy makers and the Turkish community as well. However, it is noteworthy that the year 2005, which was the date when the accession negotiations started between the EU and Turkey, is also denoted as the date Turkey's divergence from Europe began (Bashirov & Yılmaz, 2020).

As discussed in the following chapters, the Westernization and Europeanization narratives which had dominated Turkish policy makers' discourses until 2005, have been replaced by those narratives identifying Turkey as the 'Heir' of Ottoman Empire and as a 'Regional Power' (Hauge, Eralp, Wessels, & Bedir, 2016) from 2005 onwards. Emotionally, Turkey-EU relations, which progressed historically in a spiral of optimism and disappointment, started to show a significant divergence from that pattern after the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP) assumed power in 2002. In this thesis, it is asserted that Turkey has experienced an affective transformation which impacted the EU-Turkey relations deeply during the AKP rule and the outcome of the transformation became more visible after 2005. Resentment and resentment were identified as the affective enablers of the transformation which Turkey has experienced after 2005.

This thesis, by examining the affective transformation in the EU-Turkey relations, aims to make a contribution to the literatures on emotions and Turkey-EU relations by providing additional empirical evidence to the existing studies which examine emotions and their political consequences in World politics. The scope and the period of the study is limited to the EU-Turkey relations between 2002-2020. The time period of the study coincides fully with the tenure of the AKP in Turkey. This overlap allows us to trace the AKP policy makers' discourse changes related to the EU during the period at stake. The affective phenomena under scrutiny in this thesis, are resentment, resentment and transvaluation which is resentment's distinguishing feature. This thesis argues that Turkey's perception of being treated unfairly and discriminated by the EU, created feelings of resentment on the part of Turkey between 2002-2005. After 2005, resentment has gradually slid into resentment, hence a

transvaluation process was initiated accordingly. The effects of resentment became more salient in the aftermath of the transvaluation process which was consummated after 2011. Methodologically, Turkish political elites' discourses and narratives are analyzed to pinpoint the typical indicators of resentment/ressentiment throughout the thesis. In order to trace the process of transvaluation, the AKP era is divided into a number of periods based on the saliency of the major shifts and changes in discourses: 2002-2005, 2006-2011 and 2011-2020. The 2014 Ukraine crisis and the 2016 Refugee Deal are analyzed in detail in order to show how emotions permeate to political spheres and influence Turkey's policy preferences. This thesis makes a contribution to the literatures on emotions and Turkey-EU relations with the argument that taking into consideration Turkey's emotional context towards the EU between 2002-2020 allows us to better understand Turkish policy makers' decisions in the above-mentioned cases, which were highly criticized by the EU and the member states of the EU and initially perceived as quite ambiguous or even irrational by the EU.

Before moving into the theoretical debates, I would like to discuss the reasons which have motivated scholars to study emotions in International Relations (IR). Looking through a historical perspective, it can be argued that emotion studies in IR gained momentum mainly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The subsequent developments after the Cold War have demonstrated that the mainstream IR theories have difficulty in explaining state behaviors concerning the enormous changes and emerging structures in international politics, such as the rise of ethnic conflicts in different parts of the world, prominence of transnational activities etc. Consequently, the domain of international politics has extended to cover these new issues. Furthermore, the number of non-state actors has increased tremendously in the current international politics (Senarclens, 2016). The mainstream IR theories' basic assumptions such as considering states as unitary and rational actors which try to maximize their utility and security in an anarchic world structure has been challenged by scholars. For example, Paul Saurette claims that explanations based on either states' interest or fear is not sufficient to grasp the new realities of World politics (Saurette, 2006, p. 500).

Emotions have recently been added to the study of international affairs as a new dimension to address the shortcomings of mainstream IR theories. Since Neta Crawford's initial call in 2000 for future research, the research on emotions has been developing mainly in four areas: methodology for the study of emotions, specific

issues regarding emotions, the role of emotions in international politics, and general attempts to theorize emotions in international politics (Crawford, 2000). Existing studies on emotions can be classified into two groups based on their scope and approach to the study of emotions: Macro and micro approaches (Bleiker & Hutchison, 2014). Macro approaches attempt to theorize and conceptualize how emotions generally influence World politics, whereas micro approaches focus on the impact of specific emotions in specific political affairs. Jonathan Mercer's articles are good examples of macro studies (Mercer, 2014; Mercer, 2005; Mercer, 2010). Example of micro approaches include studies that investigate specific emotions' role and influence on specific political affairs: humiliation and violent terrorist actions (Fattah & Fierke, 2009), emotional roots of revenge (Saurette, 2006; Löwenheim & Heimann, 2008), emotions' role and impact on negotiations, how emotions help to build alliances, the role of emotions in inter-alliance relations (Sasley, 2010; Eznack, 2011; Hall, 2011), and emotions' role in ethnic conflicts as an elicitor or as an instrument (Petersen, 2002). Some of these studies are reviewed in the 'Empirical Illustrations' section to pinpoint the contributions of 'emotions' to the study of World affairs.

Up till now, academic studies on resentment/ressentiment which are the main emotions under study in this thesis, have generally focused on the end results, i.e., phenomena such as nationalism, fundamentalism, populism, and ethnic conflicts, or just remained limited to discovering the emotions of resentment/ressentiment in discourse without further specifying their political consequences. The studies which cover the processes of transvaluation are quite limited with Liah Greenfeld's article on Russian National Identity (Greenfeld, 1990) being an exception. In the Turkish national literature, Nagehan Tokdoğan's study (Tokdoğan, 2020) is exceptional in identifying ressentiment as the dominant emotion in the AKP era and arguing that ressentiment constitutes the foundation of the AKP's Neo-Ottomanist identity. However, Nagehan Tokdoğan does not cover the details of the transvaluation process in her article, either. In this thesis, in light of Turkey-EU relations between 2002-2020, I aim to address both the transvaluation process and the outcomes of such a transformation by including two cases in my analysis where Turkey's policy preferences were highly criticized by the EU and seemed ambiguous at first glance, namely the 2014 Ukraine Crisis and the 2016 'Refugee Deal'.

In Section 1.2, the research question of this thesis will be articulated. In Chapter 2, the basic theoretical background on emotions will be reviewed. The main topics to

be covered in Chapter 2 include: the conceptualizations of emotion and the theories on how emotions become collective and permeate political spheres. The literature review discussing some of the previous studies which deal with diverse political affairs will be covered in a separate section. The last section of Chapter 2 will focus on the methodologies relevant for the emotion studies.

In Chapter 3, the main focus will be on the twin emotional terms: resentment and ressentiment. The conceptualization of both resentment and ressentiment will be reviewed to pinpoint their similarities and differences. Literature review of some of the previous studies on resentment and ressentiment will be covered in a separate section. Section 3 of chapter 3 will be dedicated to the specific indicators of resentment/ressentiment in discourses and attitudes.

In Chapter 4, the EU-Turkey relations will be overviewed in order to provide a background information for the following sections. In Chapter 5, resentment/ressentiment will be applied to the EU-Turkey relationship in a historical perspective and the evolution and progression of ressentiment as well as the transvaluation process will be traced in the discourses of AKP elites between 2002-2020. The Ukraine crisis of 2014 and the 'Refugee Deal' of 2016 will be discussed in separate sections in Chapter 5.

## **1.2. Research Question**

To explore the reasons behind Turkey's ambivalent reaction to the annexation of Crimea during the 2014 Ukraine crisis and Turkey's decision to open borders in order to allow for the refugees' free passage to the EU, which caused a humanitarian crisis and suffering in 2020, are the two major motivators of this thesis.

With the annexation of Crimea in 2014, the power balance in the Black Sea region tilted in favor of Russia. Russia, with its superior naval force, became a potential threat to Turkey. Besides, Crimean Tatars are of Turkic origin and have a considerable diaspora in Turkey. Crimean Tatars have had to leave their homeland and migrate to Turkey in order to escape from the Russian oppression and atrocities since the 18th Century. However, Turkey was not very assertive towards Russia in criticizing the annexation in 2014. Turkey has declared several times that it will not recognize the Russian annexation of Crimea and that Turkey supports the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Turkey has also expressed its concerns for the rights and security

of the Crimean Tatars and demanded Russia to preserve them. Throughout the Ukraine crisis, although Turkey seemed to support Western declarations regarding Ukraine, Turkey refrained from joining the EU sanctions against Russia. Turkey's partial alignment with the EU has mostly been explained with arguments based on the dependence of Turkey to Russia in energy and tourism sectors. (Ereker & Özer, 2018). However, these arguments were invalidated when Turkey downed a Russian fighter jet in November 2015, which brought Turkey to almost a military confrontation with Russia. Just after the incident, Russia imposed sanctions on tourism and imports from Turkey, which eventually had significant implications for the Turkish economy. This thesis investigates the reasons of Turkey's partial alignment with the EU during the 2014 Ukraine crisis by taking affective dimensions into account and argues that one of the reasons behind this partial alignment was the deep resentment Turkey felt towards the EU.

The readmission agreement which is often referred to as the 'Refugee Deal' between Turkey and the EU, is another case examined in this thesis. The deal was signed in 2016 and after four years, in 2020, Turkey decided to open its EU borders for free passage to refugees. This decision caused a humanitarian crisis and suffering for refugees at the Turkish-Greek border in 2020. During this process, Turkey was accused of using refugees as an instrument to reach its goal regarding the EU. This thesis investigates the underlying emotion behind Turkey's decision to open its borders for refugees and argues that Turkey's desire to take revenge from the EU, which was empowered by resentment, is the cause of the decision to open the borders for refugees.

In this thesis, several discourse analysis methodologies are used. In order to trace the resentment process in general and the accompanying transvaluation processes in particular, Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) methodology is used (Reisigl & Wodak, 2017). DHA methodology has been useful for the identification of the changing evaluations regarding the objects and their values besides the self and the self-values.

In order to identify the emotional components in discourses, Emotion Discourse Analysis (EDA) methodology is used (Koschut, 2018). And finally, in order to identify the evidence of resentment/resentment in discourses, the conceptual model offered by Reinhard Wolf is used (Wolf, 2018). In Chapter 2, Section 4, the methodologies used in this thesis will be discussed in more detail.

In terms of text selection for analysis, EDA guidelines are used. EDA suggests selecting a “small number of canonical texts by charismatic authorities that may serve as emotional landmarks” (Koschut, 2018, p. 282). It especially suggests selecting those texts which represent the transformative moments or crises in which emotions are more prevalent and outspoken. In this thesis, discourses around the critical turning points which will be discussed in Chapter 4, in the EU-Turkey relations are selected.

It is necessary to evaluate the power relations and hierarchy in a group when deciding who the ‘charismatic authorities’ will be and whose discourses will be analyzed (Koschut, 2018, p. 282). In Turkey, due to the dominant position of first Prime Minister and then President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in the decision-making cycles for both domestic and foreign affairs and his superiority in power hierarchy in the AKP as a group, his discourses will be the main source for this thesis. Besides Erdoğan, discourses of other AKP elites who assume decision-making roles such as Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Ministers of EU Affairs and their spokespeople will also be included in the thesis in order to examine the intertextuality of the key messages in the discourses.

Main data to be analyzed are the statements of the AKP elites which appear in the daily newspapers, TV interviews, and speeches delivered during the election campaigns which have been filtered and selected according to their ‘emotional’ content.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2.THEORETICAL OVERVIEW**

As stated in the previous section, emotion studies in the International Relations discipline have increased considerably in the last two decades. During this time frame, emotion research has refuted the prejudices regarding emotions and cleared the way to include emotions as an additional dimension into the IR studies. Emotion researchers have convincingly demonstrated that emotions are now an integral and essential part of decision-making processes and are indispensable to make a rational decision. Another line of studies has elaborated the mechanisms by which an individual phenomenon such as emotion, become collective as well as political and permeates into political spheres and influences state behaviors. While macro studies have focused on emotion conceptualizations, micro studies have dealt with the impact of emotions in contemporary World affairs. These studies have demonstrated that, unlike the previous beliefs that considers emotions a consequence, emotions in fact constitute interests and cause behaviors.

In the following sections of this chapter, the theoretical foundations on which IR scholars build their studies on emotions are reviewed. Topics such as the conceptualization of emotions and the major debates on emotions revolving in the IR literature, are touched upon. This chapter provides a discussion of the main debates covering the emotion/reason and affect/reason dichotomies. Major debates regarding how an individual phenomenon like emotion, becomes collective and permeate the political spheres and becomes influential in international politics will be discussed. By utilizing the theories developed by emotion researchers, this chapter also elaborates on

the impact of emotions on decision-making processes and how emotion studies challenge the ‘rational actor’ paradigm in IR.

## **2.1. The Conceptualization of Emotion**

This section provides an overview of the conceptualization of emotion, which scholars of IR and those from other disciplines utilize when they develop their theoretical and empirical works. The section first starts with the definition of emotion and other related concepts frequently encountered in studies and then moves on to a discussion of how an individual phenomenon like emotion becomes collective and political as a subsection.

There is no consensus on the definition of emotions. Both emotions researchers and IR scholars have so far provided various definitions of emotion according to their specific areas of concerns and interests. On one hand, those emotions researchers who favor the process-based definitions and conceptualizations mainly emphasize the ‘process oriented’ nature of emotions and strive to unfold the emotion process from the initial elicitation until the actual emotional experience. IR scholars, on the other hand, define emotions mainly stressing its social, cultural and interactional attributes in order to explicate how emotions permeate and become influential in politics.

One of the prevailing conceptualizations of emotions is the multi-componential and process view which is supported by prominent emotions researchers, such as Nico Frijda and Klaus Scherer. Frijda (1986) and Scherer (2005) emphasize that emotional experience is an outcome of a process in which several components residing in emotion interacts bidirectionally during the process. According to Scherer, emotion components are the cognitive component (appraisal), neurophysiological component (bodily symptoms), motivational component (action tendencies), motor expression component (facial and vocal expression), and finally the subjective feeling component (emotional experience). Both scholars argue that emotions are elicited by a cognitive appraisal of a stimuli in relevance to individuals’ concerns (beliefs/desires) and the emotion process starts accordingly. Frijda (1986) asserts that a cognitive function accompanies the emotion process and this function provides feedback to emotion components at every stage of the process and the emotion components reevaluate their dispositions accordingly. As an outcome of a reevaluation, actual emotional experience and action tendencies may be different. For example, the action tendency

of anger is to immediately strike back but social norms, laws, cultural factors may prohibit the subject from acting that way. In such a case, the subject may prefer to repress his/her emotions and may choose not to discharge them right away. In the next chapter, when discussing resentment and r resentment, it will be elaborated that a subject who experiences hostile emotions may prefer to repress these emotions under specific conditions. Defining emotion as a process with a cognitive function attached to it, is important in the sense that, as will be explained in later chapters, the conceptualization of r resentment assumes a re-evaluation process which alters the value evaluations of the objects and as a consequence, emotions attached to them. So, it may be argued that the process-based conceptualization provides the basis for the explanations of such affective transformation mechanisms.

IR Scholars have so far mainly focused on the operational definitions of emotions and uncovered how emotions are shaped by the interactions with the outside environment. They have explored and observed that emotions have social, cultural and political dimensions which are the essential features of emotions, contributing to their pervasiveness at the international level. According to Mercer and Crawford, an emotion refers to the “subjective experience of some diffuse physiological change” (Mercer, 2014, p. 516) and has “intersubjective, and cultural components” (Crawford, 2000, p. 125). In that vein, Coicaud (2016) emphasizes the social and contextual nature of emotions and argues that the outside environment influences personal feelings.

In the IR studies on emotions, the concepts of affect, emotion and feelings are often used interchangeably although each of these terms point to a distinct phenomena. A feeling can be defined as the “conscious awareness that one is experiencing an emotion” (Mercer, 2014, p. 516). Affect is defined as a valenced feeling elicited by a triggering event (Sasley, 2010, s. 689). Valence may be negative or positive and its intensity (arousal) may vary according to the eliciting event and it may evoke emotions accordingly. For example positive valenced affects may evoke joy, happiness while negative valenced affects may evoke anger, resentment, rage etc. depending on the intensity of the triggering event.

Another concept that needs clarification within the context of this thesis is the ‘affective disposition’. The basic difference between emotion and affective disposition is such that, emotions are short term reactions to particular triggering events while affective dispositions are long-term experiences or sentiments which may evoke

different episodes of emotions in this long duration. For example, resentment is an affective disposition and resentment is one of its manifestations as an emotion (Aeschbach, 2017).

Affective dispositions have an impact on how subjects perceive the 'other' and consequently influences behavioral tendencies with regards to the 'other'. Affective dispositions manifest its influence especially during alliance building and negotiation cycles. Some empirical illustrations will be presented in Section 2.3

Section 2.2 discusses those aspects of emotions which allow them to permeate the political sphere and to influence political behavior are discussed. Then, in Section 2.3, some empirical studies which illustrate the impact of emotions on politics are reviewed.

