Feeling Imagined Spaces: Emotional Geographies in the EU-Turkey Relations

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ABSTRACT

Geographies and borders have become often-debated concepts, especially in the view of the increasing impact of globalization and regional integration processes. In such cases, borders are attributed certain imagined meanings and more so, they are associated with feelings. Considering such dynamics, EU-Turkey relations can be considered a good example of how borders, emotions and spatial dimensions interact. However, not much attention has been given to the emotional facets of spatial relations. By utilizing the concept of "hot places", this study tries to fill this void. We separate EU-Turkey relations into three phases: the Cold War, post-Cold War, and the peak of migration politics, driven by the Syrian Civil War. We argue that there is a specific hot place for each of these periods: Kreuzberg, Berlin for the period between 1959 and 1989, Cyprus for the post-Cold War period, and the Syrian conflict for the last period. Thus, this paper aims at suggesting a novel approach to the study of emotions, spatiality, and EU-Turkey relations.

Keywords: Emotions, Kreuzberg, Cyprus, Spatiality, Hot Places

Introduction

Boundaries are spatial imaginations to which communities attribute sentimental meaning and which they regulate through mechanisms of border control. Since 2010, with the increase in interstate and intrastate conflicts and extraordinary circumstances such as global pandemics and migration flows, the necessity to identify boundaries has increased, which in turn has caused states to reimagine the mechanisms of regulating borders and movement across borders.[1] In the case of European Union (EU) -Turkey relations, both actors entered into such new considerations in their partnership due to the massive migration influx triggered by instabilities, especially in Syria and Afghanistan. As a result, the academic literature has taken up such issues from various angles concerning spatiality. However, less attention has been

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1   Lotta Themnér and Peter Wallensteen. "Armed Conflicts, 1946–2012", *Journal of Peace Research,* Vol. 50, No 4, 2013, p. 509–21.

paid to the emotions embedded within the spatiality in EU-Turkey relations. For this reason, this paper attempts to shed light on the creation of emotional geographies, especially in the form of hot places, throughout the extensive relationship between the EU and Turkey.

The concept of "emotional geographies" is a relatively new addendum to the literature on spatiality.[2] Overall, the interlink between emotions and International Relations has been an increasingly important subject since the early 2000s, often referred to as "the emotional turn in IR".[3] Following the work of Crawford, emotions started to seep into the realm of IR, while they had been a key issue in psychology for a long time.[4] With later works building on Crawford's study, leaders, their emotions, and how they trigger and represent collective emotions became a matter of importance in the discipline. In the last decade, with the works of Koschut and his colleagues, the study of emotions became more methodologically reflected, in particular elaborating an "emotion discourse analysis".[5]

From the perspective of collective emotions, which are taken as a reference point in this study, as Zembylas and Ahmed argue, emotions are a highly significant part of how people create communities and relate to one another.[6][7] Moreover, Zembylas discusses how people's encounters with each other construct certain boundaries both cognitively and physically.[8] Space is an open area that is yet to be defined and the place is a defined version. Place is a part of a space with a given meaning, identity and characteristics. In the article, we reveal how spaces are turned into places through feelings attributed to them. These spaces can be constructed through emotions like joy, pride, pleasure, and admiration as a result of a victory, or they can be a result of fear, anger, humiliation, hatred, and anxiety in the form of collective trauma. In the latter case, Volkan refers to these places as "hot places" in which emotional luggage from a collective trauma is transferred to a physical space.[9] It is one of the main aims of this paper to explore and deepen this concept and discuss exemplary cases within EU-Turkey relations.

This article argues that emotions are salient factors in the imagination of spaces. Consequently, among other emotions, we focus specifically on trauma-related, negative, and collective emotions and argue that "hot places" define the related spatial imaginations of a community. To study the hot places in EU-Turkey relations, this paper is organized in accordance with the differing relations during the Cold War (1959-1989), the post-Cold War

2   Andy Hargreaves, "Emotional Geographies of Teaching", *Teachers College Record*, Vol. 103, No 6, 2001, p. 1056.

3   Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchison, "Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics", *Review of International Studies,* Vol. 34, 2008, p. 115; Neta C. Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships", *International Security*, Vol. 24, No 4, 2000, p. 116.

4   Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships", p. 116.

