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CULTURAL DILEMMAS OF THE EU ENLARGEMENT THE CASE OF TURKEY

1. European culture

Turkey is an Eurasian country, however, as D. de Rougemont wrote: "geographical definition of Europe, even if possible, essentially would not be interesting because it is not lands that one needs to unite but people and people are not a product of land but of a certain tradition"⁹⁰. In this context the problem with the accession of Turkey lies not only in its geographical location but in its cultural otherness. Thus, the question arises, what lies behind the notion of *European culture* and is it a result of the spiritual-historic legacy or whether Europe should be considered as an integration project?

From the first perspective, it should be stated that although European culture is not homogeneous it has something in common and that is values characteristic of the Old Continent civilizations. Durheim i Mauss define the term *civilization* as "a kind of moral milieu encompassing a certain number of nations, each national culture being only a particular form of the whole"⁹¹. Characteristic elements of Western Civilizations are Roman law, Christian ethics, respect for freedom of an individual and belief in science and technological progress⁹². Supporters of Turkish membership in the EU are convinced that Europe cannot be treated as a *club for Christians*. Studies show, however, that three fourths of Europeans declare otherwise, i.e. they state that they are believers. Even those who do not go to church consider themselves Christian. Out of seven European countries examined by Bertels-

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⁹⁰ D. de Rougemont, *List otwarty do Europejczyków*, PAX, Warszawa 1995, p. 32.

⁹¹ E. Durkheim, M. Mauss, *Note on the Nation of civilization*, "Social Research", 38 (1971), p. 811.

⁹² Also D. de Rougemont believed that Europe is mainly a cultural fact. He stated that if there was no "existing European reality, a shared sentiment which we can refer to, despite our current lingual, religious and political differences", a union established based only on politics and economy would be a utopia. When describing sources of European culture D. de Rougemont indicates three main centers where basic definitions and attitudes for today's civilization were formed, and these are Greece, Rome and Jerusalem. At the same time, however, when in the introduction to *Open Letter to the Europeans*, he names European countries he also addresses Turkish people [D. de Rougemont, op. cit., p. 14 and p. 35-45]

mann's Foundation (Austria, France, Germany, Poland, Sweden, Great Britain and Italy) Poland has the highest proportion of Christians (97%) the lowest being Great Britain (60%)⁹³.

Turkey, on the other hand, is perceived as a component of the Muslim Civilization which has always been at war with the West. The Ottoman Empire, which at a certain time in history controlled one fourth of the territory commonly considered European, was never considered as a member of the western international system. Islam has very rich cultural traditions significantly different, however, to the ones of the West. The main difference between the discussed systems derives from the traditional western concept of the separation between what is sacred and what is secular. According to Islam the source of law and at the same time of theology is the sacred book, i.e. the Koran, and tradition, i.e. sunnah.

The thesis about the eternal conflict between the world of Islam and western civilization had its revival after 11th September 2001. The precursor of the concept of the clash of civilizations is Samuel P. Huntington who believes that what causes the reasons of the conflict in today's world are in fact, cultural differences deriving largely from religious divisions. According to the author, religion determines the identity of a nation⁹⁴. In this context, despite many years of endeavor, Turkey is not a member of a traditional European system of values and historical relations. Others, however, assume that building a shared European identity in an ethnical or essentialist manner generally end in failure because European legacy is diverse and divisions within Europe are too significant and antagonize Europeans. It is also hard to base the image of a common Europe while promoting its hostile anti-Islamic identity. That is why it is more realistic to perceive Europe in a constructivist understanding. Identity is treated then as a shared European project in which there is space for the entire scope of variety. Nevertheless, even Europeanism understood in such a way, has its boundaries. They are the result of the process of constructing the community, which is based on a set of common negotiated rules, laws and rights. The point is that these values should not be the basis for exclusion and that anyone could potentially join this union⁹⁵.

While considering European identity, which is evolving as a result of the development of integration it should be considered in what way, the EU

⁹³ Anna Słojewska, *Europa jest klubem chrześcijan*, „Rzeczpospolita”, 18.09.2008.

⁹⁴ S.P. Huntington, *The Clash of civilizations. Remaking of World Order*, Simon&Schuster, New York 1996.