## **2.2. Emotions and World Politics**

Emotions and their linkages to political affairs constitute a fairly new area of study for IR scholars. Neta Crawford is one of the pioneers in this area. In her widely cited study, 'Passion of World Politics' (Crawford, 2000), she successfully maps the emotional attributes to contemporary world politics. Crawford asserts that theories which do not take into consideration the effects of emotions in international relations are likely to be flawed. For example, deterrence theory depends on fear and threat, but this theory neglects the human responses under threat and fear. As a discrepancy between deterrence theory and a real life situation, Crawford points to Saddam Hussein's decision and behavior to go to war in 1991, when he was threatened by the US-led coalition forces, rather than stepping back. She also points out that, peacebuilding efforts, diplomacy, and negotiations frequently fail due to a lack of understanding of the practitioners about emotions and their implications under various circumstances.

Both Crawford and Mercer assert that the dominant assumption that emotions can only be useful in explaining the divergences from rationality, caused the mainstream IR theories to disregard emotions in their explanations (Mercer, 2005, p. 97; Crawford, 2000, p. 122).

With the help of recent advances in neuroscience, however, scholars have found out that emotions are an essential part of rationality and even contended that, people without emotions are irrational (Mercer, 2005). Emotions influence our preferences,

choices, which and how much information we collect. Hence, emotions are an integral and essential part of decision-making processes and emotions are indispensable for making a rational decision. Emotions influence foreign policy decisions by permeating the decision-making processes. Lerner and Renshon (2012) have developed several propositions regarding the emotions-decision making nexus, which provide insight on how emotions shape decision-making processes. They claim that emotions can influence judgments about the perception of risks and risk preferences of decision makers, which information they will recall and which information they will be attentive to. For example, angry persons are more inclined to disregard risks while fearful persons are more attentive to risks.

In the next subsection, the discussions about how individual emotions become collective and permeate the political sphere, will be overviewed.

### **2.2.1. The Conceptualization of States' Emotions**

To assume that Turkey feels resentment towards the EU implies that 'Turkey' as an entity have the capability to experience emotions. Whether or not a state can experience emotions is a fundamental debate among IR scholars. Thus, the main debates revolve around whether or not states which do not have a physical body, can experience emotions.

Sasley (2011), Löwenheim and Heimann (2008) and Eznack (2013) argue that states can experience emotions because their leaders feel as the state and act accordingly. In a similar vein, Löwenheim and Heimann argue that when leaders assume roles in the state structure, they act and feel in conformation with the norms embedded in their role identities. In such a case, the leaders' feelings will be different from their personal feelings. As a theoretical background to these arguments, Sasley, by utilizing intergroup emotions theory, explains that group members may feel the same unique emotion (group emotion) provided that individuals perceive themselves as part of the group and individual members of the group converge on the same emotions (Sasley, 2011, p. 454). Sasley considers the state as a big group and thus, asserts that states can experience emotion.

Mercer, in response to the assertions which claim that a 'body' is required to experience emotions, contends that emotions cannot be reduced to bodies alone. Mercer (Mercer, 2014) argues that emotions and identity are closely related and

identity is the basic enabler of a group level emotion. His main proposition is that “emotion goes with identity and emotion makes identity consequential, and identity makes group-level emotion possible. They both depend on, but are not reducible to, individual bodies” (Mercer, 2014, p. 522).

On the contrary, Hall claims that states do not have a body and do not have a capability to feel. State leaders display emotions on behalf of the state and which emotion to be displayed in international relations is a strategic political decision (Hall, 2011, p. 532).

Crawford (2014) brings a new perspective to the debates on states’ emotions and argues that dominant emotions can be institutionalized and be influential in state behavior and this influence is reflected in the procedures of the states. X-rays at airports etc. are the basic examples of the institutionalization of fear.

In this thesis, I follow the approach that states can experience emotions through their representatives’ emotions, and I assume that the AKP leader, first Prime Minister and then President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s and other AKP policy makers’ emotions represent Turkey’s emotions towards the EU.

### **2.3. Empirical Illustrations**

In the previous sections, it was argued that emotions play a key role in international politics. In this chapter, to support this argument, several studies are reviewed to provide an insight on how IR scholars link emotions to world politics and how emotions enrich the explanations of different events and phenomena in world affairs. The objective of this chapter is not to provide a general literature review on emotions, rather its objective is to exemplify the practical application of some of the concepts discussed in the previous chapter to political affairs. The selected articles demonstrate how emotions become collective and create communities and be political, how affective dispositions influence decisions and the impact of affect in conflict resolutions. Selected articles demonstrate the application of emotion concepts to diverse political areas such as the role of revenge (Löwenheim & Heimann, 2008), trauma and humiliation (Fattah & Fierke, 2009; Hutchison, 2010; Saurette, 2006), the role of images and representations to elicit emotions (Hutchison, 2014 ; Adler-Niessen, Andersen, & Hansen, 2020), the role of emotions in ethnic conflicts (Petersen, 2002), and the role of affect in conflictual situations (Eznack, 2013). In each case summarized

below, it is shown that including emotions as an additional dimension to the specific cases, helps to clarify the decisions and behaviors that may seem ambiguous at first glance.

Lucile Eznack (2013) compared the USA's emotional reactions to Britain during the Suez crisis in 1956 and to Russia upon its invasion of Afghanistan in 1970-1980. In both cases, the USA was angry but its anger-related behavior and its expression towards Britain and Russia was different. She claimed that as the affective disposition of the USA towards Russia was negative, its anger related behavior was unrestrained and was harsher. On the contrary, the USA's anger-related behavior towards Britain was more restrained as its affective disposition towards Britain was positive. By comparing the emotional reactions and their intensity towards a friend (Britain) and towards a rival (Russia), Eznack demonstrated the role of affective disposition in shaping the intensity of emotional reactions expressed in international conflicts.

Löwenheim and Heimann (2008) analyzed the emotional basis of revenge in international politics. They have found out that humiliation and moral outrage experienced are strong motivators for revenge. Löwenheim and Heimann (2008) examined the Second Lebanon War (July 2006) as a sample case and argued that although not explicitly stated by the Israeli officials, the affair had all the patterns and characteristics of 'revenge'.

Rebecca Adler-Nissen, Katrine Emilie Andersen and Lene Hansen (2020) investigated the interconnection between images/photographs, emotions, and international politics by using the photographs of Alan Kurdi as an example. Adler-Nissen et. al presented a theoretical framework about how images/photographs, emotions, and international politics are connected through discourse. They demonstrated how the same image can both invoke various policies and change policies. As an empirical support, they pointed to the fact that, policies adopted with reference to Kurdi's death changed from an open-door approach to attempts to stop refugees from arriving.

Brent Sasley (2010) examined the impact of affect in foreign policy decision-making and its influences on foreign policy decisions. He claimed that if the politician's affective attachment to an object is high, then in such a case, the politicians tends to behave less flexible during negotiations regarding that object. In order to exemplify the impact of affect in negotiations and in decision-making processes, he utilized the Oslo Accords between Palestine and Israel as a case study and investigated

why Israel signed the agreement. He compared two Israeli prime ministers (Yitzhak Shamir and Yitzhak Rabin), affective attachment to the Land of Israel. Shamir had a more intense affection to the 'Land of Israel', whereas Rabin had other priorities such as 'national security' and thus had a less intense affection to this idea. As a result, the Oslo Accords were signed during Rabin's rule.

Emma Hutchinson (2010) examined the traumatic events and their influence in constituting collective emotions, hence communities. She especially investigated how representations of the traumatic events become an instrument in creating group emotions. She utilized the representations of Bali bombing in October 12, 2002 in media and she asserted that through representations, trauma can elicit group emotions and can create communities. In another essay, Hutchinson examined the role of emotions in the creation of an international solidarity after the Asian Tsunami in 2004 (Hutchinson, 2014). In this case, she examined the representations of tsunami in media and she asserted that the emotional media portrayals helped with the construction of an international community and solidarity.

Fattah and Fierke (2009) examined the motivators of violent acts in the Middle East. They claimed that the experience of humiliation may become collective and be influential in uniting people as a group. Humiliation arouses a desire to restore dignity. Fattah & Fierke used the 9/11 incident as a case to justify their arguments. Al Qaeda actions and the following US doctrine on the 'War on Terror' are the expressions of humiliation and the manifestations of actions to restore dignity. In a similar vein, Paul Saurette (2006) examined how humiliation has determined the USA's global policy after 9/11 and came to the conclusion that Iraq's invasion by the USA is the outcome of the effort to restore dignity after being humiliated by the 9/11 attacks.

Roger Petersen (2002) in his book on ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe, examines the underlying motivations which lead people to act violently against other ethnicities with whom they lived together for so many years. He evaluated four emotions- fear, hatred, rage, and resentment- regarding this motivation. He asserts that 'in particular, the resentment is the best fit to explain the ethnic conflicts experienced in Eastern Europe. He concludes that the ethnic groups' self-perception of their group status as 'unjust' compared to other ethnic groups, initiated resentment and motivated the ethnic conflicts in the region.

In the next chapter, the impact of resentment/ressentiment and the transvaluation process will be exemplified after resentment and ressentiment conceptualizations are discussed.

## **2.4. Methodology**

Studies have shown that many political emotions, can be identified by using the established tools of discourse analysis (Crawford, 2014; Hutchison & Bleiker, 2014; Mercer, 2014)

In this thesis, Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) methodology is used. DHA is a variant of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which takes a longer and historical view of discourses and is particularly distinguishable by its specific emphasis on identity construction (Rumelili & Aydın-Düzgit, 2019). DHA enables researchers to examine the discursive strategies used in texts/discourses to define Turkey in relation to the EU and to investigate the changes occurred in these strategies in different time periods.

DHA process proceeds as follows: “after having identified the specific contents or topics of a specific discourse, discursive strategies are investigated. Then, linguistic means and the specific, context-dependent linguistic realizations are examined” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2017, p. 93). Within the scope of this thesis, I focus particularly on three discursive strategies in discourses: nomination, predication and argumentation to track the ‘reevaluations’ occurred regarding Turkey and the EU after major turning points in EU-Turkey relations (Reisigl & Wodak, 2017). Nomination strategies are realized by discursive construction of social actors, objects/phenomena/events and processes/actions. Predication strategies may be realized by discursive qualification of social actors and objects by stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits. Argumentation strategies are realized by justifying the positive and negative attributions ascribed to actors/objects. As will be explained in Chapter 3, transvaluation which is the characteristic feature of ressentiment involves a reevaluation mechanism concerning both object and the self and the values. In that vein, it is assumed that by observing the changes in the nomination, predication and argumentation strategies in the discourses in three consecutive periods mentioned in Section 1.2, the reevaluations in the transvaluation process can be traced. All these strategies will be investigated in the AKP elites’ discourses which address the EU and

changes in nominations, predications and arguments are examined accordingly in Chapter 5.

Besides DHA, the Emotion Discourse Analysis (EDA) framework, conceptualized by Simon Koschut (2018) is also utilized and applied to the AKP policy makers' discourses to unfold the emotional components in the discourses and to interpret the meanings attached in them. According to the EDA framework, selecting the texts is the first stage of the analysis process. The second stage in EDA is to identify the emotional expressions in discourses. At that stage, it is suggested to be attentive to the emotional terms, connotations and metaphors. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, negative connotations (i.e., racist, xenophobic,) and metaphors (i.e., Crusaders Alliance) are widely used in the AKP policy makers' discourses when addressing the EU. On the contrary, the AKP policy makers used positive connotations such as tolerant, peaceful, responsible, etc. when addressing the self. The third stage in the framework is to interpret and contextualize the emotionalization effects of texts/discourses. In other words, the emotional expressions identified in the second stage are positioned in a social/political context to interpret the meaning which they convey.

The EDA framework is useful to identify the emotional terms and the meanings attached to them in various social and cultural contexts. However, if the aim of the research is to identify the expression of a specific complex emotion such as resentment in discourses, then approaches based on analyzing only the emotional expressions in discourses may not yield the expected results. For example, resentment is considered a tertiary level complex emotion, which consists of a mixture and combinations of anger, surprise, disgust, contempt, shock, and outrage (TenHouten, 2018). In order to overcome the challenge to pinpoint the evidence of an emotion, Reinhard Wolf suggests inspecting the behavioral patterns as well as the emotional content in discourses in a specific case.

Wolf (2013) considers emotions as 'patterned responses' to a specific stimulus. As stated in the previous sections, emotions are the outcome of a process which involves interactions between 'emotion components'. He claims that the indicators of emotional processes might be observed in relation to three interrelated basic characteristics of emotions: cognition, bodily arousal and action tendencies. Wolf elaborates on the indicators of resentment which researchers should look for when

studying resentment. The indicators of resentment are presented in Chapter 3, after resentment and r resentment conceptualizations are discussed.

In this thesis, DHA, together with both EDA and the conceptual model of Reinhard Wolf are used when analyzing the AKP policy makers' discourses. As a guideline it is often suggested to select texts where emotional expressions are more explicitly expressed. Hence, in this thesis, newspaper articles, interviews, and election speeches are selected as the raw data source for the analysis. The main source of raw data is the articles published in the widely circulated national newspapers, including *Hürriyet*, *Milliyet* and *Sabah*. Especially *Hürriyet* allows for free and seamless access to its online archives and provides advanced search features for scanning the articles in its database via keywords. Thus, in this thesis, articles and discourses in the newspapers were scanned and filtered for their relevance to EU-Turkey relations between 2002-2020. The second guideline is that emotions become more visible in texts/discourses during times of crises or in important turning points. In this thesis, two major turning points which divide the AKP era into three consecutive periods in terms of the EU-Turkey relationship, were identified, namely the start of the accession negotiations and start of the Arab Spring. Hence, the data collected are classified into three categories representing the three periods mentioned in Section 1.1, in the AKP era and data in each category are matched with the turning points. Then, the Turkish political elite discourses in each category are analyzed separately by using the DHA methodology, and the discursive strategies (nomination, predication, and attribution) applied by the AKP policy makers in each period are identified. These discursive strategies are later compared to the strategies in other periods in order to pinpoint the affective changes experienced in each period.

EDA and 'pattern' analysis are particularly utilized to extract the emotional content in the discourses when discussing the two specific cases in this thesis: Ukraine Crisis (2014) and the 'Refugee Deal' (2016). The reflection of resentment and r resentment in discourses and their behavioral indicators are discussed separately in Section 3.3.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3.RESENTMENT AND RESENTMENT**

This chapter focuses on various aspects of resentment and resentment. In Section 3.1, the conceptualizations about both resentment and its closely linked affiliate, resentment are reviewed and their commonalities as well as differences in terms of their eliciting factors and manifestations and the transvaluation process are elaborated. In Section 3.2, those studies which apply these concepts to the social/political affairs are reviewed. Section 3.3 focuses on discursive indicators of resentment/resentment. With regard to the conceptualization of emotions discussed in Chapter 2, this section provides a discussion on how resentment manifests itself in discourses and in behaviors and attitudes.

#### **3.1. Conceptualizing Resentment and Resentment**

Although, in the academic literature, the concepts of resentment and resentment sometimes are used interchangeably, there is a consensus that these are separate phenomena (Demertzis, 2020; Ure, 2015; Brighi, 2016). In fact, in real-world situations, resentment and resentment are intertwined in most cases and distinctions between them gets blurred in complex cases. Also, resentment can sometimes transform into resentment or manifestation of resentment may appear as resentment. However, based on the acceptance that resentment and resentment are distinct phenomena, in this chapter, conceptualizations of both resentment and resentment are separately discussed.

### 3.1.1. Resentment

In this section, resentment's eliciting factors and its characteristic features are discussed. After having completed the discussions on both resentment and r resentment, in Section 2 of this chapter, selected case studies are reviewed to demonstrate the impact of resentment and r resentment besides the transvaluation process, in various political contexts.

Resentment is a complex emotion which consists of the mixture of emotions of disappointment, anger, fear and disgust (TenHouten, 2018). Resentment is a highly political emotion and is usually affiliated with major upheavals and revolutions in history. For example, it is claimed that during the French Revolution in 1789, resentment was the prevalent political emotion (Lucena-Giraldo, 2013, p. 214). Brexit in the UK and the rise of the right-wing parties in Europe are also claimed to be the manifestations of resentment in different guises (Konciewicz, 219, p. 524).

Resentment is an emotional response to behaviors perceived as being 'unjust' or 'wrong'. In other words, it is a reaction of the subjects to perceived injustices to themselves. Resentment's characteristic action tendency is to express the 'wrongs' and ask the 'wrongdoers' to correct them. Blaming is a characteristic feature of resentment. Those who experience resentment seek someone to blame for every situation they consider unfair. Resentment endures as long as the 'wrongs' are not rectified.