5   Simon Koschut, "Speaking from the Heart: Emotion Discourse Analysis in International Relations", M. Clément and E. Sangar (eds.), *Researching Emotions in International Relations*, Palgrave Studies in International Relations, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

6   Michalinos Zembylas, "The Affective (Re) production of Refugee Representations through Educational Policies and Practices: Reconceptualising the Role of Emotion for Peace Education in a Divided Country", *International Review of Education*, Vol. 58, No 4, 2012, p. 465.

7   Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, New York, Routledge, 2012, p. 1-264.

8   Zembylas, "The Affective (Re) production of Refugee Representations through Educational Policies and Practices: Reconceptualising the Role of Emotion for Peace Education in a Divided Country", p. 465.

9   Vamık Volkan, *Divandaki Düşmanlar: Bir Türk Psikanalistin Serüveni*, İstanbul, Alfa Yayınları, 2006.

(1989-2011), and the Syrian Civil War and the Readmission Agreement (2011-2021). To represent each period, the hot places of Kreuzberg (Germany), Cyprus, and Syria are selected as case studies. This analysis contributes to the literature on EU-Turkey relations by proposing a new perspective that bridges the literature on trauma, emotions, and spatial imaginations. In addition, we contribute to the literature on emotions in IR through highlighting how bilateral relations such as EU-Turkey relations are affected by emotionally imagined spaces.

The Concept of Emotional Geographies

The two key issues for this article are emotional geographies and the concept of hot places. The study of spatial imaginations follows the footsteps of social constructivism and critical security studies, which are rooted in the early 1990s. Based on the spatial imaginations literature, emotional geographies studies started to develop, especially since the early 2010s.

With the rise of social constructivist approaches, mainstream International Relations theories and understandings about geopolitics, migration, and borders started to evolve. Gaddis and Ruggie are leading scholars who contributed to the development of spatiality in the field, and thus contributed to this evolution.[10] [11] Gaddis applied spatiality to post-Cold War global politics and human behavior, whereas Ruggie coined the term "spatial extension" when discussing territoriality. In addition, Adler built on Anderson's "imagined communities" in his concept of "cognitive regions".[12] Thus, in contrast to mainstream understandings of territoriality and space, their linkage to identities, constructions, and cognitive perceptions started to be prioritized.

Such divergences from mainstream understandings also took place in critical security studies and critical geopolitics. Walker, to illustrate, critically examined the boundaries of "modern political imagination" and how global politics was constructed around "inside-outside" relationships.[13] Focusing on geopolitics, Albert and Brock suggested alternative ways of linking postmodernity and spatiality.[14] Following this line of thinking, Tuathail contributed a seminal piece on geopolitics and postmodernity, in which he argued that the conventional wisdom that perceived the world made up of "spatial blocks" was no longer valid.[15] He referred to Agnew and Corbridge to highlight how "spatial practices" and "representations of space" should be differentiated.[16] Building on such conceptual frameworks, Tuathail offered

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10 John Lewis Gaddis, "International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War", *International Security*, Vol. 17, No 3, 1992, p. 5-58.

11 John Gerard Ruggie, "Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations", *International Organization*, Vol. 47, No 1, 1993, p. 139-174.

12 Emmanuel Adler, "Imagined (Security) Communities: Cognitive Regions in International Relations", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 26, No 2, 1997, p. 249.

13 R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993.

14 Mathias Albert and Lothar Brock, "Debordering the World of States: New Spaces in International Relations", *New Political Science,* Vol. 18, No 1, 1996, p. 69-106.

15 Gearóid Ó Tuathail, "Postmodern Geopolitics?: The Modern Geopolitical Imagination and Beyond", Gearóid Ó Tuathail and Simon Dalby London (eds.), *Rethinking Geopolitic*s, London, Routledge, 2000, p. 28-50.

16 John Agnew and Stuart Crobridge, *Mastering Space: Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy*, London, Routledge, 1995.

the concept of "postmodern geopolitics" to suggest how global, glocal, and flexible current geopolitical imaginations are.

Emotional Geographies

The term "emotional geographies" was first used by Hargreaves, a leading scholar in the field of education, with the following definition:

> "the spatial and experiential patterns of closeness and/or distance in" human interactions and relationships that help create, configure and color the feelings and emotions we experience about ourselves, our world and each other."[17]

According to Hargreaves, emotional geographies had been underemphasized in International Relations and Political Science. Ahmed studied the "cultural politics of emotion" in a similar fashion to observe how people form attachments to certain spatial creations and places.[18] As an additional point, Davidson et al. argue that emotional geographies must take into account people's "emotional involvements" with other people and places.[19] Bridged with the "modernity" literature, Ahmed's references to people's attachment relates to the concepts of "detachment" and "deterritorialization", which are embedded in Bauman's "liquid modernity".[20] Thus, people's mobilities are studied in tandem with several concepts, especially spatiality, territory, attachment, and modernity.

