

Turkey on a Path Towards a Changing Europe

Florinel Iftode¹

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to highlight some aspects of contemporary phenomena that are developing at the gates of Europe. The migration of peoples, which could be only the beginning, surprised the administration of the European Union that proved its amateurism in the face of such small challenge. It is well known that Islamic influence in Europe is not new. Anyone who is minimally informed recognizes the role of Arab scholars in transmitting to modern Europe the teachings of ancient Greece, which - together with the inheritance of ancient Jerusalem and Rome - is part of the constituent triangle of Europe. In the current context Turkey is seeking accession to the European Union, stressing that its membership would benefit both the EU and Turkey. It actively contributes to efforts to address many challenges that affect Europe as well. As an active NATO member, Turkey has made an essential contribution to the North Atlantic alliance and to the Alliance's essential premise, namely "one for all, for all". With all the political and military events, it has gone through, Turkey will define itself as a model for other Muslim states, showing that democracy and Islam are compatible, while promoting multiculturalism in Europe as a principle of European foreign policy becomes a necessity to deal with global challenges. In conclusion, Turkey has a considerable distance towards the EU and obtaining the status of member state within this structure is projected as a multi-valence premisis.

Keywords: Middle East; negotiations; Erdogan's regime; emerging

1. Introduction

After advancing towards unification in the nineties, unprecedented solutions of new generations of decision-makers and harsh realities intervened. The extension to the west, south, east and north was a success, but the management is uninspired, even wrong. It remained only the inter-governmental democracy and the election of a European Parliament endowed with weak powers. The Brussels bureaucracy has grown in proportion to its inefficiency and the money thrown at costs that no rational economist could accept. After Maastricht (1993)², no solutions were found,

¹ Associate Professor, PhD, "Danubius" University of Galati, Faculty of Communication and International Relations, Galati, Romania, Address: 3 Galati Blvd., 800654 Galati, Romania, Tel.: +40.372.361.102, Fax: +40.372.361.290, Corresponding author: floriniftode@univ-danubius.ro.

² Following the negotiations in December 1991 in Maastricht, the treaty was already signed on February 7, 1992. Due to problems arising in the ratification process (in Denmark a second referendum was needed, in Germany an exception of unconstitutionality was lodged against The Treaty of the EU entered into force only on November 1, 1993. The EU Treaty is considered as a "new step towards achieving a closer union of the peoples of Europe" - https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Maastricht 09.03.18-14: 26.

except, for example, the imposition of decisions in the East (the case of Romania 2012) and the South (Greece 2015), which increased Euroscepticism. Institutional confinement leads to secessionist movements (Great Britain, Iberian Peninsula). Following the crisis that broke out in 2008, Europe has remained in sharp economic growth, huge public debt and high unemployment among young people. The policy of austerity, adopted with the propaganda hopelessness, did not set into motion the national economies. The integration not only systematic, but also social and cultural of the own populations is a bridge too far. Under the dome of neoliberalism, naively taken as the “end of history”, the decline of European education has increased. Eastern Europe did not defeat the lagging behind. The leadership of Europe is focused in the hands of an elite devoid of ideas and vision, precisely when it is facing the need to integrate a larger number of countries than ever before. (Marga, 2017, p. 237)¹

Returning to what was in the past is not a solution, but what is in front of the eyes cannot be accepted. In this situation, Germany does not remain passive, the United Kingdom seeks solutions on its own, France oscillates, Poland and Hungary try to get along. The geometry of superpowers has become variable, but Europe has no cultural, political or military initiative, it counts more as a commercial whole. The United Europe must now contend against the backdrop of Russia's return, China has risen to a position of superpower, the United States continues to be the hegemonic superpower. For Europe, to continue in its current form does not work, to go back, it is not a solution either, and the delays can be fatal. Of those seeking unambiguous answers, not long ago, Anthony Giddens felt that the old continent was no longer powerful, but became turbulent (Turbulent and Mighty Continent. What future for Europe?, 2014, p. 3). he says that “the tendencies that lead to interdependence in Europe - to the European Union, as a community of destiny - are the same ones that create zigzag fractures” (p. 213). Despite the outcry that could be heard in Poland and Hungary not to become colonies, the well-known British sociologist observes that “the central difficulty in Europe is not the German domination, but the inability of the European Union, both in terms of lack of democratic involvement and the absence of effective leadership.” (p. 215). The solution is not new, but right in front “a federal solution, supported by greater legitimacy and a leadership capacity at the level of the European Union, is the only viable path towards the future” (p. 215). It could replace the current Europe, where the decisions are in fact a few big ones, on which the Commission, the Council and the current Parliament depend, i.e. “Europe on paper”, with a federated Europe, or even minimalist (p. 9), in which the decisions and the responsibilities are differentiated and put under the control of the citizens. It could better help the Central and Eastern Europe. Only this satisfies the aspiration of Winston Churchill