Resentment involves an inherent desire for revenge. Resentment is considered a kind of anger but unlike anger, its action tendency is not to strike back directly. Anger is aroused when an action is perceived to create a personal 'harm' to the subject, while resentment is aroused when an action is supposed to be 'unjust' according to the perception of the subject (Aeschbach, 2017). Resentment supposes that the subject does not have the capacity to strike back directly. For example, the subject may perceive his poverty unjust and may blame other social groups and the government consequently. In such cases, direct retaliation is not possible. Thus, the subjects wait for a suitable time at which they can retaliate. Until then, resentment smolders like a low fire till the wrongdoer gets punished either by the subject itself or by a third party.

'Social comparison' is another mechanism that elicits resentment (Barbalet, 1992; Elster, 2007). Social context in which inequalities and power differentials are salient, is a suitable environment for triggering resentment (Aeschbach, 2017). Under such circumstances, if a group perceives its subordinate status 'unjust' compared to

other groups then resentment as a group emotion is fostered (Elster, 1999). Social mobility, which means that a group's status is lowered while other group's status is enhanced comparably, is a powerful source of resentment. According to Petersen, this is one of the underlying reasons of the ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe after the dissolution of Yugoslavia (Petersen, 2002).

Resentment is considered a moral emotion. It is considered that being vocal to injustices and expressing them helps to identify and protect norms of justice in a society. Accordingly, the breach of shared norms in a society is another source of resentment (Ure, 2015). Democratic environments, in which everybody is supposed to be equal but in reality, apparent inequalities such as wealth, power, and status exists, encourage expressions of resentment against injustices in the society.

In the next section, the conceptualization of resentment and its constitutive parts are discussed and the differences between resentment and ressentiment are highlighted.

### **3.1.2. Ressentiment**

Ressentiment is closely related to resentment and in the literature these terms are used interchangeably. Ressentiment is a more complex phenomenon than resentment and the definition of ressentiment is a debatable topic between scholars. So far, ressentiment has been considered a psychological mechanism (Salmela & Capelos, 2021, p. 194), a cluster of emotions (Demertzis, 2020, p. 132) or an affective disposition or sentiment (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 55). Within the scope of this thesis, I will follow Aeschbach's definition and consider ressentiment as an affective disposition or sentiment. Aeschbach considers ressentiment as a 'sentiment' and claims that the "manifestations of ressentiment are hostile emotions (revenge, envy) as well as the blaming attitudes (resentment, indignation), which he calls ressentiment-emotions" (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 55). According to Aeschbach, "the characteristic ressentiment-emotions are intense, hostile, and often involve blaming someone else" (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 62). Hereinafter POR will be used as an abbreviation for person of resentment (POR) which identifies a person who is experiencing resentment.

The first person to deal with this phenomenon was Frederick Nietzsche. He discussed the issue mainly in his work entitled 'On the Genealogy of Morality' (Nietzsche, 1885/1961). Nietzsche's work has been developed and extended by Max

Scheler (1915/1961). Nietzsche and Scheler elaborated a theory of resentment which became the most widely accepted interpretation in political philosophy. For these authors, resentment was a distressing experience that showed the inability of those placed at the bottom of a social scale to assert their own value, or to admire those placed above (Gomez-Garrido, 2013, p. 279). For Nietzsche, resentment was embodied by the champions of Judeo-Christian culture with their coronation of the weak; for Scheler it was an emotion experienced in liberal democracies by those, like the petty bourgeoisie, who were placed in relatively subordinate positions, who stubbornly demanded equality. For both Nietzsche and Scheler, resentment was pathological: first, because its characteristic repression of other emotions, like anger or hatred, inflicted an acute damage on those who suffered it; second, because in its devaluation of those outstanding and placed above, resentment manifested the insanity of those who embodied it (Gomez-Garrido, 2013, p. 279).

In 1915, Max Scheler (Scheler, 1915/1961) published a phenomenology of resentment in democratic societies. He presumed envy and the repression of emotions as its main components. For Scheler, the roots of resentment lay in a comparison with others in which the person felt in disadvantage because (s)he did not have access to the same goods or could not enjoy the same status. Scheler remarked one important premise that was fundamental in his interpretation of resentment as the core emotion of liberal democracies— that the experience of inequality is not necessarily painful; resentment proliferates under specific conditions, namely when equality is formally assumed, whereas important situations of inequality actually persist. In contrast to Nietzsche, Scheler suggested in some parts of his work that resentment is an emotion emerging under certain social and cultural conditions. In other words, resentment is the manifestation of the tensions resulting from a culture of equality in a society of naturally unequal persons.

The main distinguishing attributes of resentment can be summarized as the impotence and the feeling of inferiority and hence repression of hostile emotions and reliving of those emotions and most importantly the transvaluation process which aims to recover the self-esteem of the victim (Aeschbach, 2017). In the following paragraphs, these characteristic features of resentment are discussed.

Scholars emphasize the impotence and feeling of inferiority as the first stage of resentment elicitation (Aeschbach, 2017; Demertzis, 2020). The cause of resentment is the subject's incapacity or impotence to really act against perceived

injuries, wrongdoings, undeserved slight, unfairness, or deprivation (Demertzis, 2020, p. 133). Blocking the discharge of hostile emotions leads to repression of these emotions. Social context, social norms or just power asymmetries in the interactions may disallow discharging the hostile emotions.

Besides the repression of hostile emotions, another eliciting mechanism of resentment is the constant reliving of the hostile emotions. As the subject's impotence disallows discharging of hostile emotions, the subject may recurrently experience these hostile emotions by recalling the unpleasant events that triggered hostile emotions. The constant reliving the unpleasant events and constantly repressing the emotions, may cause physiological pain and uneasiness for the subjects. Resentment provides a mechanism which is called transvaluation, that provides a relief to the impotent and inferior subject.

Both resentment and resentment involves a desire for revenge characteristically. But there are differences in their revenge attitudes. Resentment aims to rectify the 'wrongs' and punish the 'wrongdoer'. In the case of resentment, the POR takes a revenge "by downgrading a rival's personal value and thus improving her own at the same time via a process of reevaluation of values" (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 63). In the following subsection, transvaluation process will be discussed in more detail.

### **3.1.2.1. Transvaluation Process**

The most important and distinguishing element of resentment is called the reevaluation/transvaluation/revaluation mechanism or process. Although the mechanism is the same, different authors prefer to use one of the terms listed in the previous sentence. In this thesis, I prefer to use the concept of transvaluation as this term implies both a transformation and a re-evaluation process which better fits Turkey's case analyzed in this thesis.

Demertzis identifies two stages in the transvaluation mechanism:" in the first stage, the POR experiences some kind of injustice and frustration, overwhelming him/her as an unbeatable destiny. In the second stage, once the transvaluation process is completed, a new moral-hermeneutic horizon opens up for the person of resentment" (Demertzis, 2020, p. 134). In other words, while in the first stage s/he is morally injured by the damage to her self-esteem, in the second stage s/he is morally

reconstituted. Hence, the POR has “ultimately convinced her/himself of her/his goodness, piety, piousness, self-righteousness, integrity, and honesty” (Demertzis, 2020, p. 134). The crucial point in this paragraph is the assertion that a feeling of inferiority is replaced by a sense of superiority. In other words, a ‘new self’ and ‘new values’ are constituted after transvaluation is consummated.

Aeschbach attracts attention to changes in the emotions during the transvaluation process and claims that hostile emotions may transform into moral emotions (resentment, indignation) after the transvaluation process (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 92). Therefore, resentment is one of the emotional expressions of ressentiment. Demertzis also claims that repressed negative emotions like fear, insecurity and shame are transformed “into anger, resentment and hatred towards perceived out group enemies” (Demertzis, 2020, p. 133).

Aeschbach conceptualizes ressentiment as a ‘reevaluation’ mechanism which changes the evaluations about a particular object’s value. He introduces two forms of ressentiment: weak and strong forms of ressentiment. He defines the distinction between two forms: The weak form of ressentiment corresponds to the “reevaluation of a particular and inaccessible good or of a particular and unrealizable action”. The strong form of ressentiment is an “alteration of the relation of height or importance between values” (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 110).

In studies regarding ressentiment, Aesop’s fable of fox is presented as the emblematic illustration of a transvaluation mechanism. The fable is as follows: A fox tries to reach some grapes hanging high on the vine but is unable to, although he leaps with all his strength. Finally, the fox goes away and remarks, “I do not need any sour grapes”. According to this sample, the weak form of ressentiment can manifest itself as a devaluation of something that once coveted. Another manifestation of the weak form of ressentiment is to increase the value of something already at hand. As an analogy to the fable, if fox has lemons at hand, then he can reevaluate them as ‘sweet’. These kinds of reevaluations are usually referred to as ‘sweet lemon’ reevaluations which imply a positive valuation of something at hand or accessible. Other possible evaluations include devaluation or denial of the instrumental value of the coveted good: “these sweet grapes will not make me happy” (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 112).

The weak ressentiment may turn into a more extensive transformation that changes the values themselves. In strong ressentiment, the subjects alter and shift the importance of the values in their value hierarchy. In the analogy with the fable of fox,

“he would come to disvalue not only the inaccessible grapes, but sweetness and so all things sweet, because sweetness itself has changed its position in his value hierarchy” (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 119).

Ressentiment is assumed to be experienced by those subjects that are considered weak, impotent and inferior. But at the same time, resentment is affiliated with major upheavals, violent conflicts and perceived as their underlying emotional foundations. Demertzis proposes an explanation to this paradox and states that after the transvaluation process is completed, the POR assumes a new identity which is morally superior to his former identity. In that way, he claims that “the link between motivation and action is restored” (Demertzis, 2020, p. 140). The process of transvaluation takes time. It may take several decades or even centuries for states to complete the transvaluation process. According to Demertzis, transvaluation can be considered as an incubation period. In the incubation period, POR is still incapacitated to take actions but when the transvaluation process is over POR feels entitled to act. The repressed emotions such as resentment and rage will most likely become more intense during the incubation, and the “action motivated by them will be probably more violent and destructive than it would have been without resentment” (Demertzis, 2020, p. 140).

Salmela and Capelos (2021) argue that transvaluation fragments the ‘self’: a new elevated self and an old painful self. The old values which were once coveted but were unattainable by the ‘old self’, are not completely erased but stay backstage in the psyche of the ‘new self’. Scheler calls this obscure awareness of the old values as ‘value blindness’ or ‘value delusion’. In order to prevent the ‘new self’ from relapsing to the ‘old self’ and to the “old values’ which still resides in the psyche, the improved ‘new self’ has to be validated, reinforced and maintained through social sharing with like-minded peers (Salmela & Capelos, 2021, p. 192). Although POR seeks recognition of the ‘new self’ from peers, at the same time, s/he suspects them as the POR aims to maintain the new ‘self’ acquired after the transvaluation process and does not want to return to the ‘old self’. Resentment fosters social cohesion between group members and elicits both negative emotions (i.e., resentment, rage), especially for the outgroups and positive emotions (i.e., pride) as the ingroup emotions. Resentment becomes collective via a social sharing mechanism and permeates the decision-making processes and impacts state behaviors.

In the following section, in order to demonstrate the transformative power of resentment and its linkage to world affairs, several examples will be reviewed. In

Section 3.3, resentment and ressentiment's discursive indicators and their associated behavioral patterns will be discussed. In Chapter 5, resentment, ressentiment and the transvaluation process will be associated with the changes in EU-Turkey relations and will be asserted that Turkey has experienced an affective transformation from resentment to ressentiment, with regard to EU-Turkey relations.

### **3.2. Resentment/Ressentiment and World Politics**

Resentment/ressentiment is usually affiliated with populism, terrorism, revolutions, national identity building, ethnic conflicts and as a political instrument for populist leaders. The selected case studies demonstrate the impact of the transvaluation process and ressentiment in various political contexts. In the selected cases, the transformative power of transvaluation is emphasized.

For further reading on the impact of resentment/ressentiment in political affairs, I suggest the following case studies which links resentment/ressentiment to contemporary political affairs: on populism and rise of right-wing parties (Salmela & Von Scheve, 2017), on resentment and Euroscepticism (Abts & Baute, 2022), on resentment as an instrument for populist leaders (Ciulla, 2020), on resentment and ethnic conflicts (Petersen, 2002), on emotional motivators during the Arab Spring (Pearlman, 2013). Demertzis' book provides both theoretical information and case studies that cover ressentiment's political consequences in diverse political areas (Demertzis, 2020).

Brighi (2016) investigated if the Paris attacks on January 7 and November 13 were the expressions of revenge motivated by ressentiment. She asserted that these violent incidents can be interpreted as a call to French people to feel the resentment of the Muslims in France. She contends that, as long as issues that Muslims in France suffer from continue, the likelihood that resentment's re-representation of itself as ressentiment remain high. She stated that when such a shift happens, then violence as an act of revenge is highly probable. She contends that Paris attacks are clues of resentment turned to ressentiment.

Nagehan Tokdoğan (2020), emphasized the role of ressentiment as an affective foundation of current politics in Turkey. She asserted that the loss of the Ottoman Empire in addition to the perceived humiliation and oppression from the Kemalist tradition, raised a sense of victimhood in the AKP policy makers and Erdoğan. She

contended that, the victimhood narrative and the emotions elicited by this narrative is utilized in the creation of a new identity. She observed the shifts in Erdoğan's and AKP policy makers' discourses: discourses on victimhood shifted towards discourses on victory and greatness while constructing a Neo-Ottomanist identity. She claims that this transformation is an intense manifestation of ontological resentment.

Posluszna (2019) examined the relationship between resentment and Islamist terrorism using Nietzsche's theory of resentment. In Posluszna's view, the transition from resentment to terrorism essentially stems from the mechanism of the revaluation of values and the reaction to its final product, namely compensatory values, which manifests itself in the form of fundamentalism and fanaticism. According to her, the utter commitment to exterminate the unfaithful, an ostentatious contempt for the western lifestyle and a strong emphasis on the value of tradition derive from deprivation, which has befallen Islamic communities, and which leads to resentment, and terrorism is a manner of coping with resentment. Terrorism allows at least a partial redirection of resentment hatred, and it is turning now outside, towards those who have become the subject of contempt and condemnation, thanks to revaluation.

Liah Greenfeld (1990) claims that the Russian identity building process is a manifestation of resentment. She claimed that when Russia realized its inferiority in front of the West in industrial, scientific, and civilizational matters, Russia had difficulty in building a national identity against this apparent Western superiority. She elaborated three stages in the Russian national identity building process. In the first stage, the West was imitated but this attempt failed. In the second stage, the West was considered not suitable as a model for Russia and Russia's distinctness was emphasized. In the third stage, the West and its values were devalued, and the West was portrayed as evil. Aeschbach considers this case as a significant illustration of a transvaluation process. He comments that this case demonstrates strong resentment since what devalued by Russians is the very values that were celebrated in the West. On the contrary Russian values were turned into virtues and positive values (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 254).

### **3.3. Resentment/Resentment's Discursive Indicators**

As argued in the previous chapters, resentment and resentment are closely intertwined. Scholars sometimes reduce resentment to resentment as resentment is

one of resentment's typical emotional manifestations. This chapter is mainly inspired by the works of Reinhard Wolf (Wolf, 2013; Wolf, 2018) who prefers to use the concepts of resentment/resentment interchangeably. So, discursive indicators outlined in this chapter should be considered valid for both resentment and resentment studies.

Reinhard Wolf claims that resentment is often recognized by observing patterns in texts and conversations. He contends that resentment is best grasped via "classic discourse analysis" (Wolf, 2018, p. 234).

Since resentments are emotional dispositions, their most obvious discursive indicators relate to the cognitive element of the emotion process. Resentful persons or groups perceive themselves confronted with an 'unfair' but stable status hierarchy. Thus, they see a particular need for allies or supporters. In order to mobilize their support, they might try to persuade these parties of the legitimacy of their motive (Wolf, 2018, p. 237).

Wolf suggests that to identify "the cognitive aspects of resentment/resentment, researchers should look into ego's expressed views on status and the moral characteristics it attributes to alter ". He suggests paying attention to the following kinds of articulations (particularly the first four) (Wolf, 2018, p. 237):

- Objections to 'unfair' status changes or to unjust hindrances of ego's social mobility
- An emphasis upon alter's unworthiness of its elevated status
- Negative stereotypes regarding alter's character, especially essentializing stereotypes that aim to explain alter's criticized attitudes in relation to overall character rather than to momentary political events
- Evidence of ego's awareness of its momentary impotence to correct an 'unfair' hierarchy of status
- Justifications of retributive measures taken against 'unfair' status changes
- The mockery of supporters of cooperation with alter as 'naive' sympathizers who fail to grasp the latter's vicious character
- Requests for particular guarantees to minimize the risk of alter cheating in any suggested joint project

Wolf argues that indications of bodily reactions of resentment/resentment might consist of those listed below (Wolf, 2018, p. 238):

- The use of emotion laden expressions for describing the status asymmetry (e.g., ‘outrageous’, ‘evil’, ‘vile’, ‘heinous’)
- Drastic metaphors that convey the offensive character of the status asymmetry (e.g., enslavement, subjugation)
- Remarks of moral umbrage or loathing toward alter’s character (e.g., ‘oppressor’, ‘opportunist’, ‘monster’, ‘criminal’, ‘Satan’)
- Satisfaction expressed about minor setbacks experienced by alter (Schadenfreude)
- Satisfaction expressed after retribution or successful diminution of alter

Wolf argues that the main indicators of action tendencies relate to ego’s desire to fix the ‘unfair’ hierarchy and to ward off anything that might (further) stabilize it. He suggests that, researchers should seek discursive links between negative representations of alter and demands for uncooperative policies.