As in the cases of Kreuzberg, Cyprus, and Syria, people migrate from one place to another and create new attachments, both to the place and the people living there. People's emotional involvements change as they migrate between different places, from Turkey to Europe, which creates a process of attachment-detachment and deterritorialization. Encapsulated in Bauman's (1999) liquid modernity, the migration processes involved in these cases reveal how they are closely associated with emotions.[21]

As Smith et al. argue, the concept of emotional geographies is needed in geographical thinking because it provides a sense of how people re-write and reproduce different geographies.[22] Such reproduction occurs in the field of migration. For instance, a seminal work by Boccagni and Baldassar argues that the most common emotion in migration is ambivalence between the homeland and the host country.[23] An earlier seminal work by Svašek outlines how emotions are complex in terms of migratory processes.[24] For instance, the author argues that an unfriendly environment may trigger emotions of belonging, whereas a positive environment may increase migrants' bonding with new people in the host country. As Boccagni

17 Hargreaves, "Emotional Geographies of Teaching", p. 1061.

18 Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion.*

19 Joyce Davidson et al., *Emotional Geographies*, Hampshire, Ashgate, 2007.

20 Kevin Hannam et al., "Mobilities, Immobilities, and Moorings", *Mobilities,* Vol. 1, No 1, 2006, p. 1-22.

21 Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, Cambridge, Polity, 1999.

22 Mick Smith et al., *Emotion, Place, and Culture*, London, Routledge, 2009.

23 Paolo Boccagni and Loretta Baldassar, "Emotions on the Move: Mapping the Emergent Field of Emotion and Migration", *Emotion, Space and Society*, Vol. 16, 2015, p. 73.

24 Maruska Svašek, "On the Move: Emotions and Human Mobility", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 36, No 6, 2010, p. 865-880.

and Baldassar state, the migratory movement works as a vigorous catalyst in the emotional state for both the receiving countries' citizens and the refugees/asylum seekers.[25] Physical movement is not independent of emotional movement: they are co-constitutive. Hugo reports that negative attitudes and any emotions of threat and exclusion may be cognitively based on misperceptions or misinterpretations.[26] Sakız highlights the lack of a common sphere for communication and interaction between the newcomers and the original settlers to ameliorate misperceptions and prejudice since refugees are forced to live with other refugees in spatially confined territories.[27] From an overall point of view, today, spaces have become a much more complex issue bringing together multiple disciplines. However, regarding these concepts, not much attention has been given to emotions and especially trauma-related attributions.

The concept of Hot Places

We argue that in each of our analytical phases, a specific hot place as an emotional geography is negatively reminiscent of EU-Turkey relations, loaded with emotions, and transferred into a physical space.[28] Firstly, We opt for employing the concept of hot places to deepen and engraft this concept into the broader literature of emotional geographies. Secondly, these selected cases do not embed any emotions that result from mundane events but instead, (result from) negative emotions that emanate from collectively shared traumas. Hence, the concept of hot places is the most fitting lens to look at these spaces.

Pondering the concept of hot places contributes to the literature on emotional geographies because identifying the hubs of collective trauma is a starting point for healing. Schick promulgates that unless a trauma is worked through, its political danger and the emulation of insecurity prevail.[29] Moreover, when trauma is socially shared and politically supported, it turns into a habitual response towards the Other for generations. The sharpening tendency to attribute trauma-related emotions to a place can make each community more protective of the associated space, which in turn may deepen the tension.[30]

In Akhtar's Dictionary of Psychoanalysis, *hot places* are defined as "[...] locations that induce immediate and intense feelings among the members of an ethnic, religious, national or ideological large group."[31] The criteria we put forward to identify a hot place are as follows:

    I.   there should be a geographically defined space,

25 Boccagni and Baldassar, "Emotions on the Move: Mapping the Emergent Field of Emotion and Migration", p. 74.

26 Graeme Hugo, "The New International Migration in Asia: Challenges for Population Research", *Asian Population Studies*, Vol. 1, No 1, 2005, p. 93-120.

27 Halis Sakız, "Establishing an Inclusive Psychology of Migration: An Alternative Model", *The Journal of Migration Studies*, Vol. 1, No 1, 2016, p. 150.