¹ Andrei Marga (b. May 22, 1946, Bucharest) is a Romanian philosopher, political scientist and politician, university professor, he was Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania in May-August 2012, Minister of Education in 1997-2000, rector of Babes University- Bolyai from Cluj between 1993-2004 and 2008-2012, winner of the Herder Prize in 2005.

in 1946, with the call “Let Europe arise!”¹ and solves the difficult problems that many are focused in the common currency (euro). (Marga, 2017, pp. 239-240)

2. The Political Islam of Today

During the last century, in the countries of Islam, as in other regions of the world, an accelerated urbanization took place: in 1900, in the Middle East, less than 10% of people lived in the city, in 1980, already 47%, and thereafter the percentage did not increase. The repercussions, including mentalities, of this change are already noticeable. However, it still remains an old and tenacious problem - modernity is perceived not as an intrinsic need of its own society and culture, but as something foreign. Ulama, the old class of canon interpreters of the Koran, was completed in the twentieth century with traditionalist visionary, Marxist, nationalist, liberal and Sufi militants². Students of the Islamic universities of Cairo, Istanbul, Aligarh, Algiers, who then continued on to Paris, London and the United States, have changed when they return, the language in which they discuss the society, so that many things could move forward. But, as a result, the “fragmentation of Islam” has taken place rather than a coordinating center with extended authority. Regarding Islam, we are now, in any case, contemporaries of the expansion of reflections on the modern state and the organization of the world, in which the critique of modernization, liberalism and globalization has advanced.

In any inventory of facts, it may be that Islam contains also strands that aim at taking modernity under control. They highlight concepts from the Koran (such as tawhid³ and khilafa) that refer to an economy inspired by humanitarian values and to development characterized by equity and justice. Unfortunately, however, this is not the initiator majority current. Other forces are setting the direction for the moment. As a result, the leading images, which are distributed today in the Muslim communities, stir up passionate affinities. Not only that the tradition of controversial delimitation of other people has been resumed, but “there are few indications that, currently, there is any change that could eventually make it so that this tradition falls back. In fact, the current international climate seems set to add to it complication and intensification. Few images are as powerful in contemporary Islam as the al-Aqsa Mosque under Zionist Jews and their Western supporters.”

¹ Winston Churchill's speech at the University of Zurich, September 19, 1946 <https://rm.coe.int/16806981f3> 10.03.18 13:20.

² Sufism, a mystical Islamic tradition, has a long history and popular popularity in Pakistan. The popular culture of Sufi culture is centered on Thursday evening meetings, holidays and annual festivals featuring Sufi music and dances. Most Islamic fundamentalists criticize the popular character, which, in their opinion, does not accurately reflect the teachings and practice of the Prophet and his comrades.

³ Tawhid is the concept of the indivisible uniqueness of monotheism in Islam. Tawhid is the Central religion and the most important concept, on which the whole Muslim faith is based. Tawhid is the most important article of the Muslim profession of faith. The first part of the shahad (Islamic declaration of faith) is the declaration of faith in the unity of God.

Islam has, as it is known, historical layers and diverse interpretations, as any other religion. He has options that prove to be important when discussing the orientation of the culture - more acute affirmation of transcendence, a certain circumscription of the oral, the obligation of any person of figuring out what he or she does. In fact, provisions of the Koran decalogue, such as “do not kill children for fear of poverty and do not kill a person, for God does not allow this” or “do not walk the earth with airs, because you cannot tear the earth, nor touch the mountains in height”, should lead to actions totally different from those of terrorism (Marga, 2017, pp. 334-337).

Andrei Marga, in *The Future Order of the World* says: “in the context of the current terrorism, there are in fact five issues that are required of any citizen with democratic, religious or secular beliefs, and they demand clarification. These refer to the importance of one's own reason in life, to the relationship with Judaism, Christianity and other religions, to the relationship with modernity, to the “holy war” (jihad) and to the recognition of borders.