He claims that discursive evidence for action tendencies of resentment/ressentiment include (Wolf, 2018, p. 238):

- Statements aimed at damaging the social or moral condition of alter (in particular, accusations that seem unrealistic)
- Principled calls for fixing ‘unfair’ status hierarchies despite the material costs
- Proposals for retributive actions against symbols of alter’s elevated status
- Demands for an uncompromising stance in negotiations that are based on the premise that alter does not ‘deserve’ any accommodation
- Expression of uncompromising stances toward alter that are justified by past negative experiences that are re-represented in a more biased (i.e., more negative) manner
- Articulation of revenge fantasies

Action tendencies of resentment may also show themselves through conspicuous gaps in the discourse; that is, by silent objection against collaborative or conciliatory policies, demonstrated by a remarkable failure to discuss such steps. To be more precise, resentful actors may fall short of offering convincing reasons when they refrain from opportunities to better their material conditions. In addition, they may have a tendency to miss opportunities for cooperative ventures involving alter since they do not trust it or seek to avert implicit recognition of alter’s status.

The discursive indicators of resentment and resentment will be searched and identified in the discourses of the AKP policy makers in Chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4.EU-TURKEY RELATIONS**

In Section 1 of this chapter, a short overview of the relations between the European Union and Turkey will be provided and the major turning points in the relationship will be highlighted. In Section 2, the EU-Turkey conceptualizations will be overviewed.

#### **4.1. The Overview of EU-Turkey Relations**

The EU-Turkey relations span around 63 years and during this period relations have always been considered controversial and full of many ups and downs and conflicts. Turkey is unique in the sense that after so many years, it still holds a candidate status. Many exogenous and endogenous factors have influenced relations: coups in Turkey (1960, 1971, 1980), collapse of the Soviet Union, new independent countries in Eastern Europe, the AKP rule, Arab Spring etc. All of these and other factors have influenced the relations and either accelerated or stalled the accession negotiations.

In this section, some of the critical milestones in the history of EU-Turkey relations will be overviewed since the following chapters will make references to these milestones. Table.1 shows some of these critical milestones.

**Table 4.1** The EU-Turkey critical milestones

1959	Turkish application to the European Economic Community (EEC)
1963	Signature of the Association agreement (Ankara agreement) between Turkey and the EEC
1987	Turkey's membership application to the EC
1989	Rejection of Turkey's membership application
1996	The Customs Union comes into force
1997	Luxembourg European Council: Turkey excluded from the enlargement wave
1999	Helsinki European Council: Turkey's candidacy confirmed
2002 (13 December)	EC declaration: if Turkey fulfills the Copenhagen criteria, accession negotiations will start
2004 (1 May)	Cyprus' membership to the EU
2004 (17 December)	EC declaration: Turkey 'sufficiently' fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria, accession negotiations to be started in October 2005
2005 (29 July)	Additional Protocol to extend the CU to include new EU members as well as Cyprus
2005 (3 October)	Starting of accession negotiations
2006 (11 December)	EC to suspend 8 chapters
2007	France's veto to the opening of five chapters
2009	Cyprus' veto to the opening of six chapters
2012	'Positive Agenda' to reenergize the accession negotiations
2013 (28 May)	Gezi Park demonstrations
2015 (29 November)	EU-Turkey readmission deal: EU to provide 3 billion euros to Turkey for refugees, calls for revitalize the accession negotiations and for the organization of high level dialogue
2016 (18 March)	'Refugee Deal': additional 3 billion euros, commitment to revitalize the accession negotiations and to accelerate Visa Liberalization Dialogue
2016 (15 July)	Failed coup d'état attempt in Turkey
2019	Turkey's unilateral suspension of the Readmission Agreement
2020 (28 February)	Turkey's opening borders for refugees

Turkey-EU relations started with the application of Turkey to the European Economic Community in 1959, just after Greece's application to the EEC. Both Turkey's and Greece's applications as associate members of the EEC were accepted. However due to the 1960 coup d'état, it took four years for Turkey to sign the agreement and the agreement was finalized in 1963. The Association Agreement which is mostly referred to as the Ankara Agreement, foresaw Turkey's membership to the EEC at a future but an indefinite date. The Ankara Agreement became operational on December 1, 1964 and it still represents the legal framework of EU-Turkey relations (Hauge, Eralp, Wessels, & Bedir, 2016). According to the Ankara Agreement, inclusion of Turkey into the Customs Union (CU) was the main objective of Turkey-EU relations (Yılmaz, 2008). However, the agreement already raised hopes for more, mainly due to this formulation: "As soon as the operation of this agreement has advanced far enough [...] the Contracting parties shall examine the possibility of the accession of Turkey to the Community" (Hauge, Eralp, Wessels, & Bedir, 2016,

p. 11). Although, the Ankara Agreement foresaw the free movement of labor which was supposed to start in 1986, Germany's objections to the implementation of this clause inhibited its execution (Yılmaz, 2008).

The period between 1963 and the late 1980s is characterized by political turmoil in Turkey. In this period, the EU-Turkey relations became increasingly conflictual. Turkey's intervention in Cyprus in 1974, the military memorandum of 1971 and the 1980 coup d'état had negative repercussions on Turkey-EU relations. In the 1980s, the EC began to emphasize the political and normative dimensions of the European integration. Consequently, these dimensions were reflected to the candidate countries as well. Human rights, the rule of law and democratization became the main topics of discussion between the EU and Turkey in this period (Hauge, Özbey, Eralp, & Wessels, 2019). The EU institutions became increasingly vocal for human rights abuses and anti-democratic practices in Turkey. Consequently, objections by emphasizing Turkey's civilizational distinctness, to the membership of Turkey rose significantly in this period (Hauge, Özbey, Eralp, & Wessels, 2019).

In the 1980s, with Prime Minister Turgut Özal's tenure, Turkey changed its economic policy from import-substitution to an export oriented one and Özal led the efforts for Turkey's full EC membership application in 1987. The response from the EC came after two years and in 1989, the EC rejected the application. The EC Commission's report on Turkey highlighted those issues such as antidemocratic practices, human rights violations and the situation of minorities in Turkey. The Commission especially emphasized that the Cyprus conflict and the tension between Greece and Turkey were strong inhibitors for Turkey's accession to the EU (Yılmaz, 2008, p. 5).

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 had significant repercussions on EU-Turkey relations. The EC directed its focus to the new states formed in Eastern Europe to a large extent. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Turkey's geostrategic importance lost its weight as an argument regarding Turkey's membership (Hauge, Eralp, Wessels, & Bedir, 2016, p. 15).

In 1993, the EC declared criteria that every candidate country had to conform to accede to the Union during the Copenhagen meeting. The Copenhagen criteria determined the political, legal, and economic preconditions which candidates should comply with to accede to the Union (Hauge, Eralp, Wessels, & Bedir, 2016, p. 15).

The Customs Union Treaty between the EU and Turkey became operational in 1996. The CU was considered as a major leap on the way to Turkey's full accession. Turkey again submitted an application for full membership in 1997. However, Turkey's membership application was rejected again and Turkey was left outside of the enlargement cycle by the EU. During the EC meeting in Luxembourg in December 1997, the EU leaders decided to open the doors to Eastern European countries. They classified the countries in two categories according to their assumed readiness to join the EU. According to this classification, while Poland, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia and Cyprus were in the first group and negotiations were supposed to begin on March 31, 1998 with them, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania were in the second group as they were less prepared to join. Turkey was in a third category, with special conditions (Yılmaz, 2008, p. 9). It was clearly excluded from the enlargement cycle. Turkey reacted to this exclusion by cutting off the dialogue with the EU (Yılmaz, 2008, p. 9).

Two years after the Luxembourg summit, Turkey was awarded a candidate status in Helsinki in 1999. The rapprochement between Turkey and Greece after the earthquakes in 1999 and the apparent US support for Turkey's accession influenced the EC's decision positively (Yılmaz, 2008, p. 10). But the European Commission did not specify a schedule for the beginning of accession negotiations at the Luxembourg summit. The EC's report highlighted that Turkey was expected to meet the Copenhagen criteria for negotiations start and the progress of Turkey in complying with the criteria would be traced in the annual individual candidate's report. The European Council evaluated the advice of the European Commission and, officially awarded Turkey a candidate status. The final declaration of the European Council stated that the same criteria would be applied to Turkey just as they applied to the other candidates. In the 2002 Copenhagen summit, the EU-15 leaders promised to start accession negotiations with Turkey provided that the EC report based on "The Progress Report on Turkey 2004" recommends to do so. The accession negotiations with Turkey eventually started on October 3, 2005 (Yılmaz, 2008, p. 11)

In Turkey, the AKP came to power with a great victory in 2002 with 34.3 votes cast. The AKP government has implemented many reform packages at an unprecedented pace to bring the political and judicial system more in conformity with the Copenhagen criteria (Hauge, Eralp, Wessels, & Bedir, 2016). The AKP showed a great deal of enthusiasm and ambition to achieve Turkey's EU membership. In that

sense, the AKP signalled that it would follow a different Cyprus policy than its predecessors. Prime Minister Erdoğan strongly backed up the Annan Plan as a resolution for the Cyprus conflict and pushed the Turkish Cypriot leaders to accept the plan and participate in the referendum. While the Greek Cypriots rejected the Annan plan in the referendum on April 24, 2004, the Turkish side accepted it with a large majority. The unresolved Cyprus conflict became the major obstacle for the membership of Turkey to the EU. After the Greek Cypriots' membership to the EU on May 1, 2004, the EU demanded Turkey to extend the Additional Protocol to include new members as well as Cyprus. Despite the fact that Turkey signed the Additional Protocol on July 2005 which extends the CU agreement to include Cyprus, Turkey also declared that the extension of the Ankara Agreement did not necessarily signify the recognition of Cyprus and refrained from implementing the protocol. In such a case, the EU responded with a declaration stating that the recognition of Cyprus by Turkey is a precondition for the eventual membership of Turkey (Uluğ-Eryılmaz, 2015). The European Council suspended the negotiations of eight chapters and stated that the chapters would not be closed until Turkey recognizes Cyprus. The AKP leadership strongly asserted that the EU's promise was to apply the same criteria to all candidates and that the Cyprus issue should not be a prerequisite for Turkish accession. As described in the following sections, imposing a Cyprus resolution has elicited a great deal of resentment on the Turkish side. Thus, accession negotiations stagnated, and the Cyprus dispute became an impediment for Turkish accession to the EU.

During this process, the Arab Spring remarked a major juncture in the EU-Turkey relationship because after the uprisings started, the EU often needed Turkish cooperation rather than the other way around. Besides, the stagnation in accession discussions, the security threats emanating from the regional conflicts have reshaped the Turkey-EU relations and subsequently made foreign policy cooperation the main driver of the relationship (Süsler, 2020, p. 1). Such renewed emphasis on increased cooperation appeared also in the context of membership negotiations. There were voices in the European Council and the European Commission that clearly wished to avoid a deadlock in Turkey-EU relations, especially since the turmoil in the Middle East might be threatening for the stability of the EU. There was a mutual interest in working closely to tackle foreign policy problems in the shared neighborhood and a belief that the EU and Turkey were stronger together. However, despite the recurring rhetoric of closer foreign policy cooperation, actual cooperation between Turkey and

the EU was limited and it varied considerably, especially taking into account the way in which Turkey had differences of opinion with the EU regarding the crises in Libya, Egypt, and Syria (Süsler, 2020, p. 2; Aydın-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016)

During the Arab Spring and the 2014 Ukraine crisis, Turkey did not align its policies completely with the EU but the migration flow from Syria to Europe made cooperation a necessity. When the massive influx of refugees from Syria fostered a great deal of opposition in the European countries, the EU asked Turkey for cooperation to reduce the refugee influx from Syria to Europe. In return, the EU was ready for several concessions: financial assistance, revitalization of accession negotiations, and the start of the visa liberalization dialogue. Finally, Turkey and the EU signed an agreement which is mostly referred to as the ‘Refugee Deal’ in March 2016 and which covers the discussion items listed above. This agreement apparently was signed between two ‘equal’ partners, rather than the EU and a candidate country. By signing this agreement, the EU obviously disregarded its conditionality and its concerns about democracy and human rights violations in Turkey (Aydın-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016, p. 3). However, the agreement did not produce the expected results. Besides, President Erdoğan used the agreement and refugees as an instrument to take revenge from the EU. In section 5.4.2, the refugee deal will be reviewed in more detail.

#### **4.2. EU-Turkey Relations, Conceptualizations and Narratives**

The EU-Turkey relationship constitutes an interesting topic for scholars of international relations. EU-Turkey relations span around 63 years and as of today Turkey still holds a candidate status. The existing literature on Turkey-EU relations has mostly examined this relationship from the EU enlargement perspective until the start of the accession negotiations. This set of literature mainly investigates the questions such as why the EU-Turkey relations have endured for so many years, why Turkey was granted a candidate status despite the cultural and religious differences with the EU and proposes conceptual models accordingly

As stated in the previous section, EU-Turkey relations began to stagnate soon after the start of the accession negotiations in 2005. In recent years, the literature has begun to focus on mainly Turkey’s domestic transformation, which followed the accession negotiations.

In this section, some of the conceptualizations regarding EU-Turkey relations and some of the studies examining the policy changes at critical junctures via discourse and narrative analysis will be reviewed.

This section is divided into two subsections. In the next subsection, various conceptualizations of the EU-Turkey accession process will be reviewed. In subsection 4.2.2, studies that cover a wider timescale in which major narrative and policy changes have occurred will be reviewed.

#### **4.2.1. The Conceptualization of EU-Turkey Relations**

The focus of the studies in this section is to explicate, from the EU enlargement perspective, why Turkey was granted EU candidacy in 1999 and why negotiations were suspended, mainly from 2005 onwards and why Turkey's accession negotiations have progressed so far. In this subsection, Liberal Intergovernmentalism, Historical Institutionalism, Rhetorical Entrapment and Neofunctionalism conceptualizations in relation to Turkey's accession bid to the EU will be discussed. These conceptual models are the most widely used approaches for explaining the EU enlargement and integration processes, at least partially.

Frank Schimmelfennig (2021) marks the influence of norms in the EU enlargement practice. Rhetorical entrapment is a mechanism that forces states to behave in conformity with the EU norms. According to Schimmelfennig, when Turkey has managed to comply with the Copenhagen criteria, the EU rewarded Turkey's 'norm confirmative behavior' and announced the opening of Turkey's accession negotiations. In that case, opponents to Turkey's membership to the EU were 'entrapped' as they had to act in conformity with the norms of their community. Thus, the EU approved the opening of the membership negotiations with Turkey. But when Turkey has refused to extend the Additional Protocol to include Cyprus, the opponents of Turkish membership promptly demanded sanctions as non-extension of the protocol was an infringement of basic EU norms. In that case, the supporters of Turkey were 'entrapped' (Schimmelfennig, 2021) and accession negotiations stalled.

İçöz and Martin (2021) argue that Historical Institutionalism is suitable for evaluating Turkey's EU accession process. Historical Institutionalism contends that Turkey-EU relations have endured for security reasons. İçöz and Martin claim that the

security priorities of the EU were influential in the progress of the accession process but the weak human rights record of Turkey has slowed down this process.

Tsarouhas (2021) explains the EU enlargement process towards Turkey by the Liberal Intergovernmentalism (LI) conceptual model. He claims that the fact that EU excluded Turkey from the enlargement wave in 1997, and the fact that the European Union declared Turkey's candidacy in 1999, can be explained by the liberal intergovernmentalism approach. Liberal Intergovernmentalism has been developed by Moravcsik (1993) to explain the evolution of the EU and its major decisions over time. This theory places national governments at the center of the European Union decision-making mechanism. According to Moravcsik, "European integration can best be explained as a set of rational decisions made by European national leaders". According to the Liberal Intergovernmentalism theory, international cooperation decisions made by the EU, can be explained by a three-step process. First, member states define their interests. In the second step, member states bargain and negotiate with the other member states to secure their interests. In this step, member states work on an acceptable solution to all. At the third step, member states grant some of their authorities to the EU institutions to achieve their interests. From that perspective, the turmoil in the Balkans and Kosovo and the EU's desire to maintain stability in the region, were the common interests of the EU member states. According to Tsarouhas, Turkey was granted a candidate country status just because the member states' interests converged under these new circumstances in 1999.