⁹⁵ Z. Mach, *Tożsamość europejska – dzieło ewolucji czy konstrukt polityczny?*, www.ec.europa.eu/polska/news/opinie/index_pl.htm.

defines and establishes European culture. Member States did not consent to competence of the Union in the field of culture, hence cultural policy was never a priority but it was only accompanying the process of integration - both economic and political. An event of significant importance in its creation was passing the *Declaration on European Identity* in 1973 which listed European values such as democracy, European identity, protection of human rights, and legality. The next step was the European Parliament resolution on *The Protection of the European Cultural Heritage* from 1974. A very important document was also the *Solemn Declaration on European Union* from 1983 which presented the decision to build the sense of European unity by referring to shared cultural heritage⁹⁶. Finally, as can be read in the Treaty of Maastricht in article 151: "the Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and shall bring the common cultural heritage to the fore"⁹⁷.

The above documents do not precisely explain, however, what lies behind the term *common European culture* or *cultural heritage*. Just after passing the Treaty of Maastricht European identity was defined in the Cannavaro Report as "a product of interaction between a civilization and a plurality of national, regional and local cultures"⁹⁸. The Treaty of Lisbon confirmed the importance of culture in the integration process which can be seen in one of the points of its preamble and reads: "inspired by cultural, religious and humanistic heritage of Europe"⁹⁹. What is more, in the third article of the Treaty one of the regulations reads that the Union "respects its rich cultural and linguistic diversity and ensures the protection and development of the cultural heritage of Europe". Cultural union is therefore really understood by its diversity. The lack of an unequivocal definition of Europe and describing it as "a multiethnic and multireligious reality formed from the sum of all national cultures"¹⁰⁰ allows for the enlargement of the European Union even through the accession of a country so culturally different as Turkey.

⁹⁶Information of The Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, www.kultura.gov.pl.

⁹⁷ D. Lubiński, *Rola kultury w procesie integracji europejskiej*, „Wspólnoty Europejskie”no 2 (183), 2007.

⁹⁸ Raport Canavaro from 1.XII.1993 r. for Commission of Culture of European Parliament, qtd. from: K. Krzysztofek, *Kultura i integracja europejska. Implikacje dla Polski*, „Studia Europejskie”no 3, 1997, p.17

⁹⁹ *Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community*, Official Journal of the European Union from 17.12.2007, C 306/01.

¹⁰⁰ Raport of consultants for culture, *Kultura dla obywatela Europy w roku 2000*, 1989 r., qtd. from: K. Krzysztofek, op. cit., p. 18.

2. Turkey in comparison to Copenhagen criteria

The problem of the enlargement of the European Union comes down in fact to the question about its core, its meaning and its message which determine the borders of the EU by a common understanding of such political values as respect for the principles of democracy, respect for civil rights and liberties or agreement to the rule of law. These values were also highlighted in the political Copenhagen criterion which states that “a country has to have stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, law-governed state, respect for human rights and for minority rights”¹⁰¹. By opening accession negotiations in 2005 the European Union stated that Turkey had met the political criterion from Copenhagen to a sufficient degree.

The direction of pro-Western reforms, that had its beginning during the Tanzimat and was continued by Kemalism, resulted in the introduction of many elements of secular European legislation¹⁰². The aim of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) was to build a modern society based on equal rights for both genders and which would be tightly bound with Europe. Following governments also presented radical Occidentalism. As a result of that, many reforms were introduced, the most important of which being the change in the educational system, making rights equal for Christians and Muslims, the subversion of the caliphate, the introduction of a clear separation of religion and State and the common enlistment into the armed forces. The secular character of Turkey was to be guarded by the army, which managed to lead to a coup d'état four times in the republic's history. What was also introduced was the compulsory education of women and laws guaranteeing women social and political equality. In 1934 women were granted passive and active suffrage. This was also the time when the penal code and Latin alphabet came into use.

These changes dictatorially enforced in the country made it possible in long term, after the Second World War, to introduce principles of democracy. Although, its functioning in Turkey fundamentally differs from the European model. The accusation most often brought against Turkey concerns the limit-

¹⁰¹ European Commission, *Accession Criteria*: www.ec.europa.eu/enlargement.