Islam's activism has long been observed. Already in the scriptures, after recognizing the sovereignty of God compassionate and merciful, Islam is positioned not so much by embracing a value - as it was, for example, “justice” to Jews, “love of neighbor” to Christians, “harmony” to Confucians, “diving into absolute” to the Hindus -, as to the direction of the accusing delimitation of the others. The Koran begins with these lines: “In the name of Allah, the compassionate and merciful! Thank God, the Most Merciful and Compassionate, the Lord of the Day After Forever! Only we pray and only in you we have hope! Guide us on the right path, the path of those who enjoy Your mercy! Not the way of those over whom your anger is poured out, nor the way of the wandering!” (Translation by Mustafa Ali Mehmet, Koran. Last holy book, Istanbul, 2007). The Muslim is guided to the path of life revealed by God (sharia), but at the same time, the other people, who see differently, are regarded as accusers.”

Jihad means, as you know, “effort”, “struggle”, “fight”. Originally, it means “holy bath” for one's own inner and outer cleansing, but also “holy war” to “cleanse” the world of “infidels”, “apostates” and “hypocrites”. In the militant formulations, “jihad is the holy war, the war of the right, the fight against tyranny.” The Islamists tell us that “it is an indifferent passion for the destiny of the battle, because jihad wins anyway: in the long run, war will be won; and in the short term, death will bring this inner purity”. Representatives of Islam admit that jihad has often been politically instrumentalized, into selfish interests, in various historical circumstances. They insist, however, that jihad is more than is observed in violent actions, that is, a life beyond the violent action and political struggles. “The jihad was misinterpreted, in very different ways by the sultans and emirs who chose to confuse it with their selfish interests and often attributed the Prophet's improbable sayings to justify their less than pious wars. But there is no confusion over the legitimacy of jihad when a Dar-Islam or a House of Islam was subjugated by those

hostile to Islam. This would make the country a Dar-ul-Harb or a War House. “Islam would not, therefore, rely solely on physical force, but above all on faith. “The martyr is smiling on his way to death, and death opens the door to paradise. The believer does not surrender to anyone except Allah ... Allah has promised the Muslim victory, but only if the believer keeps his faith in him.” (Marga, 2017, pp. 334-337)

The countries of the Middle East follow various policies, depending on their history and the financial resources available to them. Of course, Egypt with its ancient culture, Iran with a long-standing culture, Saudi Arabia, with massively funded actions to relaunch Islam, have certain profiles, while money-rich countries such as those in the Gulf (Kuwait) have other profiles, and Iraq, Syria, Libya and others resulted in fact from a relatively recent history, but which show less financial strength, are actually very different.

Almost all of these countries share some features. They all have a one-sided economy, most of them focused on oil exports. All struggle with a profound inequality in society, as a result of the detachment of the category of ultra-wealthy people who control the whole society. They all need modernization, but chances for this are not easy to see, because political elites keep things in place. All proclaim Arab solidarity, but in the respective societies the social gap is large and each one has to deal with itself. Each seeks a protective pattern among the superpowers (Marga, 2017, p. 345).

3. Europe in Full Process of Islamization

From his famous article *Clash of Civilizations* (1993), Samuel Huntington has accustomed us to the idea that religious identity is the most stable of all human identities and that the next war will be of religiously colored civilizations.

In the meantime, there have been many events that seem to confirm it. Islamic terrorists attacked New York and Washington. The crisis in Syria broke out. Attacks occurred in Madrid, London, Paris, Brussels. Those who carry out the suicide attacks disappear into nothing saying “Akbar!¹”. The Islamic State was established. The population movement from Islamic countries to Europe takes place.

¹ In the Muslim tradition, “Allahu Akbar” did not have a warrior meaning. Historians explain that in the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the term was not used as a Muslim battle cry. “Allahu Akbar” is seen as representing - beyond words – “a way of life”. Sergiu Mişcoiu, professor at the Faculty of European Studies, within the “Babeş Bolyai” University, explains the meaning of the expression. Allahu Akbar, which means “Allah is great!”, it is used in the Arab-Muslim world as a common expression, symbolizing religious fervor, gratitude, but also joy, fulfillment, satisfaction in hearing good news for the person or family in question. It is pronounced as the first sentence by the muezzins to announce the time of the daily prayer”, says Sergiu Mişcoiu - http://adevarul.ro/locale/satun-are-ce-inseamna-fapt-allahu-akbar-teroristilor-contexte-folosesc-credinciosiiobisnuiti-este-pronuntat-fraza-muezini-1_5669a11d7d919ed50e16d491/index.html 10.03.18-13: 26.

On the other hand, Europe has taken over millions of Muslims, located in the most developed countries, especially France, England, Germany. In some cities, local elections cannot be won without the vote of the Muslim community, and in the parliamentary elections, in the existing political balance, this vote is no longer negligible. Germany surprised, declaring itself ready to take over a million emigrants. Michel Houellebecq's ingenious novel, *Supunerea/Submission* (2015), has extrapolated tendencies and given the literary representation of the prospect of Islamization that France and, perhaps, Europe would expect.