Catherine Macmillan (2009) examined while some of the big and powerful countries in Europe oppose Turkey's membership, why Turkey's accession process has progressed so far. She claims that neofunctionalism can provide an answer to this question. Neofunctionalism asserts that in general, any integration process begins with economic integration but may eventually 'spills over' to political integration, as deeper economic integration would require harmonization of legislations. The spillover concept is the distinguishing feature of Neofunctionalism. Neofunctionalism emphasizes the role of supranational institutions in integration processes. Neofunctionalism supposes that, over time, supranational institutions will develop an independent identity, with ideas of their own that cannot simply be reduced to the preferences of a single national or subnational group. European Commission is an example of a supranational institution. Macmillan asserts that the European Commission has acted as a broker between the EU member states and Turkey and has

been active in cultivating political spillover regarding Turkey's accession. Hence, Turkey's accession process has progressed despite strong oppositions from some of the member states.

Both liberal intergovernmental and neofunctional approaches are criticized by scholars claiming that neither approaches fully grasps the complexity of Turkey's accession process. One of the strong arguments against the neofunctionalist approach is that Turkey-EU relations started in the field of security during the Cold War period and then spread to the economic field which is contrary to the basic assumption of Neofunctionalism. Another counter argument to the neofunctional approach is that, countries like Croatia which did not pursue an economic integration process similar to Turkey with the EU, has already been an EU member in 2013 while Turkey is still on the waiting list (Köroğlu, 2021). The intergovernmental model approaches Turkey's relationship with the European Union from a security perspective more than an integration issue. In this respect, it is claimed that intergovernmental approaches fails to explain why Turkey-EU relations have endured so long when strong opposition from members have been outstanding (Macmillan, 2009).

As will be stated in the following section, in parallel with the opening of the accession negotiations in 2005, Turkey has started to experience a major transformation which had significant consequences regarding EU-Turkey relations. In the new era after 2005, the emerging new realities such as the diminishing role of 'EU conditionality' and the rise of transactionalism in the EU-Turkey relations points to a need for the above-mentioned conceptualizations to be updated to cover these new challenges.

#### **4.2.2. Discursive Indicators of Turkey's Transformation After 2005**

As stated in the previous section, due to the complexity of Turkey's accession process to the EU, main conceptualizations on the EU enlargement and integrity strategies have only managed to explain the accession process partially, leaving many questions unanswered. As will be discussed below, following the beginning of the accession negotiations in 2005, a new era in the EU-Turkey relations started. This new era is characterized by major changes in Turkey's policy preferences in relation with the EU, which can be identified by analyzing the changes in the discourses of the AKP policy makers towards the EU.

The studies in this section elaborate on the policy and discursive changes that took place among the AKP policy makers from 2005 onwards. Mostly, there is a consensus in these studies about the portrayal of the EU negatively after the beginning of accession negotiations in 2005. Besides, studies emphasize that a de-Europeanization process is evident in this new era whose reflection is the divergent foreign policy preferences of the EU and Turkey in regional affairs.

These studies pinpoint the changes in the narratives and policies of Turkey towards the EU but none of them questions the underlying affective mechanism that caused these changes. In Chapter 5, the resentment/ressentiment conceptualizations will be applied to EU-Turkey relations to unfold the reasons for discursive changes and narrative shifts which scholars have already highlighted and exemplified below, after 2005.

Alpan (2014) pointed out to the discourse changes after the start of the accession negotiations with the EU in 2005. Alpan argued that the AKP's discourses displayed 'resentment' and a 'critical tone' towards the EU beginning in the late 2000s and early 2010s and the EU was not 'the promised land' anymore in discourses (Alpan, 2016). Aydın-Düzgit (2016), demonstrated that Erdoğan discursively constructed Europe as an 'unwanted intruder', 'inherently discriminatory', or having an 'inferior democracy' after 2005 (Aydın-Düzgit, 2016). Aydın-Düzgit and Kaliber (2016) contended that the post-2005 developments are evidences of a 'de-Europeanization' process. Catherine MacMillan (2020) argued that, the AKP government has discursively depicted a Turkish national myth as an opposite of the EU's founding myth. The AKP depicted Turkey as a peaceful, hospitable and tolerant actor. On the contrary, the EU was depicted as an actor which has genetic diseases of intolerance and xenophobia (Macmillan, 2020). All these studies remark and signify that the narrative and discourses of the AKP policy makers have changed considerably after 2005.

The report by Hague, Özbey, Eralp and Wessels (2019) focuses on the narrative changes in the EU-Turkey relations between 1959-2019. These narrative changes can be attributed to an 'identity' transformation process, especially after 2005. As indicated in the report, the 'Europeanization' narrative was replaced by Turkey with a Turkey as 'the Heir' narrative, then Turkey as a 'Great Power' narrative. Hague et. al (2019) made a comprehensive study and analyzed the discourses of Turkish actors and institutions between 1959 and 2019. The analysis of the document indicates five main narratives in a sequence: Westernization, Europeanization, Eurasianization and

Turkey as “the Heir” and Turkey as a “Great Power”. Westernization was the dominant narrative in the 1960s and 1970s. The Europeanization narrative gained predominance between the late 1980s and lasted till the second half of the 2000s. Eurasianization became a predominant narrative after the collapse of the Soviet Union but lost its significance quickly in the second half of the 1990s. In the first three narratives, the EU’s normative superiority is recognized by the Turkish political actors. In Turkey as the ‘Heir’ narrative, Turkey is perceived as the heir of the Ottoman Empire. The dominance period of this narrative is assumed to be the second half of the 2000s till the early 2010s. ‘Turkey as a Great Power’ narrative assumes Turkey as a powerful actor with a pivotal regional role. This narrative appears at episodes from the 1990s but gained its relevance under the AKP rule (Hauge, Özbey, Eralp, & Wessels, 2019). According to the analysis provided by Hague et al, it is apparent that, after the start of the accession negotiations, the dominant narrative has evolved gradually from Turkey as a ‘Heir’ to Turkey as a ‘Great Power’.

The changes in policy behaviors, discourses and dominant narratives are indicative of a transformation that took place with regards to the EU-Turkey relations from 2005 onwards. This thesis, as mentioned in the previous sections, also aims to unfold the affective background of the transformation Turkey has experienced after 2005. Uncovering the affective background and adding emotions as an additional dimension to the EU-Turkey studies, can help scholars to develop comprehensive theories and conceptual models with regard to EU-Turkey relations.

It is not in the scope of this thesis to predict the future cooperation models between Turkey and the EU, but I would like to comment that ever since Turkey has acquired a ‘new’ assertive identity via the resentment’s transvaluation process, the conceptual models that assume the EU and Turkey as ‘equal’ partners, make more sense as the future cooperation models between the EU and Turkey.

## CHAPTER 5

### 5. RESENTMENT AND TRANSVALUATION IN THE AKP ERA

This chapter consists of two sections. In section one, the resentment process which progressed in the EU-Turkey relations will be traced. In section two, the political outcomes of resentment will be demonstrated in two controversial cases: the Ukraine Crisis in 2014 and the ‘Refugee Deal’ in 2016.

As summarized in the previous sections, the AKP era is quite dynamic and controversial with regard to the EU-Turkey relations. An era of democratic reforms and emphasis on Europeanization in the early 2000s, is followed by a quick switch-over to a de-Europeanisation period from 2005 onwards. In terms of narratives, the initial portrayal of the EU as something that Turkey has longed for many years, gradually turned into an enemy of Turkey. The AKP era, as shown in the previous section, due to its dynamism and changing narratives and policies, is best analyzed by dividing the era into a number of different phases. In each phase, it is possible to observe a distinct dominant discourse and narrative.

This thesis aims to unfold the dominant EU-related affective underpinnings of the AKP era and claims that Turkish policy with regards to the EU has been shaped under the influence of resentment and ressentiment. In other words, inherent initial resentment towards the EU has slid into ressentiment and initiated a transvaluation process. In this thesis, the indicators of resentment and ressentiment and the ongoing transvaluation process are traced based on the discourses and the narratives of the high level AKP elites who assumed governmental roles, such as Abdullah Gül, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and Volkan Bozkır etc.

In this chapter, I divide the timeframe of the Turkey-EU relationship into three phases: the 2002-2005 period in which the accession negotiations started, 2006-2011

in which the EU-Turkey relations transformed into a stalemate and the period from 2011 to present in which Turkey-EU relations have become increasingly conflictual and Turkey's divergence from the EU perspective has become apparent. I argue that the dominant emotion between 2002-2005 can be best defined as resentment. The 2006-2011 period can be identified as a transitory period where the initial manifestations of resentment, namely 'weak resentment' became predominant. This was a period in which the transvaluation process progressed gradually. Finally, I assert that in the period from 2011 to present, the resentment process has mostly been completed, meaning that the weak resentment transformed into 'strong resentment'. In this period, the implications of resentment are more apparent in the policy outcomes and the AKP policy makers' discourses. In Section 5.4 in this chapter, two cases where resentment has been influential on the final policy decisions will be overviewed: Turkey's ambiguous policy during the Ukraine crisis in 2014 and the decision to open borders for free passage to refugees in 2020. The analysis of the Ukraine case demonstrated that taking into consideration the feeling of resentment on the part of Turkey, helps to alleviate the ambiguities in the case. The 'Refugee Deal' case demonstrated that Turkey's decision to open the borders to Greece for the refugees in 2020 constituted an example of 'revenge' due to strong resentment that Turkey experienced towards the EU.

As briefly exemplified in the literature review (resentment/resentment) section in Chapter 3, academic studies on resentment/resentment have so far generally focused on their outcomes, such as nationalism, fundamentalism, populism, ethnic conflicts etc., or have just been limited to discovering the emotions of resentment/resentment in discourses without specifying any further political consequences. It is also quite confusing that some of these studies used the concepts of resentment and resentment interchangeably. Furthermore, the number of those studies covering the transvaluation process, which is the most significant characteristic of resentment, is quite limited. As stated before, Liah Greenfeld's article on the Russian National Identity is an exception in the sense that it covers the transvaluation process explicitly. In a similar manner, Nagehan Tokdoğan's study (2020) is exceptional for the Turkish literature, in asserting that the dominant emotion in the AKP era is resentment and this is the foundation of the Neo-Ottomanist identity. However, Nagehan Tokdoğan does not cover the transvaluation process in detail,

either. In this thesis, I aim to cover both the transvaluation process and the political consequences of this transformation.

### **5.1. Resentment as the Dominant Emotion (2002-2005)**

The AKP assumed power on November 3, 2002, just before the Copenhagen Summit of the European Council on 12–13th December of that year. Although the AKP had an Islamist background, it embraced Turkey's goal of becoming an EU member at the beginning of its rule (Tetik, 2021, p. 378). The Europeanization process was embraced with a great deal of ambition and enthusiasm until the beginning of the accession negotiations with the EU in October 2005 (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2009, p. 8).

However, the AKP faced significant challenges in this period: the Cyprus dispute, questioning Turkey's Europeanness, as well as considerations and proposals for alternative accession strategies. The most significant challenge confronted by Turkey during this timeframe was the Cyprus dispute. The AKP was keen to resolve the Cyprus conflict before Cyprus became a member of the EU and the AKP clearly supported the 'Annan Plan' as a solution for the divided island. In 2004, both parts of Cyprus have voted for the implementation of the 'Annan Plan' as a resolution to the Cyprus dispute. Turkish Cypriots have approved the plan (%65) but the Greek Cypriots rejected (%76) it. In the end, Cyprus became an EU member on May 1, 2004 (Torun, 2021, p. 329). Soon after Cyprus' membership to the EU, Turkey was asked by the EU to extend the 1963 Ankara Agreement to the new EU members including Cyprus. Although Turkey had signed the Additional Protocol which extended the Customs Union agreement to include Cyprus in July 2005, Turkey declared that the extension of the Ankara Agreement did not necessarily mean the recognition of Cyprus and refrained from implementing the protocol. In that case, the EU declared that Turkey's recognition of 'the Republic of Cyprus' be a precondition for Turkey's eventual EU membership (Uluğ-Eryılmaz, 2015, pp. 196-197).

In such a political context, the AKP elites, while making efforts to quickly enact the EU harmonization laws, developed their own arguments against possible objections that some EU countries might raise considering Turkey's membership. The discursive strategies that were applied by Turkey include Turkey's contributions to the EU on their endeavor to become a global power and, the contributions of Turkey's membership to the realization of an inter-civilization harmony (Tetik, 2021, p. 379).

Abdullah Gül, the first Prime Minister of the AKP, clearly expressed his government's views about the EU membership and its expectations from the Copenhagen Summit:

What is our ultimate goal? It is exalting Turkey beyond the level of 'contemporary civilizations' ... We need two things for that: firstly, developing democratic standards and making Turkey an advanced democracy. Secondly, we need to make Turkey wealthier ... I want to say this to the European leaders: We want to show that a 'Muslim country' can be democratic, transparent and modern, and in harmony with the world ... A Turkey, which is also a member of the EU, would be a great example for all Muslim countries ... If the EU leaders strategically want to ascribe greater functions to the EU, Turkey will make the EU stronger ... (2002a)<sup>1</sup>.

Gül emphasized the distinctness of Turkey from the EU in 2002 and focused on the notion of inter-civilizational harmony. This is a major shift from the pre-AKP discourses, which depicted Turkey as part of the European-Western civilization. Gül highlighted Turkey's possible contributions to the EU when Turkey becomes a member. Besides, Gül discursively implied that the EU had superior democratic and economic standards which Turkey aims to reach as well. In other words, Gül recognized the EU's normative superiority. Erdoğan, during his speech at the Ambrosetti Forum's session titled 'Country in Focus: Turkey' in 2003, consistently repeated Gül's messages:

EU membership is not only an end but also a means to convey the Turkish people to the level of contemporary civilization they deserve...It is common political, economic and strategic interests that bind Turkey and the EU together. When Turkey becomes a full member of the EU, it will play a leading role with its secular, extrovert and entrepreneurial identity, population and size, and special political and strategic activity (2003a).

Both Erdoğan and Gül nominated Turkey as an actor whose unique features and strengths would contribute to the EU's achievement of its strategic objectives. The EU was also framed positively as an entity which had superior economic, democratic and normative standards compared to Turkey. During the 2002-2005 timeframe, Erdoğan constantly emphasized that "Turkey's EU membership bid was the contemporary reflection of 'the founding ideal of the Republic', and a means to lift democratic and living standards of Turkey" (2005a). The EU membership goal was often defined as the reflection of Turkey's endeavor for modernization, as a strategic objective and as an instrument which would enhance Turkey's democratic standards (2005b).

However, imposing the recognition of Cyprus as a prerequisite for Turkey's EU membership in addition to the Copenhagen criteria was highly criticized by the AKP elites constantly during the period. Erdoğan, during an interview in a national TV

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<sup>1</sup> Translated in Tetik (2021).

channel, criticized the EU upon Cyprus conditionality: “There is no such thing as the recognition of Cyprus in the EU's Copenhagen criteria and preconditions. But they are constantly imposing Cyprus [on Turkey]” (2003b).

Erdoğan also claimed in an interview with a German newspaper, *Bild am Sonntag*, that the EU was engaging in explicit discrimination against Turkey on the part of the EU. When Erdoğan was asked if he thought that Turkey has been treated unfairly, he replied:

I cannot answer this question as 'no'. I am of the opinion that more strict conditions have been imposed on Turkey compared to other candidate countries. No other country had to wait at the EU door for 41 years. We have fulfilled all the requirements, but Europeans are hesitant. This can also be called discrimination (2004a).

During the 2002-2005 timeframe, one of the prevailing discourses among the EU members was whether Turkey should be offered a privileged partnership rather than full membership. In response to such proposals, the AKP elites always asked the EU to respect and comply with the terms of agreements signed between the EU and Turkey. Erdoğan, during his speech at the dinner for the ambassadors of the EU member states in Ankara at the Official Residence of the Prime Ministry, stated that: "Neither in any agreement signed between us and the EU, nor in any decision taken by the EU, there is no option other than Turkey's full membership," (2005c)

Erdoğan's speech in the 'EU Session' in Ambrosetti Forum summarizes the AKP's key messages in a consolidated way. Erdoğan participated as a speaker to the 'EU Session' in Ambrosetti Forum, together with the US senator Joe Biden, Czech Republic President Vaclav Klaus, former presidents of the EU Commission Valery Giscard d'Estaing and Romano Prodi, Austrian Finance Minister Karl-Heinz Grasser on September 3, 2005. During his speech, Erdoğan reiterated Turkey's strong will to become an EU member. In response to a question, Erdoğan stated that in case Turkey cannot accede to the EU, Turkey will maintain its path by replacing the Copenhagen Criteria with Ankara Criteria. Erdoğan added that membership to the EU is part of Turkey's modernization project and the reforms made so far, aimed to realize the democratic aspirations of the Turkish people. They were not intended just to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria. In an interview with CNBC and SKY news during the forum, Erdoğan blamed the EU for not complying with their own rules by accepting Cyprus as a member of the Union. He stated that “according to the Copenhagen criteria, a country that has not resolved its border problems in a certain geography cannot be

allowed to be a member of the EU. Cyprus' acceptance as a member contradicts to this rule" (2005b).