28 Volkan, *Divandaki Düşmanlar: Bir Türk Psikanalistin Serüveni.*

29 Kate Schick, "Acting out and Working through: Trauma and (In) security", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 37, No 4, 2011, p. 1837.

30 Lili Qian et al., *A County Town in Ruins: Memories, Emotions, and Sense of Place in Post-Earthquake Beichuan, China*, MDPI, October, 2021, https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/20/11258, (Accessed 25 April 2022); Isabelle Anguelovski, "From Environmental Trauma to Safe Haven: Place Attachment and Place Remaking in Three Marginalized Neighborhoods of Barcelona, Boston, and Havana", *City & Community*, Vol. 12, No 3, 2013, p. 211-237.

31 Salman Akhtar, *Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*, London, Routledge, 2018.

II.   the space should constitute a source of a shared trauma or some sort of a psychological discomfort,

III.   the community should attribute negative emotions to the place,[32]

IV.   the space should hold an essential place in the group identity of the community.

To elaborate further on these criteria, a geographically defined place presupposes an overall consensus on where that place is on the surface of the earth. Spatial disagreements on the borders and/or the names of the place do not exclude them from this criterion. In Cyprus, for instance, there is no consensus on borders but we can locate it on the world map. Volkan's work identifies hot places as "national cemeteries, memorials, museums, or monuments".[33] In contrast, we extend the definition to include neighborhoods, cities and even countries such as Cyprus.

Our second criterion, along with the third one, constitutes the core of the concept of a hot place. It requires the place to have a commemorative effect on a community. This effect should be tied to a trauma or an event that causes psychological discomfort. Shamai[34] defines national or collective trauma as a psychological condition developed after a catastrophic event (such as war, disaster, occupation) that caused or still causes psychological and physical harm to a community and its individuals. National trauma is directly associated with negative emotions - which leads to the third criterion.[35] The place should bring back memories of the trauma and evoke negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, humiliation, anger within the community.

Our last criterion suggests that a hot place must hold significance in the *being* of a community. Shamai argues that trauma is not independent from the national narratives and identity.[36] On the contrary, trauma constitutes a keystone for the Self and simultaneously for the Other. Hence, the community attributes a shared meaning to the place and carries it along with themselves.

Hot Places in EU-Turkey Relations

1959-1989: EU-Turkey during the Cold War

This period marks the foundations of modern EU-Turkey relations in terms of emotional geographies. In this period, spatial imaginations started to sprout as bilateral relations developed. The first significant incident that triggered the foundation of spatial imaginations in relations was the 1961 Labor Recruitment Agreement between Turkey and Germany.[37]

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32   Emotions are categorized in distinct ways within the study of psychology. In order to understand hot places, we are using emotions with a negative valence. For instance, there are fundamental discrete emotions such as sadness, anxiety, fear, disgust, anger and social emotions like jealousy, trust, resentment, envy, guilt and shame (Capelos & Nielsen, 2018).

33   Volkan, *Divandaki Düşmanlar: Bir Türk Psikanalistin Serüveni.*

34   Michal Shamai, *Systemic Interventions for Collective and National Trauma: Theory, Practice, and Evaluation*, New York, Routledge, 2015.

35   Christal L. Badour et al., "Associations Between Specific Negative Emotions and DSM-5 PTSD Among a National Sample of Interpersonal Trauma Survivors", *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, Vol. 32, No 11, 2017, p. 1620–1641.

36   Shamai, *Systemic Interventions for Collective and National Trauma: Theory, Practice, and Evaluation.*

37   Ahmet İçduygu, "50 Years After the Labor Recruitment Agreement with Germany: The Consequences of Emigration for Turkey", *Perceptions,* Vol. 7, No 2, 2012, p. 11.

As İçduygu argues, the first Turkish population that arrived in Germany started to stay there for more extended periods and brought their families together. Consequently, the Turkish population started to grow in Europe. However, after the 1970s, it is estimated that many people returned to Turkey.[38]

Such big waves of social mobility contributed to creating emotional geographies in both communities, getting to know each other and creating perceptions towards one another. Such creations occur in hot places such as Kreuzberg, Berlin, where people from Germany and Turkey cut across each other's identities and spaces. Kreuzberg is regarded as one of these significant spaces because it is where the first ever mass migration from Turkey to Europe settled and, hence, constitutes the first actual meeting ground of both communities in their most naked form. This district of Berlin was imagined as the place where the Turkish guest workers would stay before returning to their "home country". Yet as spaces are not independent of the resident's identity, Kreuzberg soon turned into *Klein Istanbul* – "little Istanbul". It soon became a haven for those who were added later to Berlin. As Kreuzberg became one of the hotspots for these peoples, the meanings of spatiality and emotion changed and started to resemble different altercations for both communities. In fact, the area between Neukölln and Kreuzberg started to be called "Kreuzkölln" as a result of two divergent urban and cultural imaginations.