¹⁰² The Tanzimat (means reorganization) was a period of reformation of the Ottoman Empire (1839-76). The era was characterized by various attempts to modernize and to secure the Ottoman Empire's territorial and aggressive powers. The reforms attempted to integrate non-Muslims and non-Turks more thoroughly into Ottoman society by enhancing their civil liberties and granting them equality throughout the Empire. While Kemalist ideology was created during the activity of Mustafa Kemal Pasza. It defines the basic characteristics of the modern Republic of Turkey (which was established in 1923). The Kemalism is also known as the six arrows, because it specifies the six main principles which should be based on the state reform, namely: republicanism, populism, secularism, revolutionism, nationalism and statism.

ing of freedom of expression, making political parties illegal, the notion of national minorities and the threat to the secular character of the state. However, the fact illustrating pro-Western sentiments is that the reformer Mustafa Kemal is still venerated and as a consequence of the changes he initiated Turkey is significantly different from other countries in the Mediterranean Sea basin. What makes Turkey distinctive compared to the countries of the Middle East is the prewar nationalism which replaced monarchic tradition and reduced Islam in its political form. Secularism has been strongly rooted in Turkish society: 73% of which declared full support for the separation of religion and State, and at the same time 76% of Turkish people objected to the introduction of sharia¹⁰³. This, of course, did not eliminate the existence of the Islamic movement in Turkey.

Respecting the European system of protection of human rights and of minority rights is one of the important conditions in the commenced negotiation process. In this context, the often raised argument against Turkey is the non-observance of human rights, especially in the scope of freedom of religion, freedom of expression and of publishing. There is still the unresolved armed conflict with Kurdish guerillas that has lasted for over 20 years and the problem of the Kurdish community regarding the guarantee of their democratic rights¹⁰⁴. Indeed, the situation of the Kurdish community improved to a considerable degree starting in 2002 when EU demands concerning the introduction of rights and privileges for the Kurdish minority were fulfilled. At the time, Kurdish people were statutorily guaranteed: freedom of expression, the possibility of teaching in Kurdish in regions of eastern Turkey and programs broadcasted in Kurdish¹⁰⁵. Rights of Kurdish people, despite having

¹⁰³ Pew Research Centre, *What the World Thinks in 2003* and research done by Ali Carkoglu i Binnez Toprak Degisen in 2006, qtd after: A. Balcer, W. Paczyński, R. Sadowski, *Turecja po rozpoczęciu negocjacji z UE –relacje zagraniczne i sytuacja wewnętrzna*, Works of OSW, Warszawa 2006, p. 37.

¹⁰⁴ The Kurds constitute a nation of 30 million people half of which inhabit Turkey. The problem of the Kurdish minority occurred in the times of Mustafa Kemal when the constitution was passed and which stated that the Republic of Turkey is a country of the Turkish people and for the Turkish people only. The policy of those times was the assimilation of the Kurdish minority. The words such as Kurd or Kurdistan were forbidden, Kurdish schools had been closed, Kurdish language had been forbidden. As a result of this policy the Kurds incited numerous uprisings (in 1925, 1927 and in 1936) and also the Labour Party of Kurdistan was created in 1978. The armed conflict in Turkish Kurdistan lasted up until 1984 and the events from 2007 in the northern part of Iraq when the Turkish air force bombed the posts of the Kurdish fighters in retaliation for a bomb attack in Diyarbakir in the Turkish part of Kurdistan show that this conflict is still ongoing..

¹⁰⁵ M. Giedz, *Węzeł kurdyjski*, Wydawnictwo Akademickie "Dialog", Warszawa 2002, p. 94-98.

grown in recent years, are still limited when compared with the status of national minorities in almost every European country. The European Union still has fully justified reasons for criticizing Turkey for the mistreatment of Kurdish people¹⁰⁶.