In the 2002-2005 timeframe, the EU membership was positioned as a national objective and as an instrument to reach the level of contemporary civilizations. In that sense, the EU membership was perceived very positively as it was assumed that membership would eventually contribute to the improvement of Turkey's democratic, economic and normative standards. However, the imposition of the Cyprus resolution as a criterion for EU accession and the considerations for alternative methods of accessions were conceived by the AKP elites as unjust, wrong and discriminatory attitudes.

As stated in the previous sections, resentment stems from an actor's confrontation with an unjust behavior. According to Wolf (2013), accusations of 'unfair' status shifts and principled calls for rectifying 'unfair' policies are some of the typical discursive indicators of resentment. In the 2002-2005 timeframe, Cyprus conditionality for accession and proposals for alternative accession strategies are good examples of the unfair status shifts (from member status to privileged partner) and unjust behavior for Turkey. Turkish policy makers acknowledged the EU's unfair attitude toward Turkey and asked the EU to resolve the issues, a behavior which would be expected from any actor who feels resentment. However, Turkish policy makers could not rectify the injustices experienced in Turkey-EU relations as the power asymmetry in the EU-Turkey relationship was in favor of the EU. The EU was the dominant party and had the right to impose or change criteria of accession to the EU and the candidate countries barely had to comply with the accession criteria. As stated in the resentment conceptualizations section, resentment invokes a 'desire for revenge' and elicits hostile emotions towards the resented party. However, due to impotence and the inferiority of the resentful party, a direct retaliation and an immediate discharge of hostile emotions is not always possible and, in that case, hostile emotions are repressed and retaliation is postponed to a later stage. Thus, although the dominant emotion in the Turkey-EU relationship was resentment in this phase, the context was suitable for the elicitation of resentment. Thus, I conclude that between 2002-2005, Turkish policy makers expressed their resentment by highlighting the discriminatory and unjust policies of the latter and asking for correction.

In fact, resentment towards the EU had started long before the AKP era. The chapters reserved for EU-Turkey relations in *Strategic Depth* by Ahmet Davutoğlu

(2001, s. 501-550), present the salience of resentment in EU-Turkey relations. Davutoğlu served as the chief foreign policy advisor of Tayyip Erdoğan between 2003-2009, as the Turkish foreign minister between 2009-2014 and as the prime minister between 2014-2016. In his book, Davutoğlu not only expressed his resentment towards the EU but also signaled the basic elements of his future foreign policy doctrine:

...By approving this decision (entry into the Customs Union without being a full member), Turkey abandoned its balanced approach to the free movement of goods and people, which had been maintained since the 70s, and accepted the EU policy. The trade balance has changed in favor of the EU and Turkey has become the periphery of the EU. Turkey, by keeping in mind that the possibility of progress might be uncertain in its EU accession process, needs to formulate an economic development strategy that takes support potentials stemming from its geography into account. The more we have geo cultural depth, the more we can have an influence on the EU...

...Since Turkey's application for membership, the EU has, with a very cold-blooded choice, kept Turkey in a waiting process without including it and without rejecting it completely. Inclining towards establishing a special status that keeps relations on hold by extending the waiting process as much as possible, the EU, without bearing responsibility for the risks that Turkey's full membership would bear, has been trying to eliminate the risks that would stem from Turkey's exclusion. Turkey was satisfied for a short time by introducing the Customs Union, which is a suitable instrument for a special status...

...The issues voiced by the EU, such as human rights, the Cyprus issue, the Aegean, and economic parameters, are the excuses for and not the reasons behind the policy of keeping Turkey in constant uncertainty. In other words, such a decision is not taken because of these factors. These factors are highlighted because an uncertainty strategy is being implemented. The formation of these elements facilitates the implementation of the strategy that the EU is already considering and has been implementing...

...This is the most dangerous aspect of the customs union process. While Turkey adapts its internal and external economic parameters to Europe, Europe has full decision independence in Turkey's union and relations. While the EU has the chance to demand concessions from Turkey through the Greek veto before every important decision, Turkey does not have the right to impose any sanctions against the EU or these union member states. The continuation of uncertainties in this relationship style would seriously limit Turkey's international economic preferences and an economic structure that's dependent on, rather than being a partner to, Europe would be formed...

...Europe is following a policy of geo cultural exclusion which is against the universal values it has declared. Turkey, which is economically attached to Europe, but geo culturally excluded, is being tried to be caught in the grip of the confrontation/integration pendulum. The prevention of this grip from turning into a strategic dead-end depends on Turkey's ability to implement a policy of diversified near continental basin within the framework of long-term strategic planning...

In his book, Davutoğlu openly complained about the power asymmetry between the EU and Turkey by stating that Turkey has no influence on the decisions affecting Turkey. Davutoğlu also blamed the former governments for accepting such a disadvantageous Customs Union agreement. He perceives the 'Customs Union' agreement as an instrument which is used by the EU to keep Turkey anchored to the EU. He implied that the EU is not only 'cheating' Turkey by its 'uncertainty' strategy but also cheating itself by violating the universal values it has declared. In other words,

Davutoğlu portrayed the EU negatively as a ‘dishonest, unjust, untrustworthy’ entity. He asserts that to be more influential on the EU, Turkey has to implement a policy of diversified near continental basin. Indeed, it seems that Davutoğlu signaled his foreign policy aspiration as early as 2001 and he executed his plan to become a regional power when he assumed office as a foreign minister in 2009.

As Poszlusna (2019) claims, resentment is a claim to power in itself. It satisfies the subject’s desire for (a kind of) superiority or power over the object by utilizing the transvaluation mechanism for such a transformation. Thus, it seems that as early as 2001, Davutoğlu, similar to the other high ranking Turkish policy makers at the time, felt a deep resentment towards the EU and devised a strategy to overcome the uneasiness he felt due to the power asymmetry of the Turkey-EU relationship.

## **5.2. Weak Resentment (2006-2011)**

This era is characterized by dynamic changes occurred in both domestic politics in Turkey and the relations between the EU and Turkey. The dynamics of the EU–Turkey relationship have been reshaped after 2005 (Alpan, 2021).

In this period, dispute over the extension of the Additional Protocol to Cyprus continued. Vetoes issued by France and Cyprus in 2007 and 2009, in addition to veto of the EU in 2006, stagnated the accession negotiations. Due to the stagnation of the EU accession negotiations after 2005, Turkish Foreign Policy towards the EU has started to change (Bashirov & Yılmaz, 2020). The AKP has started to pursue a more active and multidimensional approach in foreign policy affairs. This new active and multidimensional foreign policy and the new assumed role of regional leadership invoked ‘axis shift’ debates in the international arena (Tetik, 2021, p. 383). Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu, during his speech at the ‘Minimum Problem, Maximum Trade with Neighbors’ conference organized by the Kahramanmaraş Chamber of Commerce and Industry on November 17, 2010, stated:

Nobody can instruct us to turn our back on our near abroad while we fulfil our commitments and maintain our alliance [to the West]. These debates on ‘axis shift’ appear mostly when Turkey increases its level of activity/influence ... Our ‘axis’ is our history and geography. And our identity. Our solemnity. And we look at the world 360 degrees around this axis ... What we aim with all these is to form a new image and perception regarding Turkey in the World ... (2010a)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Translated in Tetik (2021).

In the excerpt above, Davutoğlu discursively nominated Turkey as a unique actor whose historical roots and geographical location shaped its identity and determined its 'axis'. In an 'address to nation' speech session in national TV channels on August 30, 2008, Erdoğan commented:

We are determined to continue with our efforts to establish peace in our region and in the world at all levels, and to maintain our contributions to peace efforts. We see this as a regional, historical and humanitarian responsibility that falls upon us (2008a).

Thus, Erdoğan discursively ascribed positive attributes to Turkey as a peacemaker and a responsible humanitarian actor in the region. Interpretations of both Davutoğlu's and Erdoğan's speeches indicate that Turkey's identity transformation has already started in this period.

While Turkey's moral values were being promoted, the EU as an entity started to be denigrated. The EU values and norms were still valuable for Turkey, but the EU was accused of being unreliable, untrustworthy, hypocritical, and discriminatory (2008b; 2010b).

In this period, accession to the EU was demoted from a high priority initiative such as the 'National Project of Turkey', to a strategic preference, especially after 2007. The AKP elites repeatedly emphasized that Turkey's improving relations with the non-Western World constituted a reflection of a complementary multi-dimensional foreign policy rather than an alternative comprehensive project for a replacement of the EU. While the emphasis on being a regional power prevailed, the EU rendered a strategic choice in parallel with the other geographies. During this period, Turkish policy makers maintained that the EU and other geographies where Turkey was present, were not alternatives to each other. Accordingly, the messages delivered in the policy makers' discourse changed to reflect the new demoted status of the EU membership (2010c; 2010d). Still, standards of the EU was considered important and valued superior but the EU as an institution and 'Turkey's membership to the EU' began to lose its value as an instrument to reach that goal. Gül during his official visit to Slovakia on November 3, 2009, told to journalists: "It is important for us to catch up with the standards of the EU. When we achieve these standards, maybe we will be like Norway..." (2009a). Gül implied that it is in fact achieving the EU standards rather than being a member of the EU, which really matters for Turkey. Gül used the example of 'Norway' to support his claim.

In this period, the EU was blamed for supporting terrorism and the EU was often accused of providing sanctuary and, financial support to terrorists (2007a; 2009b). The

AKP policy makers discursively portrayed the EU as “hypocritical and malicious in their handling of the terrorism issues regarding Turkey” (Tetik, 2021, p. 386).

I argue that in this period, Turkey-EU relations demonstrated an empirical evidence for a ‘weak’ form of resentment. As Aeschbach claims, a transvaluation process consists of a change of evaluation about a particular object’s value, either positively or negatively. The weak form of resentment corresponds to the “reevaluation of a particular and inaccessible good or of a particular and unrealizable action” (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 110). I claim that, in this period, two reevaluations took place in parallel. First, Turkey’s accession to the EU and the EU itself were reevaluated and denigrated. The AKP policy makers employed the discursive strategy of ‘negative representation’ towards the EU and attributed negative traits such as ‘unjust, discriminatory, hypocritical, etc. As a consequence of this reevaluation process, Turkey’s aspiration to become an EU member has diminished significantly and the EU membership issue shifted from being a ‘National Project’ to a lower priority initiative such as ‘one’ of the strategic projects of Turkey. In other words, the AKP elites became concerned more with reaching the standards represented by the EU rather than the means to reach their target. The second reevaluation in the 2006-2011 period was Turkey’s self-reevaluation as a regional power, a ‘unique’ actor, and ‘heir’ of a glorious Ottoman Empire. The AKP elites’ discursive strategy of the attribution of ‘positive self-representation’ and ‘national uniqueness’ and positioning Turkey as a responsible, active, and humanitarian actor not limited to the Western sphere but to all geographies, is an empirical evidence of Turkey’s positive reevaluation that took place in this period. But throughout the 2006-2011 period, the EU’s normative superiority was still recognized and consistently acknowledged by AKP elites.

The next section shows that the ‘weak’ variant of resentment evolved towards a ‘strong’ form of resentment from 2011 onwards.

### **5.3. Strong Resentment (2011 to present)**

The previous section claimed that in the 2006-2011 period, Turkey has experienced a weak form of resentment and two reevaluation processes occurred in parallel. In line with the new active and multidimensional Turkish foreign policy, Turkey was portrayed as an active, responsible and humanitarian actor. According to Aeschbach, “The endorsement of positive values can, at the same time, constitute a

devaluation of all states of affairs that do not instantiate them or which instantiate the opposite values” (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 121). In accordance with this argument, a devaluation of EU accession is identified in the AKP elites’ discourses. The EU norms and standards are still positively valued and identified as a goal to reach but the EU was degraded to an instrument to reach that goal.

In this period, EU-Turkey relations became more conflictual. Repercussions of the Cyprus issue continued in this period and Turkey unilaterally froze relations with the EU when Cyprus assumed the Presidency of the Council of the EU between July-December 2012. The EU criticised the AKP government’s forceful reaction to the Gezi Park protests in 2013 and the government’s declaration of a ‘state of emergency’ following the coup d’etat attempt in 2016. Criticisms from the EU were perceived as an intrusion to Turkey’s internal affairs and the relations between the EU and Turkey became more strained. Arab Uprisings, which started in Tunisia in December 2010, had a major impact on the course of relations, as well. The Arab Uprisings marked a milestone in the relationship between Turkey and the EU because the EU often needed Turkey’s cooperation in the political affairs in the Middle East region. The stalemate in Turkey’s EU accession talks and security threats emanating from regional conflicts have significantly transformed the nature of Turkey-EU relations and subsequently made foreign policy cooperation as the main driver of the relationship in this period (Süsler, 2020).

From 2011 onwards, Turkish policy makers employed discursive strategies of ‘negative representation’ towards the EU and employed negative attributes such as ‘xenophobic, racist, Nazi, fascist, enemy, inferior and the sick man’ to the EU. On the contrary, the AKP elites continued to employ discursive strategies of ‘positive representation’ for Turkey and in their statements, they used positive attributes such as ‘tolerant, humanitarian, hospitable and responsible’ for Turkey. The AKP elites asserted that Turkey, with its Ottoman inheritance, characterized by peace, hospitality and tolerance, could provide “an antidote to Europe’s ‘genetic’ disease of intolerance and xenophobia” (Macmillan , 2020, p. 540) provided that Turkey becomes a member. Turkey has even been portrayed “as the ‘true bearer of European’ values” (Macmillan , 2020, p. 530) such as democracy, freedom and the rule of law (Macmillan , 2020).

During this period, Turkish policy makers also expressed their frustration for the non-progression of the EU accession negotiations. For example, Ahmet Davutoğlu in a press meeting organized after the Third Ambassadors Conference on January 8,

2011, stated that “no one should try to test the limits of our patience, where this patience begins and where it ends is related to our principled position” (2011a). In a similar vein, Erdoğan in an interview in a national TV channel, also expressed his frustration about the EU several times and even talked about putting an end to the accession process. He said that the EU’s actual intent was to stop the process but the EU could not declare its intention directly and rather preferred to stall Turkey. He commented that if the EU declared its intention, both the EU and Turkey would be relieved and than Turkey could maintain its way for the future. He added: “Recently, I said to Mr. Putin, 'Include us in the Shanghai Five'. Let's say 'goodbye' to the EU” (2013a). Discursively Erdoğan identified the EU as an entity which Turkey could easily forget about. The new position ascribed to the EU represented a major shift from the messages of the previous periods in which the EU accession was portrayed as a strategic initiative.

As stated above, especially after the Arab uprisings commenced, the EU often needed Turkish cooperation rather than the other way around. Under these circumstances, Erdoğan expressed his opposition to the power hierarchy imposed by the EU on Turkey. Erdoğan, during the AKP meeting on March 6, 2014 in Elazığ, claimed that the previous EU practices such as giving orders to Turkey was not acceptable anymore:

Turkey is now a country whose agenda is not determined, but Turkey determines its own agenda. This is the difference we have. For years, they (previous governments) have bowed down in front of the West, this is what they did. What did the West do? It gave orders, and they obeyed those orders. But now there is no such situation. We sit down, we talk, but we take our own decisions (2014a)<sup>3</sup>.

The assertive tone in the discourse is noticeable. Erdoğan employed a similarly assertive tone in some of his other statements when addressing the EU, as well. For example, during the AKP election meeting in Bursa on July 18, 2014, Erdoğan said: “We are faced with a new Crusader alliance, this is a wrong direction. I am calling out to the West, this is not an honest approach”. In the same speech, Erdoğan then highlighted Turkey’s normative superiority to the EU by using its Ottoman past as a reference:

Silence would not suit us. Osman Gazi established a state here, that state brought justice in Palestine, for centuries it maintained justice in all of the Middle East, North Africa, the Balkans ... Small states get frightened, they turn silent, we are not a small state, we will not be silent, we

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<sup>3</sup> Translated in Aydın-Düzgıt (2016).

will continue to shout for the Palestinian cause. I am asking from here: European Union, why are you being silent? (2014a) <sup>4</sup>.

In both of these statements above, the ‘West’ is consistently portrayed negatively. Especially in Erdoğan’s second statement, ‘Crusader alliance’ metaphor is employed when referring to the reactions of the Western/European countries towards the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Turkey is nominated as a ‘just’ and ‘active’ actor in the face of the conflict, by referencing its Ottoman past as an argument. Hence, Turkey’s normative superiority was emphasized once more. When the results of the local elections which took place on March 30, 2014, were announced, Erdoğan made a speech and asserted that “we have the democracy that the West aspires to have; it is us who have it” (2014c). In other words, Erdoğan asserted that Turkey is more ‘European’ than Europe as Turkey has more advanced democracy than the EU have.