While Kreuzberg stands out as the representation of creativity, urban openness, and multiculturalism, Neukölln has been associated with xenophobic tendencies and crime.[39] In other words, Kreuzberg has evolved into a space that belongs to the willingly polarized Other, fueled by anger towards alienation. Thus, in Kreuzkölln, German Turks play an essential role in bridging the two different urban spatial and emotional encounters. The space of Kreuzkölln has shifted soul and identity with its newcomers and witnessed a battle of emotions. Eksner, in her research conducted on "36 Boys", a local group of migrant youth, concluded that they had "constructed a dichotomy around two dominant cultural themes: 'being a victim' (*Opfer sein*) and 'being aggressive' (*aggressiv sein*) which were conflated with 'being German' and 'being Turkish/a 'foreigner.'"[40] Alternatively, as Topcu recalls (as cited in Piwoni) how the Turkish community in Kreuzberg reacted negatively when Thilo Sarrazin - a German politician, paid a visit to the neighborhood. Topcu even criticized the overemotionality within the community and condemned how they turned the visit into a big fuss instead of using this as an opportunity to talk about their problems.[41]

The Kreuzberg example thus shows how rapid and massive migratory waves caused both actors' borders to be contested and re-imagined. Meanwhile, relations between Turkey and the EEC weakened because of the coup d'état in Turkey. In addition, with the densification of identity politics in the 1980s, external and internal factors contributed to the rise of ideological

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38 Ibid, p. 15.

39 James W. Scott and Christophe Sohn, "Place-making and the Bordering of Urban Space: Interpreting the Emergence of New Neighbourhoods in Berlin and Budapest", *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Vol. 26, No 3, 2019, p. 297-313.

40 H. Julia Eksner, "Indexing Anger and Aggression: From Language Ideologies to Linguistic Affect", Helena Flam and Jochen Kleres (eds.), *Methods of Exploring Emotions,* New York, Routledge, 2015, p. 213-225.

41 Eunike Piwoni, "Mass-mediated Discourse on Emotion, and the Feeling Rules It Conveys: The Case of the Sarrazin Debate", *Current Sociology*, Vol. 68, No 3, 2020, p. 390–407.

conflicts in Turkey, which created discomfort in both communities and trauma for the Turkish community.[42] As the number of political asylum seekers increased in Turkey in the 1980s and throughout the 1990s as a repercussion of the coup, ethnic tensions became a significant issue due to encounters between "Turkish/Muslim" populations and "foreigners" which combined positive and negative emotions (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Hot Place Criteria for the EU-Turkey Relations During the Cold War
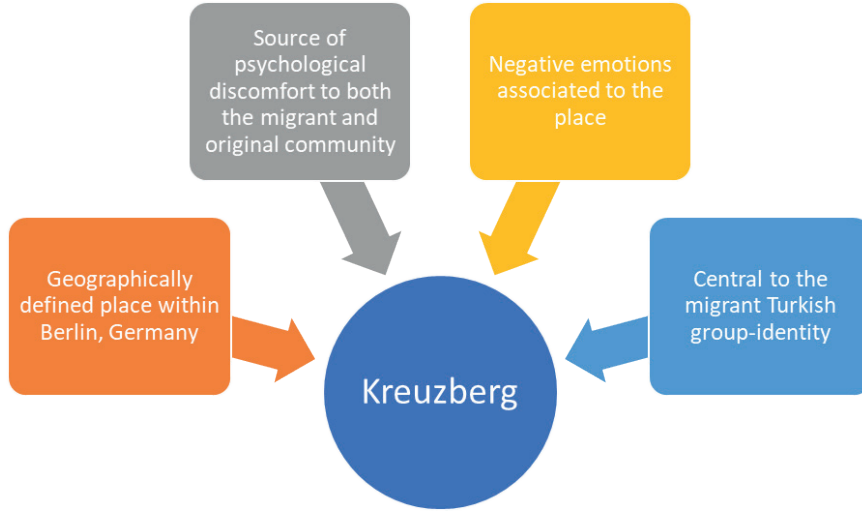
Kreuzberg thus fulfills the criteria for a hot place in our definition. It is a neighborhood within Germany that can be easily located and the place accounts for discomfort in both communities. Among original settlers, the Turkish community has negative impressions.[43] For the Turkish community, Kreuzberg is a place where they can escape from discrimination and can build a community. On the contrary, Kreuzberg is also the space where violent racist attacks against the Turkish community occurred. Moreover, in the minds of Turkish migrant workers, Kreuzberg holds a symbolic place, it is where they can feel at home. As Ardagh suggests, Kreuzberg is a "Turkish town."[44] All in all, we suggest that Kreuzberg is a hot place and it is crucial to break down the trauma attributed to this place for both European and Turkish communities.