It is also necessary to take care of the Armenian issue, as the Turkish elite do not feel historically responsible for the death of Armenians. After the defeat of the Turkish army in 1915 by the Russian army a series of tragic events broke out which are known in history as *the issue of the Armenians*. It was then that Turkish people accused the Armenians of sabotage and started to take repressive measures also against civilians. According to different sources 200 thousand to 2 million people lost their lives as a result of executions, hunger and exhaustion¹⁰⁷. Turkey explains the events from 1915-1916 as anti-national acts on behalf of Armenian people after which mutual massacres between Armenians and Turks took place¹⁰⁸. Turkey's approach to this matter raises objections from the EU countries. France who, in the statement of the French National Assembly and the Senate, publicly acknowledged that in 1915 genocide against Armenians was committed, showed the most forceful approach to this subject in 2001. Then, in October 2006, France passed an act that introduced penalties for denying Armenian genocide. For decades the matter of the Armenian Massacre made relations between Armenia and Turkey difficult. The first step to the normalization of political relations took place on 10th October 2009 along with the signing of historical protocols about establishing diplomatic relations and the development of bilateral relations. Next, on the 95th anniversary of the Armenian Massacre, for the first time in Turkish history a public commemoration of the victims took place in Istanbul despite the fact that Turkey still rejects the qualification of the massacre of Armenians as genocide¹⁰⁹.

The position of women, although much better than in other Muslim countries, leaves a lot to be desired. Turkish women were granted civil rights in

¹⁰⁶ A. Balcer, *Kurdowie w Turcji-bez uproszczeń*, „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 13.08.2007.

¹⁰⁷ T. Majda (ed), *Leksykon wiedzy o Turcji*, Wydawnictwo Akademickie Dialog, Warszawa 2003, p. 202.

¹⁰⁸ Turkish Noble prizewinner O. Pamuk was put before court several times for his statements about the Armenian and Kurdish Massacre in an interview given in 2005 for a Swiss magazine “Bild”. There, he stated that million Armenians and 30 thousand Kurds were murdered in Turkey for which statement he was charged under article 301 of Turkish Penal Code which provides for prison sentences for ‘insulting Turkishness’. In 2006 under influence of world opinion and heavy criticism of EU the court dismissed the charges whereupon in 2009 the Noble prizewinner was tried again for the same interview this time as a civil action, [M. Kazimierczyk, *Pamuk znów przed sąd*, Gazeta Wyborcza, 18.05.2009].

¹⁰⁹ *Turcja po raz pierwszy upamiętnia Ormian*, „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 24.04.2010.

1926 and their political rights were granted four years later. Since then, the rights of men and women in Turkey are institutionally equal. This equality is realized mostly in an urban environment. In the countryside however, especially in the middle and eastern part of the country, women are oppressed by the traditional patriarchal social structure. A matter of great concern, as far as the situation of women in Turkey is concerned, are the so called honor killings. In recent years, Turkey has modernized its penal code and at present the before mentioned crimes, regardless of the age of the killer, are subject to life imprisonment. Despite that, some families have started looking for other ways of solving the problem, for example, forcing girls to commit suicide.

What is more, the employment rate of women in Turkey is low. However, it should be noted that the group of women, although still small, is growing bigger in politics, in the academic and economic arena, and they have better access to education. Moreover, women's movements actively defend their rights and privileges. An example of such actions is the debate about the wearing of headscarves by Muslim women at universities and government offices. The ban on the wearing of headscarves by women is a well-known problem, and has been dragging on in Turkish politics for several years and which divided the society into two camps. Supporters of the ban state that its abolition will undermine the secular vision of the Republic and will strike at the principle of the separation between religion and the State. Opponents of the ban indicate that the right to wear a headscarf is an expression of personal liberty and freedom of religion and such a ban cannot be tolerated in a country applying for membership in the EU. The AKP party invoking the principle of freedom of conscience in 2008 made an attempt at abolishing the ban of wearing traditional Muslim headgear, which has been legally binding since 1982. Female opponents of this change immediately published a declaration entitled *We are not free yet*, in which they criticized the idea of the government and appealed to take action in order to eliminate current problems of discriminated groups living in Turkey¹¹⁰. Yet, in the same year the Turkish parliament abolished the ban on wearing headscarves at universities. This issue was examined by the Constitutional Court, which in its verdict found the introduced changes inconsistent with secular values included in the Constitution¹¹¹.

The result of Turkish negotiations depends largely on the vision of the future of Europe. If the conception of a homogeneous union is forced through, then there will be no place for Turkey in such an EU. We can imagine, however, granting Turkey the status of a full member of Europe at a different speed.

¹¹⁰ M. Kazimierczyk, *Turcja: Przestańcie mydlić nam oczy chustą*, „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 21.02.2008.

¹¹¹ A. Bey, *Problem „chust na uniwersytetach” w Turcji*, www.alibey.salon24.pl.