In addition, the threats of the Islamic State are without detours. The support comes from over thirty countries. At the same time, part of Islam is calling for recoveries after the elimination of Spain and the failed siege of Vienna and announcing the return to the occupied places in an era of Islamic flourishing. In the meantime, the motto of some European imams¹ - "Adapt yourself, but don't integrate!" - is catching on to new generations, who seem ready to move on to extra actions. Above all, with the current demographic course, in a few years, Islam will change its share in the world, surpassing Christianity in terms of the number of believers.

Is Europe, however, in danger of overturning its own culture, synonymous with Islamization? Andrei Marga believes "that the Muslim presence has not torn and will not tear Europe from the European culture. This culture has advantages - incomparable chances of personalization, high level of performance - even if it leaves vulnerabilities. The administrative decision is cumbersome, the social discrepancies increase, and the relativism of the current visions undermines any initiative. But, as things stand today, with a confused and indecisive Europe and an offensive Islam, European culture will have to use itself to the full to prevent danger. It must use its strengths, but with a decision-making capacity and one of changed integration" (pp. 244-245).

On the other hand, diasporas do not, for the first time, choose Europe as a frontier. The continent has been the welcoming home for many groups. Today we are struck by a difference. The Jewish diaspora, which followed the occupation of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Jewish state by Titus (AD 70), made a significant contribution to the modernization of European societies. But the current Islamic diaspora, part of it, suspects modernity and wants to stop it. In fact, as is more and more directly observed, the persistent conflict in the Middle East is not only for territories or other goods, as Europeans are tempted to believe, but for much more - a cultural stakes, in other words: stopping modernity.

Regardless of the situation, Europe is a territory of immigration, each year settling here, again, almost half a million people from different corners of the Earth. However, it would be evaluated, the phenomenon of population migration will continue, especially given that each of the most competitive countries in the world

¹ The Imam is a position of Islamic leader, often the leader of a mosque or community. Muslim priest or prelate; the leader of collective prayer in a mosque, <https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imam>.

economy wants to take on qualified staff, beyond what the internal market offers, besides the fact that the demographic deficit of indigenous Europeans is increasing and it must somehow be compensated.

On the other hand, the internationally agreed right to asylum cannot be denied. Persons who adapt to the freedoms and rights recognized in Europe and who are citizens like any other, cannot be discriminated against on religious or ethnic criteria.

The novelty now lies in the fact that, in recent years, immigrants have come in relatively organized groups, and among many people who aspire to rebuild their lives elsewhere are militants of the destruction of European culture. Especially in the context of terrorism, with newcomers, the security of the receiving countries and of the whole of Europe becomes an open question. It is no longer just a matter of secret services, but a matter of clairvoyant policies.

Despite recent discussions, the coexistence of people with different cultural backgrounds has no alternative. It has been called, with a long term, but little clarity, multiculturalism. Whatever I say, multiculturalism is, in a certain connotation, inevitable. The coexistence of people who come from different cultures cannot be avoided. But multiculturalism gives results with two conditions: the sharing of the rights and freedoms of the human and citizen and the interculturality by those involved. Multiculturalism that includes respect for rights and freedoms and interculturality is itself multiculturalism. This is very different from the multiculturalism that reduced the spread of ghettos in big cities, possibly whole societies, and which is not only counterproductive, but also dangerous. And the permissive Europe must reject it.

We cannot ignore the voice of imams who show that Islam, at the level of the Koran, does not justify violence. On the ground of Europe, some Muslims went further and called for the mutual treatment of Jews, Christians and Muslims as brothers. Symmetrically, some Christians have proposed a new code of conduct for the sons of Abraham (Ibrahim, Abraham), to take advantage of their common origin.

But Europeans can no longer afford not to notice that a current in Islam believes that jihad does not only mean inner self-cleaning, but also an outward action to eliminate "sinners". That current postulates that the borders of Islam must be extended until they are confused with the borders of the world, that Allah owes the Muslim to fight for the return to the once conquered lands. The documents of terrorism attest that certain imams inspire acts of violence. That being the case, someone has to take responsibility for all these interpretations that fuel the terrorist offensive, especially as its actors claim it from the Koran. Europe can no longer accept anonymization of responsibility.