Besides emphasizing Turkey’s normative superiority to the EU, the AKP elites’ discourses constructed Europe as an inferior entity to Turkey, both politically and economically from 2011 onwards. By implying the Eurozone crisis and its impact on Europe, during the AKP meeting in Nevşehir on May 25, 2011, Erdoğan stated that “Spain is going bankrupt, the situation of Greece is obvious, the situation of Italy is obvious ... Thank God, look at Turkey. We have to know how to be thankful” (2011b). During this period, Erdoğan was not the only political figure who emphasized the EU’s economic inferiority. Volkan Bozkır, former Minister of EU Affairs, also claimed in 2012 that the Europeans would rush to Turkey to find a job as Turkey was experiencing an economic boom:

Turkey is a country with a better economic structure than 22 EU countries. If the EU does not make a country that has reached this point a member, Turkey does not care much. This is the common interest of both sides. The EU, seeing this new picture, should make Turkey a member. They think that 20 million people will come from Turkey on the day the visa is lifted. The job, development and growth rate is in Turkey. Now why should Turkish people go to Europe to look for a job. There is no job there. But I claim this. Maybe we will be thinking about requiring a visa because of EU member citizens who will come to Turkey from the EU countries to look for a job (2012a).

In Erdoğan’s and especially in Bozkır’s speeches, an emotion of ‘Schadenfreude’ is quite apparent. Both politicians seem to be enjoying to see the EU suffering from a deep crisis. Schadenfreude which is defined as pleasure at another’s misfortune, results when a misfortune is perceived as deserved (Aeschbach, 2017).

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<sup>4</sup> Translated in Aydın-Düzgıt (2016).

According to Wolf, satisfaction expressed about minor setbacks experienced by alter (Schadenfreude) is an indication of the resentment experience (Wolf, 2018).

During this period, 'sick man' metaphor was employed by the AKP elites to denote Europe. On the contrary, Turkey was nominated as the 'Robust Man of Europe' (2011c). In 2017, Erdoğan said: "Today's sick man is the European Union. Its economy is shrinking, its debts are increasing, its trade volume is narrowing" (2017a). Recalling the times when the Ottoman Empire had been depicted as the 'sick man' of Europe, Erdoğan directly reversed the metaphor to point to the EU rather than Turkey. According to Wolf, negative stereotypes concerning alter's character, particularly essentializing stereotypes that try to explain alter's criticized behavior with reference to the overall character rather than to momentary political circumstances is an indication of the resentment experience (Wolf, 2018). Feeling Schadenfreude and employing negative stereotypes when referring to the EU can be considered evidence that the AKP elites were experiencing resentment in this period.

In the period after 2011, the AKP politicians constructed the West and Europe as enemies of Turkey. In 2012, Erdoğan accused France, Germany and the Scandinavian countries for supporting terrorism by providing sanctuary and funding to terrorists (2012b).

Just after the coup d'état attempt on July 15, 2016, the AKP elites accused the EU and the West for supporting the perpetrators of the coup. Erdoğan said: "Is the West in favor of democracy or of the coup? I think they support the coup. If they had supported democracy, all of their statements would have been in this direction. But they have given themselves away" (2016b). For some of the AKP elites, the EU's reaction to the coup is in contradiction with their declared values. For example, former EU minister Ömer Çelik, rhetorically asked: "If the EU does nothing now against the most serious attacks on democracy when is it going to?" Çelik also added that "the ones who preach to Turkey on democracy and values should now look inside the EU to protect our common values and stick to common sense" (2016c).

Bashirov and Yılmaz argue that between 2011 and 2016, 'civilization competition' between the EU and Turkey determined the course of relations (Bashirov & Yılmaz, 2020, p. 172). Especially, during the refugee crisis in 2016, the critics' tone got harsher to the point that the Eastern and Western moral values were compared and the Eastern values were identified as superior to those of the West. During the hot dates

of the Syrian refugee crisis at which lots of humanitarian tragedies were being reported nearly every day, Erdoğan, made a speech at MUSIAD EXPO Forum and stated that:

Without being ashamed of the blood dripping from their hands, without seeing their calloused hearts, they make us look like Nazis. You are the Nazi yourself. They even go further, without ever blushing, expressing that they will embrace anyone who comes under political asylum. The Nazi mentality is a mentality that emerged not in the east but in the west and led to disasters. The origin of the idea of mass murder of people because of their beliefs or origins is not the East but the West. Our ancestors took care of the people they [the Europeans] expelled and saved their lives. While neo-Nazis have resurfaced in Europe, comparing Turkey with a Nazi can only be a delusion (2016a).

In his speech, Erdoğan employed a discursive strategy of ‘shaming’ the EU/West by reminding the past atrocities and genocides experienced in Europe and the West. Erdoğan proudly portrayed Turkey positively as an Eastern country which has superior moral values compared to Western ones. Thus, after 2011, the EU was more and more portrayed as an actor on the verge of returning to the dark days of fascism and racism. This position was reiterated by the former Turkish Minister of EU Affairs, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu. Çavuşoğlu argued that the rise of right-wing parties in Europe was posing a threat to the ‘universal values’ of the EU:

The European Union, which was born as a peace project from the ashes of the Second World War, has made the fight against racism, discrimination and xenophobia one of its principles. The current political trend in this union, which was founded on the shared values and ideals of humanity, threatens the very values around which Europeans united (2014e)<sup>5</sup>.

Çavuşoğlu also argued in this time period that Turkey’s full membership was ‘vital for the future and peace of the continent’ because of ‘the historical and cultural values of tolerance which Turkey represents’. The AKP elites framed the EU as an entity which is suffering genetic diseases such as nazism, racism and xenophobia and claimed that unless these diseases are cured by the injection of tolerance and, hospitality by Turkey’s membership, the EU is destined to return to the old dark days in their history. According to Wolf, the use of emotionally loaded terms such as xenophobic, racist etc. For describing the status asymmetry is an evidence of a resentment experience.

This section demonstrated that Turkey’s ‘weak resentment’ vis-a-vis the EU has transformed into ‘strong resentment’ after 2011. As elaborated in the previous section, the weak form resentment corresponds to “the reevaluation of a particular and inaccessible good or of a particular and unrealizable action”. The strong form of resentment corresponds to “an alteration of the relation of height or importance

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<sup>5</sup> Translated in Macmillan (2020).

between values” (Aeschbach, 2017, p. 110). In the 2006-2011 timeframe, as discussed in the previous section, accession to the EU and the EU itself were reevaluated and denigrated by attributing negative traits such as hypocritical, untrustworthy etc. As a consequence of the reevaluation process the aspiration to become an EU member has diminished significantly and shifted from a ‘National Project’ status to a lower status initiative such as ‘one’ of the strategic projects of Turkey. The second reevaluation in the 2006-2011 period is Turkey’s self-reevaluation as a regional power, a ‘unique’ actor, and ‘heir’ of a glorious Ottoman Empire. But throughout the 2006-2011 period, the EU’s normative superiority is still recognized and consistently acknowledged by the AKP elites. But, after 2011, the AKP elites discursively reversed the portrayal of a tolerant, liberal and democratic EU. On the contrary, Turkey itself was depicted as the true champion of democracy. Later in the period, the AKP discourses evolved to include the West-East civilizational debates and, as exemplified in the sample discourses above, Turkey claimed to have distinct and superior values compared to the values represented by EU and the West in general. Hence, Turkey has decreased the level and importance of the once coveted values of the EU to a lower position in its value hierarchy and in parallel heightened its unique values correspondingly.

As Posluzna (2019) argues, the reevaluation process compensates the weak and inferior for its powerlessness and reevaluation is nonetheless a claim to power in itself. After the transvaluation/reevaluation process is consummated, the once impotent and inferior actor feels equal or superior against its alter. Demertzis (2020) asserts that after the process of transvaluation is consummated, the POR feels itself empowered to act. Hence, POR can now take revenge, take part in demonstrations or even commit violent actions. In other words, after the transvaluation process is completed, resentment shapes the political actor’s preferences significantly. It can be observed that after 2011, the AKP elites narrated Turkey and the EU as mutually dependent equal parties. According to Bashirov and Yılmaz, after 2016, transactionalism rather than EU conditionality became the dominant mode of operation between the two parties (Bashirov & Yılmaz, 2020). In other words, after 2016, Turkey-EU relations moved away from the perspective that recognized Turkey essentially as a candidate country for the EU, to a perspective that considered Turkey as a separate actor that competes with the EU in international arena. The transvaluation mechanism which transformed resentment to eventual ‘strong’ resentment, is the affective enabler of Turkey’s transformation to a ‘regional power’ which can pursue competing strategies

with the EU in the international arena. In the next section two cases in which resentment was influential in Turkey's political decisions, will be discussed.

#### **5.4. Political Implications of Resentment in EU-Turkey Relations:**

The previous sections have traced the resentment process, which Turkey has undertaken against the EU, in three phases in order to show how this process has progressed and consummated since the early 2000s. This thesis asserts that after Turkey's candidacy has been approved by the EU in the Helsinki summit in 1999, Turkey experienced an enthusiastic beginning in its reform process to align with the EU acquis, especially after the AKP assumed power in 2002. However, this enthusiastic and optimistic ambiance turned into a deep resentment when the Cyprus issue was brought to fore besides the Copenhagen criteria as a precondition for Turkey's membership. Although Turkey expressed its uneasiness regarding the unjust and discriminatory behaviors of the EU, no progress has been made to resolve these issues. As time passed, unresolved resentment gradually turned into 'weak resentment' which then transformed into 'strong resentment' after 2011.

Resentment, as outlined by Wolf, has several action tendencies which become influential in states' decision-making processes. This chapter will present two cases to demonstrate the political implications of resentment. It would be beneficial to repeat the basic relationship between resentment and resentment before going through cases. Resentment is an emotion which can elicit either independently or as a manifestation of resentment. When resentment elicits as a resentment-emotion, its action tendencies become more bitter, violent and assertive. Although resentment involves a 'desire for revenge', when resentment elicited as a standalone emotion, revenge fantasies can not be realized if the subject perceives itself weak and impotent. But, if it is elicited as a resentment-emotion, then due to the new character of the subject, which is powerful and assertive, enabled by resentment, the subject conceives itself capable of performing revenge. Before discussing the both cases in this section, it should be noted that Turkey had already experienced resentment and had acquired a new elevated identity.

First, Turkey's ambiguous policy during the Ukraine crisis in 2014 will be reviewed. A closer look to the case from an emotional perspective demonstrated that, Turkey's resentment towards the EU was one of the factors that inhibited Turkey to

align with the EU. Second, Turkey's decision to open borders for refugees and migrants in 2020, which is also criticized as being an inhumane action by the EU, will be reviewed. It is asserted that the decision is taken under a strong will to take revenge from the EU which is a typical reflection of resentment (Wolf, 2018).

#### **5.4.1. Turkish Policy During the Ukraine Crisis (2014)**

As stated in the previous sections, Turkey's resentment towards the EU, elicited a 'reevaluation process' which was consummated after 2011. As outlined by Reinhard Wolf, resentment and specifically resentment as the moral emotion, has political implications. Wolf claims that resentful actors lack trust to resented actors and hence they avoid implicit recognition of the status of the resented actors which manifests itself as an avoidance for cooperation. Cooperation with the EU in foreign policy is an EU-Conditionality. "In Turkey's EU accession negotiations, Chapter 31, titled 'foreign, security, and defense policy', requires full alignment of Turkey's foreign policy with that of the EU" (Torun, 2021, p. 324). "Greater compatibility of the foreign policies can, thus, also be seen as an indicator of how close Turkey is to the fulfilment of the relevant EU membership criteria" (Torun, 2021, p. 324).

During the 2003-2010 period, Turkey's and the EU's foreign policies can be considered mostly aligned. Turkey, to a great extent, aligned with the EU's CFSP declarations during the 2003-2010 period. For example, in 2010, Turkey aligned with 109 of 124 CFSP declarations. However, after the Arab uprisings of 2010 and 2011, Turkey's foreign policy started to diverge from the EU's policies (Torun, 2021).

Divergences between Turkey and the EU policies have been visible in Libya, Egypt and Syria conflicts (Süsler, 2020). Especially in the Egypt case, divergence has been much more visible. Erdoğan severely criticized the US and the EU for not naming the overthrow of the Morsi government in Egypt a coup and accused them for not complying with the standards of democracy. Erdoğan believed that there was a similarity among the Gezi Park protests and the anti-Morsi demonstrations in Egypt, and that these demonstrations were organized with the support of foreign powers who wanted to intrude domestic politics (Baştürk, 2014). This mistrust to the EU and the US manifested itself in the Ukraine Crisis, too. The Kremlin statement after the phone call between Erdoğan and Russian President Putin on March 4, 2014, reveals Ankara's point of view. In this official statement, which did not attract much attention in the

Turkish press, Erdoğan said that the pro-democracy Maidan forces that overthrew the regime in Ukraine were ‘aggressive and extremist’. This statement implies that Erdoğan was still under the influence of the Gezi Park protests when crisis started in Ukraine (Çakırözer, 2014). When Crimea was annexed by the Russian Federation in 2014, it was expected that Turkey would intensely react to the annexation but on the contrary, Turkey showed a much more restrained response to the annexation (Ereker & Özer, 2018). When Crimea was annexed by the Russian Federation, the balance of power in the Black Sea region changed in favor of Russia. Moreover, Crimea has always been a region of special importance for Turkey. Turkey and Russia have struggled and went to war many times for the dominance of Crimea. In addition to that, the Crimean Tatars still have strong ties with Turkey (Aktürk, 2014). Turkey has openly declared on every platform that it will not recognize the annexation of Crimea by Russia and supports the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Turkey shared its concerns with Russia and asked Russia to protect the rights of the Crimean Tatars. However, Turkey did not strongly criticize Russia regarding the Crimea/Ukraine crisis as expected. Although Turkey seemed to support Western declarations regarding the Ukraine crisis, it refrained from joining the EU sanctions. This behavior suggests that Turkey's non-alignment did not stem from its disagreement with the EU on policy choices, but from the rejection of EU leadership on this issue (Hellquist, 2016).

The EU uses sanctions as an instrument to test the normative fidelity of the candidates and other non-EU countries. If the countries align with the EU, then it is interpreted as the approval of the policy of the EU in the case under question. The critical point is that the alignment process leaves no room for consultation. Alignment takes place within ‘a clear hierarchical relation’, where the countries are invited to join the already finalized decisions. Alignment also implies that aligning countries are authorizing the EU to speak on their behalf (Hellquist, 2016). The logic of the alignment outlined above was clearly not suitable for Turkey. Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu, during an interview with a German newspaper, *Die Zeit*, said that “Turkey makes its own decisions, and if it finds sanctions to be necessary, it will take its own measures rather than aligning with the EU” (Topçu & Thumann, 2015). In other words, Çavuşoğlu explicitly refused to align with the EU regardless of whether sanctions are useful or not in this specific case. In a visit to Ankara in December 2014, the EU High Representative Mogherini pointed to Turkey’s low alignment with the CFSP and the need for improvement in that area. Çavuşoğlu replied to this criticism by pointing to

“a contradiction of the EU, where Turkey is expected to align its policies with the EU while being kept out of the decision mechanisms” (Newsweek, 2014). ‘Being kept out’ of the decision cycles of the EU is a major resentment which was also expressed by Davutoğlu as early as 2001 in his book *Strategic Depth*. Still, nearly after a decade, Çavuşoğlu expressed his resentment towards the EU by referencing the same point when he articulated his decision of non-aligning with the EU.

Inline with the conceptualization of resentment, Turkey has perceived itself as ‘equal’ to the EU if not superior after 2011. Under these circumstances, Turkey has rejected to align with the EU sanctions as it would mean that Turkey was accepting the hierarchy imposed by the EU. Although Turkey and the EU agreed to condemn the annexation of Crimea and support Ukraine's territorial integrity, Turkey chose not to join the EU sanctions to Russia. A closer look to the case from an emotional perspective attested that Turkey’s resentment towards the EU had a role in the non-alignment decision.

Turkey’s partial alignment with the EU in the Ukraine crisis has mostly been explained with arguments emphasizing the asymmetric interdependence between Russia and Turkey, and especially Turkey’s dependence to Russia in energy and tourism sectors (Ereker & Özer, 2018). However, these arguments were invalidated when Turkey downed a Russian fighter jet in November 2015, which brought Turkey to almost a military confrontation with Russia. Just after the incident, Russia imposed sanctions on tourism and imports from Turkey, which eventually had significant implications for the Turkish economy.