The course of negotiations will show whether 87 years of the functioning of a secular model of the state was the sufficient incentive to the change in life-style of the Turkish community, or whether Turkey is still defined by aversion to changes in habits and mentality which became historically common as a result of ethnic difference. Time will also tell whether introduced reforms, both the ones from the beginning of 20th century and the current ones, have a long-lasting or a superficial character.

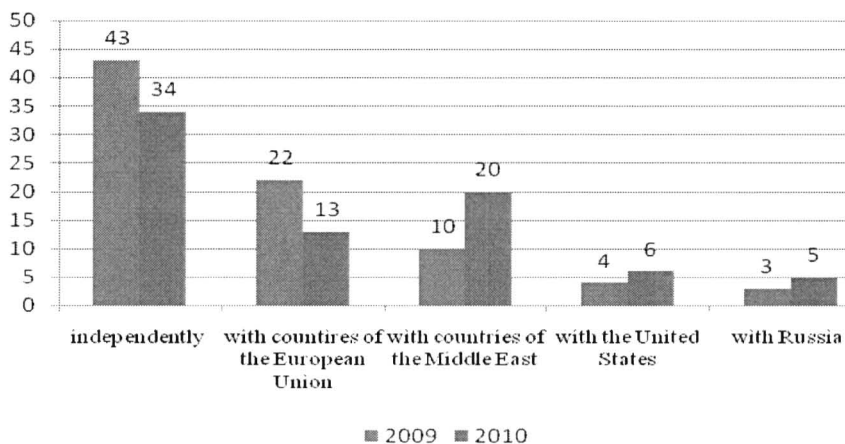
3. Attitude of society towards Turkey joining the EU

Further discussions require bilateral political will and a change in world view, to a greater degree on the Turkish side, of course. Turkish society is more patriarchal and conservative and less educated and less urbanized than the inhabitants of Western Europe. It should be remembered, however, that as early as 1963 Turkey was promised that it could become a member of the EU if it became a democracy and if the free market and the rule of law was introduced. The declarations once given cannot be withdrawn, at the same time knowing that the perspective of membership spurs Turkey into enforcing democratic reforms. Because of constant hindering in the integration process Turkish society is less and less sympathetic towards joining the Union. There is widespread conviction that the EU member states are using double standards for their country.

The predominant opinion among supporters of accession is the one on the possibility of the improvement of the financial situation and of strengthening the principles of democracy in Turkey. The opponents, however, those who do not identify themselves with Western civilization are afraid of cultural changes and of losing their identity. The strongest reservation amongst Turkish people concerns the open character of the *Scope of Negotiations* - completion of the negotiation process does not guarantee full membership. While in 2006 public support in Turkey for its Union membership was 54% and 20% of the people expressed their disapproval, in 2010 only 13% of respondents were still holding a view that Turkey should still be involved in cooperation with the EU (chart 1)¹¹².

¹¹² Badania Transatlantic Trends, www.transatlantictrends.org.

Chart 1
Who should Turkey cooperate more closely with?



Source: Transatlantic Trends Survey, *Turkey and the West. Drifting away*, www.transatlantictrends.org.

In contrast to this, what is increasing is the support for intensification of relations with the countries of the Middle East. Between 2009 and 2010 this support increased by 10 percent. In relation to these statistics, it would be a mistake to perceive Turkey as a country being either on the side of the EU and the USA or on the side of the Muslim world or Russia. Ankara maintains a position as a political and economic superpower of the region, and the actions of the new strongly Turk-centric policy use the geographical situation and economic position of the country. In practice, it means that relations with Europe are still a priority of Turkish foreign policy but at the same time there are attempts at finding alternative solutions¹¹³.

Additionally, none of the Union enlargement processes was dividing the European political arena so strongly and so distinctly. The first part consists of countries supporting the idea of accepting Turkey, especially Great Britain, Ireland, Sweden, Spain, Portugal and a few new member states (table 1). Representatives of these countries believe that the accession of Turkey to the EU is a chance for the peaceful building of a bridge between civilizations and an opportunity of stabilizing neighboring regions. They also point out the increasing role of the Union in the peace process in the Middle East and the economic benefits connected with the large Turkish market and significant economic potential of this country. Poland, in addition, sees in the negotiation talks with Turkey a chance of initiating the same process with

¹¹³ O. Matthews, *Turcja między Zachodem i Wschodem*, „Newsweek”, 31.07.2010.