As awkward as it is to acknowledge the fact, terrorism has in recent years become a global trend, which seeks to achieve political goals through intimidation, even with

the sacrifice of one's own life. In fact, on the fronts he has opened in different parts of the world there are young people of European origin, and his financial and information networks are not random. From now on, the new scale of terrorism and its new profile must be considered. Europe cannot give in to terrorism.

The clarification of the issues and a new decision-making capacity of Europe could open a period of normalized relations between Christianity, Judaism and Islam, for Europe and Islamic countries. Inaccuracies and vagueness are often sources of conflict greater than the attitudes espoused. In short, the First World War tells us today the most qualified historians - broke out of tragic diplomatic and political errors and inaction! (Marga, 2017, pp. 244-249)

4. Turkey on the Way to Modernization

The Republic of Turkey is a country spread over two continents. 97% of the country's surface is in South-West Asia (Anatolia peninsula) and 3% in Europe (Balkan peninsula). Turkey has borders with eight countries: Greece and Bulgaria to the northwest, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan to the northeast, Iran (Persia) to the east, Iraq and Syria to the South.

Turkey is a democratic, secular, constitutional republic whose political system was established in 1923. Turkey is a member state of the UN, NATO, OSCE, OECD, OIC, and the Council of Europe. In October 2005, the European Union opened the accession negotiations with Ankara.

The Bosphorus Strait separating Southeast Asia from Southeast Europe is located in Turkey. Anatolia¹ is located between the Black Sea to the north and the Mediterranean Sea to the south, with the Aegean Sea and the Marmara Sea to the west. Some geographers consider Turkey a part of Europe due to certain cultural, political and historical characteristics. Due to its geographical position between Europe and Asia and between the three seas, Turkey has been a historical crossroads, the homeland and battlefield of several great civilizations and a trading center.

The position of Turkey at the intersection of Europe with Asia makes it a country of great geostrategic importance. Ethnically, the Turks make up the majority of the population, but there is also a significant minority of Kurds. The predominant religion in Turkey is Islam, and the official language of the country is Turkish².

Turkey has also been an active member of the G-20 since its establishment and has been its president for 2015. At the G-20 Turkey promotes the link between

¹ Anatolia or Asia Minor is a region of Southwest Asia that today corresponds to the Asian part of Turkey, but not to the European part, Rumelia. In Greek the name means "sunrise" or "east". The Turkish word Anadolu is derived from the original Greek version. The region is also known by its Latin name, Asia Minor.

² <https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turcia>.

humanitarian development and inclusive economic development and fair distribution. Turkey is part of Europe and almost all European institutions. These include the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and numerous other fora¹.

Originally invented in 1981 by the then World Bank economist Antoine Van Agtmael, the term emerging market is sometimes used loosely as a substitute for developing economies, but it really means a business phenomenon, which is not fully described or constrained by geographical position or economic power.

These countries are considered to be in transition between developed and development. Examples of emerging markets include many countries in Africa, most countries in Eastern Europe, some countries in Latin America, some countries in the Middle East, Russia and some countries in Southeast Asia. Underlining the fluid nature of the category, political scientist Ian Bremmer defines an emerging market as “a country where politics matters at least as much as the market economy.”

In 2009, Dr. Kvint published this definition: “The emerging market country is a society that moves from an economic dictatorship to a free market-oriented economy, with growing economic freedom, a gradual integration with the global market and other members of GEM (Global Emerging Market), an expanding middle class, improving living standards, social stability and tolerance, as well as increasing cooperation with multilateral institutions.” Therefore, emerging economies seem to be a by-product of the current globalization.²

Turkey's economy grew by 9.2% in 2010, faster than India and China, being the third fastest growing economy in the world. Economic growth was mainly from the construction sector, rather than from exports such as China and Russia. Only constructions represent 6% of the Turkish economy, however, if the various industrial sectors related to construction (steel, wood, energy used and purchased) are counted, and the related industry represented about 30% of the economy. Turkey also has a very large domestic consumption base as well as three major car companies. Turkey's big cities and its Aegean coasts attract millions of visitors every year.³

For years Turkey has been holding the world's attention in at least two major ways. On the one hand, the enormous economic, technical-scientific development and the demographic explosion, which have made this country, in the last decade, a regional power. On the other hand, the emergence of Islamist politics in the country that had entered almost a century ago on the path of secularization of the state, initiated by Kemal Ataturk. Being one of the strong countries and a pluralistic democracy in an Islamic country, the interest for changes in Turkey has

¹ <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/synopsis-of-the-turkish-foreign-policy.en.mfa>.

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emerging_markets 29.03.18.

³ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MINT_\(economics\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MINT_(economics)).

always been high. And what is happening today - the harsh penalty and the massive purification of army, justice, education and press personnel - not only increases the interest, but makes the question inevitable: is Turkey facing a historical turn? Does this country, which claims to be democracy, change the modernizing course that the founder was placed on and has successfully evolved? Even if the events are still ongoing and do not allow for final conclusions, at least assumptions are needed.

On the route of the last years, the Turkish authorities have sought to exit the competition, it is true, fruitless of the gas pipelines, which opposed the followers of Nabucco with those of South Stream. Turkey built, along with Azerbaijan, its own pipeline, Trans-Anatolia, on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan route, and did not give another signal, from its own perspective.

Again, the authorities have deprived parliamentary immunity of the opposition. The arrest of teachers, military, judges, journalists was continued, under the generic charge of "terrorism". Visibly, this term is abused, in fact applying it to the opponents of the government. Now the arrests are increasing daily with thousands and thousands of people, under the accusation of belonging to the network of Imam Gulet, who would carry out "terrorist" activities in the US. The official term of the Turkish authorities is "cleansing", "purifying" or "devouring" the army, justice, education and media.

As an additional indication of the extent of the measures, if the persons were forbidden to travel abroad! It is claimed that the freedoms in the country would be higher than those in the West. And some councilors announce emphatically the creation of "treason cemeteries" for those who will only be referred to the courts!

The current situation in Turkey can only be understood by considering the history of the last century. Let us recall, therefore, that, amid the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, Kemal Ataturk took over the political initiative and, in 1923, the Treaty of Laussane enshrined the recognition of Turkey as a state. The modernization of the country was undertaken without delay: in 1924 the caliphate was abolished, Turkey was decreed the country of the Turks (provided the Kurds rose to 20%), the Swiss civil code replaced "charia", the Latin alphabet became obligatory, women were granted the right to vote, the state was secularized, religion remained in civil society. In any case, in 1938, Kemal Ataturk left behind a developing Turkey. His successor prevented the country from entering the war with Hitler. In 1952, Turkey became part of NATO and went from this position to the "Cold War". Well credited by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, Turkey has become an example of successful technical-economic development. Its population increased from 21 million in 1920, to more than 80 million in 2012. The vast population exodus took place from villages to cities, against which Islam gained public impotence. Unable to remove the country from crises, the traditional parties gradually became discredited, and the attraction of Islam increased among the Turks, amid increasing influence throughout the East.

In 2003, Erdogan's Islamist party won the general election, opening a conflict between the army, guarantor of Kemalism and the country's strongest institution, and pro-Islamist rule. In 2005, Turkey opened accession negotiations with the European Union. Following fruitful cooperation with Israel and Jordan, which went as far as joint maneuvers of the armies of the three countries, in 2010 the Turkish government sent a military ship to Gaza, which collided with the Israeli coast guard. This episode severed relations with Israel, but Erdogan's initiative, doubled by the success of his economic policy, increased the Turkish leader's credibility in the Arab world. The authorities could thus increasingly perceive the country as a major Muslim power. Its immediate goals were to stop the formation of Kurdistan (Turkey having official, as President Turgut Ozal, 12 million Kurds), remove the Alawite (Shiite) power from Syria, support the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, limit the influence of Iran (Shiite) and take over the political initiative in the Turkic area and in the Islamic world. Domestically, the authorities persevered in the direction of diminishing the military power (already in 2013, more than 10% of the generals were in prison) (Marga, 2017, pp. 377-381).

On the other hand, Europe rightly opposes, to those who will destroy democracy, the argument of respecting human rights. But this requirement, justified, of course, is no longer sufficient. When good faith is lacking, and unfortunately, it is frequently absent in a world of various exacerbated "wills of power", nor can the call for human rights unfortunately overcome the controversies to be a recognized landmark and indisputable. I believe that it must be made clear and energetically transposed into binding regulations, a fact that is always left in the shadow: democracy gives the chosen legitimacy to do something, but it does not give him the legitimacy to do whatever he wants in the exercise of a function. It is well noted that Erdogan, for his part, deduces from the fact that he was elected by democratic suffrage the right to do anything in his position.

The relationship with the European Union is important, but in the current situation in the Union, it is not decisive for Turkey. Certainly, until recently, Turkey was keen to join the European Union - even if the question "how can a Union with Turkey be the most populous country outside Europe? Nobody answered. The refusal that the authorities perceived from Brussels created disappointments, that even without the mysterious coup attempt Turkey was looking for alternatives. As things often happen in history, the marginalization of Ahmet Davutoğlu¹ may, paradoxically, mean the triumph of his geopolitical views regarding the re-profiling of Turkey on its historical heritage.