#### **5.4.2. EU-Turkey Refugee Deal (2016)**

In order to stop the evergrowing refugee influx to Europe from Syria via Turkey, in March 2016, the so-called ‘Refugee Deal’ between Turkey and the EU was signed. The agreement offered Turkey concessions like financial aid, revitalization of accession negotiations and Visa Liberalization in return for accepting cooperation with the EU. The deal foresaw a ‘1:1 resettlement scheme’ which meant that Turkey was supposed to send one Syrian refugee to the EU in exchange for each refugee deported to Turkey from the EU. The visa liberalization part of the deal was very exciting for Turkish nationals. It would come into force immediately after Turkey fulfilled seven technical requirements. The deal included EUR 6 billion to be sent to Turkey as

financial assistance to be spent for the sanctuary and other needs of the refugees until the end of 2019. The revitalization of the accession negotiations by opening new chapters was another clause in the agreement (Dağı, 2020).

The Visa liberalization part of the agreement was especially important for Turkey as it is a subject about which Turkey felt and expressed strong resentment for many years. Even in his book *Strategic Depth* (2001), Ahmet Davutoğlu expressed his resentment about visa liberalization. Throughout the history of EU-Turkey relations, visa liberalization has been something that the Turkish nationals desired for many decades but the EU refrained from granting. During the readmission agreement negotiations with the EU, visa liberalization was always a hot and debated topic between the parties. For example, in 2005-2006, Turkey requested to be treated equally with the Balkan states which already had been granted visa liberalization (Wolff, 2014). Indeed, the European Commission offered Turkey a visa facilitation. However, visa facilitation was still a different treatment compared to visa liberalization. Considering the negotiations about visa liberalization, it can be said that the EU had taken a discriminatory approach to Turkey and had offered a different roadmap and conditions when compared to the execution of visa liberalization towards the Balkan states.

In the 2006-2011 period, the power asymmetry was in favor of the EU but after the Arab Uprisings started and excessive flow of migrants became a priority issue in the EU member states, power shifted to Turkey's side and Turkey managed to get concessions from the EU such as the accession process revitalization and visa liberalization besides financial support. The 'Refugee Deal' was unique at that time as the deal was negotiated outside of the EU conditionality context and apparently between equal partners. In a way, Turkey found a way to rectify the injustices (visa liberalization, accession process) that it had confronted for many years.

In the course of the EU-Turkey relations, Turkish state elites have expressed their resentment about the discriminatory behavior of the EU concerning visa liberalization, in their interactions with the EU many times. For example, Minister for EU Affairs, Egemen Bağış once expressed in frustration:

Turkey does not deserve this. If Paraguay, Uruguay's citizens go to the Schengen area visa-free, while I need to get a visa...it hurts me. It hurts me that the EU, which has started visa exemption negotiations with Moldova, does not initiate it with us (2011d).

Thus, when the refugee deal was signed, Turkish state elites started to warn the EU about the sensitivity of the visa liberalization clause in the deal in advance. For

example, Minister for EU Affairs Volkan Bozkır just after the signature of the agreement, stated: “If the EU does not grant visa liberalization, we can terminate this readmission agreement. It's a bargain. If there is no visa, there will be no readmission” (2016e). Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu also made a warning about the visa liberalization issue during his speech at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey:

We want to put an end to the humanitarian tragedies, we want our people to travel [to Europe] without a visa, we want the Customs Union to be updated, and chapters to be opened. If the EU does not keep its words, we will cancel other agreements, including the Readmission Agreement (2016f).

As Wolf argues, one of the action tendencies of resentment is to highlight the moral deficits of the Other (such as its unreliability) in order to justify the demand for special guarantees to minimize the risk of cheating” (Wolf, 2013, p. 14). Some other action tendencies of resentment are “the uncompromising stances in negotiations. Wolf claims that “uncompromising stances towards the Other are justified with past negative experiences which are re-represented in a more biased (i.e. more negative) manner” (Wolf, 2013, p. 13). Articulation of revenge fantasies is also a strong indicator of resentment. Both Bozkır and Çavuşoğlu have performed an uncompromising stance against the EU and pointed to ‘visa liberalization’ as a precondition for the execution of the other parts of the agreement. In other words, they implied a demand for a ‘guarantee’ that visa liberalization will be granted, in order for the execution of the agreement. Çavuşoğlu implied that he does not trust the EU that they will keep their promises for sure. Çavuşoğlu, by recalling the past experiences at which the EU did not keep its promises, warned the EU to keep its promises this time. He implies that if the EU does not keep its promises, there will be severe consequences for them. In other words, he implied that a ‘revenge’ will follow this time. Bozkır’s comment implies that he conceives the EU and Turkey at least equal in the power hierarchy, even Turkey as superior since Turkey imposes the conditions of agreement. When disagreements arose during the implementation of the agreement, the threats to take revenge became much more evident in discourses, as will be demonstrated and analyzed below.

Erdoğan repeatedly used the presence of the Syrian refugees in Turkey as a leverage against the EU in general and Germany in particular, threatening to ‘open the gates’ to Europe and flood the EU countries with migrants:

When 50 thousand refugees came to Kapıkule, you cried out and started saying, "What will we do if Turkey opens its border gates?" Look at me, if you go further, these border gates will open, so you know. Neither I nor this nation can understand such blunt threats, and you should know that (2016g).

According to Wolf, one of the indicators of resentment is the articulation of revenge fantasies. The excerpt above clearly indicates that Erdoğan is experiencing resentment.

However, for Turkey, the agreement did not accomplish any of its promises and did not help to reenergize the relations between parties. Neither the revival of the membership accession negotiations nor the visa liberalization for Turkish citizens has been achieved. Regarding the financial aid promised to Turkey, the agreement worked relatively smoothly but with some delay (Dağı, 2020).

In an interview with a national TV channel, Çavuşoğlu declared that Turkey is suspending the readmission agreement with the EU. Çavuşoğlu said that “this was not only due to the EU’s recent sanctions. The decision was also taken because the EU still had not introduced the agreed-on visa-free regime for Turkish citizens” (2019a).

On February 27, 2020, 36 soldiers were martyred as a result of the attacks carried out by the Syrian regime forces on the Turkish army in Idlib. This incident denotes a critical juncture in the EU-Turkey relations. After the incident, Erdoğan decided to open the borders for refugees so that they could enter the European territory. Turkey’s announcement of free passage to the European territory via Greece was the first but long-awaited blow to the agreement. Erdoğan, during his meeting with the AKP İstanbul deputies on February 29, 2020, stated:

...We said months ago that if it goes on like that we’ll open the doors. They (the EU) didn’t believe it. Now we have opened the doors and will not close and it will go on like that. Why? The EU must keep its promises. We do not have to look after and feed so many refugees... (2020a).

The EU, especially the German Chancellor, strongly condemned Turkey’s use of migrants as an instrument for the resolution of political issues. Nonetheless, the EU accepted to establish working groups to ‘evaluate’ the execution of the ‘Refugee Deal’ (Dağı, 2020). The crisis was finally resolved when Erdoğan ordered the closure of the borders to Europe after his meeting with top EU leaders in Brussels on 17 March 2020. Erdoğan’s decision to open borders for free passage to refugees is a revenge on the EU and revenge is one of the consequences of resentment. As Demertzis claims, after the transvaluation process is consummated:

... ‘psychological dynamite’ of resentment explodes and impotent victimization ceases, is replaced by other, more assertive and aggressive emotional stances. When the transvaluation process is over, they feel entitled to act. And not only that: the likelihood is that the repressed resentment and rage become more intense through their incubation, and the action motivated by them tends to become more violent and destructive than it would have been without resentment (Demertzis, 2020, p. 139).

The previous sections argued that the unrighted recurrent resentments in EU-Turkey relations ignited a transvaluation process on the part of Turkey. When the transvaluation process is consummated, the subject feels a sense of moral superiority over the object, which is the EU. The subject now feels entitled to act. In this case, Erdoğan realized his ‘revenge fantasies’ and opened the borders.

According to Wolf, one of the chief indicators of the action tendencies of resentment is related to the self’s motivation to remedy the “unfair” hierarchy and to refrain from any action that might (further) stabilize it. In that sense, the ‘Refugee Deal’ presented an opportunity to rectify the power asymmetry in the EU-Turkey relations. The negotiations about the terms and conditions of the deal are done outside of the EU conditionality but rather between two equal partners. In such a case, Turkey had a chance to rectify his resentment with regards to visa liberalization. This deal is the reflection of the new power claim that was enabled by resentment. As a result of the transvaluation process, the impotent and inferior actor of the 2000s evolved to an assertive regional power. Hence, instead of accepting the conditions put forward by the EU, Turkey had the power to impose its own conditions.

One additional remark for this section is that, “when resentment takes over, justice leaves the scene and revenge takes over – the aim of depriving and making others suffer becomes more important than affirming one’s worth” (Brighi, 2016, p. 20). Opening borders to Greece, while it was clearly evident that Greece would not allow them in, caused humanitarian crises at the Greek border and refugees suffered a lot by the harsh reaction of the Greek authorities. The point here is that, taking revenge seemed much more important than the safety or well-being of the refugees. This is another action tendency of the resentment. When resentment takes over the subjects, the objects get blurred and violent actions like mass-killings, suicide bombings to kill innocent individuals are justified mentally by the subjects (Demertzis, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

The EU-Turkey relations have historically followed a course full of ups and downs. Despite all the challenges faced by Turkey during this long history, Turkey's desire for EU membership persisted. The EU membership has always been ascribed symbolic meanings such as the realization of Turkey's centuries-long desire for Westernization. However, during the AKP rule, the EU-Turkey relations deviated from its characteristic and usual path and gradually started to follow a completely different route and the EU membership has lost its significance to a large extent in this period. The Westernization and Europeanization narratives, which had dominated Turkey's policy circles since the foundation of modern Turkey and the perception of the West as the ultimate level of contemporary civilizations, have changed radically during the AKP rule. The Westernization and Europeanization narratives are replaced by first, Turkey as the 'heir' narrative and then Turkey as a 'regional power' narrative (Hauge, Özbey, Eralp, & Wessels, 2019). These narratives emphasized Turkey's uniqueness from a civilizational perspective and the superiority of the moral values associated with it. All these changes pointed to a transformation that Turkey has experienced in the EU-Turkey relations in the last two decades and this transformation has changed the usual operating framework of the EU-Turkey relations.

The transformation that Turkey has experienced during the AKP rule has been a popular subject of study for scholars. Scholars have published articles which pointed out the changes happened in the last two decades in Turkey's identity and its political conduct with the EU. However, these studies did not explain the reasons for Turkey's sudden deviation from the EU membership path after 2005, which had implemented the EU harmonization laws with an unprecedented speed between 2002 and 2005. In other words, while there is a consensus that Turkey has undergone a transformation during the AKP rule, there is a need for further research to elaborate why such a

transformation has been experienced and its root causes. This thesis argued that including emotions as an additional dimension to the EU-Turkey relationship, will help to better understand and explore the underlying reasons which initiated the transformation process and its political consequences afterwards. The investigation of the affective background of Turkey's transformation process, may help scholars to better predict the future of the EU-Turkey relations and develop more encompassing conceptual models. Additionally, a re-reading of the political affairs in the EU-Turkey history from an emotional perspective may help to enrich the explanations of these affairs by clarifying the attitudes which may seem ambiguous at first glance.

This thesis assumes that Turkey's transformation has left traces in the AKP elites' discourses and the evolution of the transformation process as well as the dominant emotion in the respective period, could be uncovered by utilizing discourse analysis methodologies.

The analysis of the AKP policy makers' discourses indicated that the transformation in EU-Turkey relations took place in three stages. Resentment was determined as the dominant emotion in the first stage which corresponds to the 2002-2005 as the timeframe. The imposition of the Cyprus conditionality besides Copenhagen criteria has been perceived as unjust by Turkey and elicited resentment in this period. The EU's persistence on Turkey's recognition of Cyprus and Turkey's incapacity to change the conditions within the rigid hierarchical structure of the EU has been a growing source of frustration for Turkey in this period and this situation eventually created the appropriate environment for the cultivation of resentment.

In Turkey's case, the resentment has progressed in two stages: a 'weak' form of resentment between 2006-2011 which transformed into 'strong' resentment after 2011 onwards. In the first stage between 2006 and 2011, Turkey denigrated the EU considerably. In other words, Turkey has reevaluated the EU and the values associated with it negatively and being an EU member has lost its significance considerably in that period. On the contrary, in this period, Turkey praised itself by carrying its Ottoman Heritage to the fore and started to follow a dynamic and multi-dimensional active policy by referring to the responsibilities this heritage imposes on itself. In other words, Turkey has reevaluated itself and the newly associated values brought to the fore, positively in this period. Turkey's frustration continued to increase in this period. The member states used their veto power against Turkey to block Turkey's accession negotiations in this period, besides the EU. After 2011, the weak form of resentment

experienced in the previous period, has transformed into strong resentment and the transvaluation process is mostly completed. In line with the resentment conceptualizations, Turkey altered values regarding the West/Europe and placed them to a lower level in its value hierarchy and carried the discussions to the comparisons of civilizations. In that vein, the European and the Western civilizations were portrayed negatively claiming to have negative traits such as xenophobic, intolerant, hypocritical etc., while Turkey's own civilization and to some extent Eastern civilizations were portrayed positively claiming to have attributes such as humanitarian, tolerant, defender of true democracy etc.

Ressentiment is a claim to power. Its main function is to provide relief to impotent and inferior subjects, via alterations of values, a sense of moral superiority. In other words, when the transvaluation process is consummated, the subjects acquire a new 'self' with a new value hierarchy in which once coveted but unattainable objects or goods are placed at the bottom of the value hierarchy. Compared to the 'old self', the 'new self' is self-confident, more assertive and powerful. In Turkey's case, the centuries long desire to be part of the Western civilization and the EU membership as an anchor for Turkey to the Western civilization, are devalued in the transformation process and was placed at a lower position in Turkey's value hierarchy. Consequently, Turkey lost its enthusiasm to become an EU member. Besides, Turkey, by claiming itself as a regional power, positioned itself as equal, if not superior, against the EU after the transvaluation process is over.

Both resentment and ressentiment have political consequences. Turkey's political preferences in the Ukraine Crisis in 2014 and during the 'Refugee Deal' in 2016 were examined in this thesis as case studies to demonstrate the political consequences of Turkey's affective transformation vis-a-vis the EU. During the Ukraine Crisis in 2014, Turkey rejected to align with the EU to impose sanctions to Russia. A closer look to the case from an emotional perspective demonstrated that Turkey's resentment towards the EU was one of the factors for non-alignment of Turkey with the EU for imposing sanctions to Russia. Aligning with the EU sanctions would imply acceptance of the EU's leadership as well as the EU's normative superiority in that specific case. Hence, by non-aligning with the EU, Turkey rejected the EU leadership and the hierarchy imposed by the EU.

This thesis also explored the reasons behind Turkey's decision to open its EU borders for free passage to refugees in March 2020, and argued that the reason behind

this decision was the realization of Turkey's desire to take revenge which arose in reaction to the unfulfilled promises of the EU, such as granting visa liberalization in the context of the 'Refugee Deal'. Ressentiment was claimed to be the affective background and the enabler of the realization of the 'revenge fantasies' in this case. After the transvaluation was over, the acquired 'new self' of Turkey was more assertive towards the EU and perceived itself capable of the realization of the 'revenge' and performed it.

I presume that the future cooperation projects with the EU can only proceed if both parties assume the other as an equal party to itself as a precondition before any negotiation starts on the subject. Otherwise, Turkey, which has already experienced resentment, will reject the cooperation with the EU beforehand.

As stated in Chapter 3, according to resentment conceptualizations, transvaluation fragments the 'self': a new elevated self and an old painful self. The old values which were once coveted but were unattainable by the 'old self', are not completely erased but stay backstage in the psyche of the 'new self'. In order to prevent the 'new self' relapse to the 'old self' and to the 'old values' which still reside in the psyche, the improved 'new self' has to be validated, reinforced and maintained through social sharing with like-minded peers (Salmela & Capelos, 2021). Therefore, countries which have experienced resentment could be expected to form a social cohesion and a group with countries which had similar experiences before. One particular example for a country which had a similar resentment experience can be Russia. Russia has also experienced resentment and established its national identity on the basis of anti-Westernism after a transvaluation process. At first glance, the affective proximity between these countries seems to be the enabler of the ongoing coordination with Russia in regional conflicts, though in most cases (i.e., Libya, Syria) both countries have serious conflicting interests. As a suggestion for further research, I propose to scholars to examine the affective proximity between Russia and Turkey and its political consequences from an emotional perspective. Such a study has potential to help predict how Turkey-Russia relations may evolve in the future.

As a general recommendation, as elaborated in the relevant sections in this thesis, resentment may have very destructive consequences. I suggest that countries, especially the ones which have several ethnic minorities with status differentials, to watch the signs of resentment and take timely precautions for not letting resentment to slide to resentment in order to avoid severe future consequences.

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