Ukraine. The Vatican also expressed its support for Turkish efforts to become a member of the European Union. Benedict XVI confirmed this statement during his pilgrimage to Ankara at the end of 2006. Although, while being the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the current pope was skeptical about this enlargement. In 2004 the then cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was convinced that Turkey as a Muslim country, had always been in opposition to Europe and that inviting Turkey to join negotiations would mean the loss of European cultural wealth on behalf of economic benefits.

Table 1
Attitude of the society of the EU countries towards Turkish accession

Distinction	Countries	Expectations
Moderate support	Spain, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Hungary, Great Britain	possible loss of support
Indecisive	Holland, Latvia, Malta, Italy	open matter
Opposed	Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Luxemburg, Latvia, Germany,	moderate chances of position change
Decidedly opposed	Austria	lack of chance of position change

Source: Self made case study basing on: A. Balcer, W. Paczyński, R. Sadowski, *Turcja po rozpoczęciu negocjacji z UE –relacje zagraniczne i sytuacja wewnętrzna*, works of OSW, Warszawa 2006, p.11.

The other side consists of declared opponents which are Austria, Germany and France. Countries who oppose are Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Luxemburg, Latvia, and Slovakia. The disapproving position of the mentioned countries is based on the claim that the proximity of Iraq, Iran, Syria, Armenia or Georgia poses a threat to the Union’s security. They are also afraid of the development of Islamic fundamentalism and of the probable inflow of cheap labor which would result in disturbances in the Union labor market. The opponents of Turkish accession to the EU dominate in countries where Muslim minorities already live and have problems with their integration. The coexistence of immigrants and the native population ended up with numerous severe events such as the riots in 2005 in the suburbs of Paris and in other regions of France¹¹⁴. As a consequence of these events in the second half of 2005

¹¹⁴ The riots from 2005 started with the death of two boys who were hiding from a police chase in a transformer station. In France, every fatal accident with the police involved is perceived by the inhabitants of the so-called ‘difficult suburbs’ popu-

France made alterations to its constitution. This provided for a decision about accepting new members, after the accession of Croatia to the EU. French people would vote by referendum to accept new members or not. Pessimists about Turkish membership propose a so-called *privileged partnership* in exchange for Turkey to resign from its efforts to become a member of the EU. Chancellor Angela Merkel frequently has raised this subject, as, for example, during her official visit to Ankara in March 2010 when she said that Turkey would not be enrolled in the Union and she again proposed a privileged partnership¹¹⁵. The position of Turkey in this matter is unequivocal and uncompromising, as Ankara does not accept any other relation with the Union than full membership¹¹⁶.

Table 2
Support for further enlargement of the European Union [in %, 2007]

Distinction	Great Britain		France		Italy		Spain		Germany		USA	
Attempt	1025		1012		1090		1010		1014		1018	
	in general	for Turkey	in general	for Turkey	in general	for Turkey	in general	for Turkey	in general	for Turkey	in general	for Turkey
Yes	29	23	20	16	48	31	35	26	33	21	46	32
No	47	46	67	71	41	55	40	46	55	66	5	13
I don't know	23	31	13	13	11	14	25	28	12	13	49	55

Note: Percents do not sum up to 100% because of rounding of the numbers.

Source: "Financial Times", Harris Poll 2007, www.harrisinteractive.com.

The Greeks, who for the longest time blocked the process of reaching a decision about starting negotiations with Turkey¹¹⁷, agreed to support the accession of this country to the EU on the condition that Turkey would recognize

lated by Muslim immigrants as provocation [J. Kubiak, *Paryż znówu płonie*, „Polityka”, 27.11.2007].

¹¹⁵ During his speech in the Turkish parliament in October 2010, German president Ch. Wulff softened the statement of Lady Chancellor assuring that the accession negotiations with Turkey shall be conducted in a fair way. At the same time, he appealed for religious liberty and he said that ‘Christianity was a part of Turkey’. He indicated that in Germany Muslims might practice their religion and the he expects the same rights for Christians in Islamic countries.

¹¹⁶ S. Ūnaydin, *Current Turkish Foreign Policy*, „Foreign Policy”2002, vol. 29, no. 3-2, p. 12.