The relationship with China remains difficult to establish. On the one hand, China did not approve the unrest in Kyrgyzstan, which was prolonging Uighur Islamism.

¹ Ahmet Davutoğlu (born 26 February 1959) is a Turkish academic, politician and former diplomat who was Prime Minister of Turkey and leader of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) from August 2014 to May 2016. He previously worked as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Foreign Affairs from 2009-2014 and was Chief Adviser to Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan from 2003-2009, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmet_Davuto%C4%9Flu 22.05.18 13:26.

On the other hand, while some badly inspired European Union countries made it difficult for the Chinese to gain access to Europe, Turkey had become a gateway. We no longer remember the benefits that the dynamic economies of China and Turkey can offer each other. In the coming years, the expansion of Chinese-Turkish cooperation will continue.

The Turks and Russians were often in opposite positions, even if they did not fight. Now, the two countries, Russia and Turkey, feel close for different reasons - Russia because the rivals have expanded militarily on what they consider to be their own security belt, Turkey because they would have expanded culturally to the detriment of its religious tradition. It will not be a long-term convergence, but it will have to be noted that the two countries will cooperate in the next period. Russia is not hostile to Islam, but will not be indifferent to imam-inspired projects.

Turkey has beneficially established cooperation with the other Middle East-Israel force. Few in the world know Turkish society as well as Jewish specialists. The Ottoman tradition was not one of the anti-Semitic fronts - even though the record of the relationship between Islam and Judaism is not simple. In any evolution, Turkey will seek to use Jewish competence and insight, and Israel will seek to cooperate honestly with a more or less Islamized state, which does not, however, cultivate primitivism over other religions.

The positive relationship with Germany and France and the United Kingdom will be indispensable to Turkey. In any option, the three powers emerging again in Europe will increasingly depend on Ankara. As for the relationship with Iran, it should not be continually focused on the Shiite-Sunni conflict, as it is dogmatic today, as this conflict can at any time be relativized by Turkey and Iran and kept cold. From a religious point of view, it seems more important to observe the relation of Turkish Islamism with the Wahhabism of fundamentalism that is being launched continuously from Saudi Arabia. For today, Turkey will not be able to liquidate overnight a century of Kemalism, regardless of the size of the "cleansing" of President Erdogan (Marga, 2017, pp. 385-387).

The Rise of Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Born in 1954, Recep Tayyip Erdogan grew up in Istanbul, the Turkish city of which he was to become mayor. In his teens, he sold lemonade and sesame balls on the streets of Istanbul, to make money. He attended the courses of an Islamic school before obtaining a management degree from Marmara University in Istanbul and played football.

1976: He becomes the leader of the local youth branch of the National Salvation Party, the most important Islamist group at that time.

1994 - 1998: He was the mayor of Istanbul, with a program dominated by anti-corruption measures. It has won the support of the people for the efforts aimed at

problems generated by pollution, the traffic congestion in the city, but also the interruption of the water supply. He held this position until the army took control of the country.

1998: He was sentenced to ten months in prison, after a secular court backed by the military regime ruled that a poem recited by Recep Tayyip Erdogan in December 1997 incited Islamism. But it was closed for only four months, between March 24 and July 27, 1999.

2001: Established Justice and Development Party (AKP), whose president was from August 14, 2001 to August 21. Previously, he had been part of the Welfare Party (1983-1998) and the Party of Virtues (1998-2001), besides the National Salvation Party.

2002-2003: AKP wins elections, but despite success, Recep Tayyip Erdogan did not become a parliamentarian, due to his conviction in 1999. However, a December 2002 constitutional amendment allowed him to run for a partial election from March 9, 2003.

2003: Turkey's then-President Ahmet Necdet Sezer entrusted him with the formation of a new government. It renewed its mandate on September 5, 2007 and June 29, 2011.

2014: Becomes the first President of Turkey elected by direct vote.

2016: It is targeted by a military coup, triggered by a faction of the army.

2017: Becomes the strongest Turkish leader after Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, through a referendum that amended the country's Constitution and strengthened its power in Turkey¹.

5. Conclusions

- The accession of Turkey would mean that the European Union is close to Iraq, Syria, Iran and the Caucasus countries and it would bring for the first time a country with a majority Muslim population in the Union.

The prospect of Turkey's accession has divided the Union's politicians: some believe that Turkey will not be able to be absorbed, others believe that it is essential for Turkey to become a political partner, not just a strategic one, of Europe. Those who support the accession also say that a country that offers a democratic example to other Islamic countries in the Middle East should not be discouraged. However, the EU, through the voice of the President of the European Commission, encouraged Turkey and urged it to continue carrying out the reforms,

¹ Ioana Vochin, *Erdogan, „sultanul”*. *Ascensiunea unuia dintre cele mai puternice figuri politice din Turcia/ Erdogan, the "sultan."* *The rise of one of the strongest political figures in Turkey, April 17, 2017*, according to <http://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/analiza-turcia-sub-domnia-erdogan-cum-s-schimbata-tara-cei-doi-ani-de-cand-erdogan-devenit-presedinte-1580973>.

and believed that it would be better if Turkey were in the EU, if it respected all economic and political criteria.

- With the opening of negotiations, Turkey's relations with the European Union have entered a new stage, in which other sensitive aspects will gradually emerge. For these situations to be managed successfully, mutual understanding and acceptance will be needed, structural changes coupled with flexibility and consistency in decisions.

During the negotiations, Turkey and the European Union will have to learn to accept each other, thus achieving the desired balance between diversity-dynamism and unity-cohesion.

- With all the particularities it presents, Turkey will be defined as a model for other Muslim states showing that democracy and Islam are compatible, while promoting multiculturalism in Europe as a principle of European foreign policy becomes a necessity in order to face global challenges. Turkey's road to the European Union is proving to be one as long as it is winding, and obtaining the status of member state within this structure is projected as a multi-valence stake. At this moment it is difficult to say exactly when Turkey will join the other EU states.

- The complexity of the Turkish file makes it possible to assert that becoming a member of the European Union was and is a political decision based on the potential of the candidate state and not on its identity. For its part, the European identity must be designed as flexible, focusing mainly on mutual respect and recognition, equality and solidarity. Only in this context will the challenge of diversity towards the European political identity be understood.

6. Bibliography

- Antoși, Sorin (2008). *Modernism și antimodernism/ Modernism and antimodernism*. Bucharest: Ed. Cuvântul.
- Bărbulescu, Ghe. & Iordan, Răpan, Daniela (2009). *Dicționar explicativ trilingv al Uniunii Europene/ Trilingual explanatory dictionary of the European Union*. Iasi: Ed. Polirom.
- Collantes Celador, Gemma *et al.* (2008). Fostering an EU Strategy for Security Sector Reform in the Mediterranean: Learning from Turkish and Palestinian Police Reform Experiences, *EuroMesco Paper* 66, January, 8, www.euromesco.net/images/66eng.pdf.
- Cooper, Robert (2007). *Destrămarea națiunilor: ordine și haos în secolul XXI/ The disintegration of nations: order and chaos in the 21st century*. Bucharest: Ed. Univers Enciclopedic.
- Insel, Ahmet (2017). *Turcia lui Erdogan/Turkey of Erdogan*. Bucharest: Ed. Corint.
- Maior, George, Cristian (2009). *Incertitudine: gândire strategică și relații internaționale în secolul XXI/ Uncertainty: strategic thinking and international relations in the 21st century*. Bucharest: Ed. RAO.
- Marga, Andrei (2017). *Ordinea viitoare a lumii/ The future order of the world*. Bucharest: Ed. Niculescu.

Matei, C. Horia (2007). *Enciclopedia de istorie/ Encyclopedia of history*. Bucharest: Ed. Meronia.

Niță, Ion (2009). *Dicționar explicativ al Uniunii Europene/ Explanatory dictionary of the European Union*. Bucharest: Ed. Irecson.

Temelkuran, Ece (2017). *Turcia între nebunie și melancolie/ Turkey between madness and melancholy*. Bucharest: Ed. Corint.

http://adevarul.ro/locale/satu-mare/ce-inseamna-fapt-allahu-akbar-teroristilor-contexte-folosesc-credinciosiiobisnuiti-este-pronuntat-fraza-muezini_1_5669a11d7d919ed50e16d491/index.html.

<http://www.mae.ro/bilateral-relations/1745#791>

<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/minister-of-fa-info.en.mfa>

<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/synopsis-of-the-turkish-foreign-policy.en.mfa>

<http://www.msb.gov.tr/Bakanlik/Misyon>

<http://www.tsk.tr/TskHakkinda/Tarihce>

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/policies/enlargement/turkey/>

***Central Intelligence Agency - The World Factbook, Turkey:
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tu.html>.

*** http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/index_ro.htm.

*** http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/index_ro.htm.

*** http://europa.eu/about-eu/index_en.htm.