¹¹⁷ The reason for the Greek opposition was the territorial conflict on the Aegean Sea (concerning: the shoreline and the rights to the sea shelf and the natural resources beneath it, mostly oil; respecting the demilitarized zone including the Aegean Sea islands) and ‘the Cypriot problem’. The earthquake from 1999 in the northern parts of Turkey changed the attitude of Greece towards Turkey and made it possible to stimulate bilateral relations and to enter into a dialogue with Turkey within the scope of the EU policy.

the authorities of the Republic of Cyprus and would fulfill all demands made. Cyprus declared their possible support for Turkish aspirations only if Turkish troops were removed from the northern part of the island. Such location of accents in the political discourse between the supporters and opponents of Turkish membership in the Union additionally makes coherent politics difficult and slows down the enlargement process.

What is more, it is noted that in the last decade opposition to the accession of Turkey among the society of the EU member states has increased (table 2). Studies show that Turkish aspirations were supported only by 16% of French, 21% of Germans. What is also surprising is the relatively small percentage of support by the British and the Spanish who declare their acceptance for the accession of Turkey and who traditionally show their 'pro-enlargement' position. However, it should be noted that support for the enlargement of the Union by any other country is also weak.

Conclusion

Immigration trends in Europe, problems with citizens from other continents and fears of the elite about the position of Europe in the world contribute to a phobia about "strangers". In this context, the fear of societies from the world of Islam is understandable. The strongest argument against Turkey is the fact that unlike Europe, which is based on the foundation of Christianity, Turkey is a Muslim country. Religion is one of the most sensitive subjects in Turkish-European relations. Of course, common Christian heritage is a fact in Europe but it is difficult to say unequivocally that at present times this heritage is the factor determining the real sense of unity. As J. Siewierski wrote, unity of the Christian Europe according to St. Augustine was not based on signed treaties but on "the inner experience of individuals and environments, on the unity supported by the unity of faith and of the religious practice"¹¹⁸. The progress of civilization and accompanying mass culture along with the secularization of life caused the transformation of the strength and meaning of homogenous national identity and of common European values. The paradox of global culture, as justified by A. Marr, is based on the fact that when it offers everyone same products for consumption, at the same time, it is searching for differences and for something new that can be sold or used. In the economy of knowledge cultural complexity not only produces richness but also is the richness itself¹¹⁹. It should also be considered whether it is possible to avoid the confrontation of civilizations taking into account the birth rate in the Muslim countries on the one hand and common access to news, art, literature, fashion, etc. on the other. More than

¹¹⁸ J. Siewierski, *Źródła tożsamości europejskiej* [in:] *Współczesna Europa w procesie zmian. Wybrane problemy*, ed.: J. Polakowska-Kujawy, Difin, Warszawa 2006.

¹¹⁹ A. Marr, *Perils of ethnic purity*, „The Observer”, 4 July 1999, London.

anything else, it may be assumed that in the case of rejecting Turkish efforts of becoming a member state cultural antagonisms will arise.

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RESUME

L'Union Européenne fait face aux défis de l'élargissement en particulier dans le cas de l'accession de la Turquie. L'adhésion potentielle du pays Eurasien génère la controverse, l'argument opposé étant l'altérité culturelle turque. Cette critique, bien que non explicitement formulée, est actuellement la barrière la plus significative à l'expansion de l'Union Européenne. Les conditions traditionnelles de la cohésion politique de l'Union européenne, à savoir le désir de la paix et la croissance économique semblent être insuffisantes aujourd'hui. Une opinion fréquente est que les nouvelles sources de cohésion devraient être discernées dans une culture européenne commune. Cependant, la question est de savoir comment doit-on considérer l'Europe d'aujourd'hui: comme héritage spirituel et historique ou plutôt comme projet d'intégration?

ABSTRACT

The European Union faces the challenges of enlargement, including in particular the accession of Turkey. The potential membership of the Eurasian country raises a lot of controversy and the strongest argument against this is Turkish cultural otherness. This complaint, although not explicitly articulated, is currently the most significant barrier to expanding the European Union. Traditional conditions for the creation of the EU political cohesion, namely the desire for peace and economic growth appear

to be insufficient today. Many believe that new sources of cohesion should be discerned in a common European culture. However, the question is, how to regard today's Europe as a spiritual and historical heritage or rather as an integration project?