1989-2011: EU-Turkey Relations After the Cold War

The period between 1989 and 2011 is when Turkey's official candidacy process to the EU was formulated. Thus, the Helsinki Summit also became a significant emotion-bearer for EU-Turkey relations and their encounters after the Cold War and the emotional geographies started to be created by all member states and the EU actors. On the one hand, the Helsinki Summit

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42 Ahmet İçduygu and Damla Bayraktar Aksel, "Turkish Migration Policies: A Critical Historical Retrospective", *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 18, No 3, 2013, p.167-190.

43 Meltem Yılmaz Şener, "Perceived Discrimination as a Major Factor behind Return Migration? The Return of Turkish Qualified Migrants from the USA and Germany", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 45, No 15, 2019, p. 2801-2819.

44 John Ardagh, *Germany and the Germans: An Anatomy of Society Today*, New York, Harper Perennial, 1988.

constituted hope for Turkey and instigated the prospects of becoming part of "Europeanness" meanwhile the Cyprus issue and the Republic of Cyprus' (RoC) accession to the EU has taken a serious toll on this process.[45] Cyprus has been a blind alley for Turkey and Greece in many ways and with the actors of the international arena such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the EU. The Cyprus conflict dates back to the 1950s, yet we have opted for including it in this period since until the RoC became a member of the Union in 2004, the EU was not an active actor in this disunity.

Following the Turkish army's intervention on the island and its partition in the aftermath, the territory's political identity was under dispute, and all parties were alarmed about another military collision. In other words, emotions were dense. On the Greek-Cypriot side, for instance, even children display a virulent bunch of emotions when asked about the Green Line that separates North from South, and about the Other on the other side of the line.[46] Merely the idea of visiting the Turkish side ignites an "intense sense of fear" even after this became possible in 2003.

On the Turkish side, Cyprus has been a sensitive issue as well. Turkish politics embroidered the motifs of Cyprus as another territory of the Turks. The stories of the humanitarian rescue mission have glorified the Turkish presence on the island and gained domestic support. In public discourse, Cyprus became designated as the baby of the Turkish motherland republic. The public thus assigned Selfness to the island as well as the inhabitants of it. In the same vein, it attributed negative emotions to the Greek-Cypriot side.

Deriving from its past, Turkey is a country that often re-lives its battles and sanctifies the indivisibility of its territory. This habitually occurs due to the public being exposed to discourses of the "holy territory", "masterminds gambling on Turkey" and such. Turkey perceives the Cyprus issue as a national case (*milli dava*) that is of vital importance.[47] As Cizre points out, there exists a "national security syndrome": the prioritization of security over everything, which leads to a reproduced form of anxiety.[48] Greece and Greek-related issues (such as Cyprus) are an unavoidable part of this anxiety since Greece is constructed as Turkey's historical nemesis.[49]

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45 The Cyprus issue refers to the political dissensus between Turkey, Greece and the United Kingdom regarding the island of Cyprus. Whilst the island was under British rule, there was a violent tension between the two communities living in the island (Greek and Turkish). The tension tried to be resolved through political settlement such as the Treaty of Guarantee in 1959. Turkey believed the settlement was not enough to ease the violent events and hence launched two military operations in 1974. Ever since, the island has been parted between the communities, no political solutions reached a consensus, and the UN has launched a peace-keeping mission in Cyprus to prevent the further escalation of conflict.

46 Miranda Christou and Spyros Spyrou, "Children's Emotional Geographies and the Geopolitics of Division in Cyprus", Matthew C Benwell and Peter Hopkins (eds.), *Children, Young People and Critical Geopolitics*, New York, Routledge, 2016, p. 75-90.

47 Semin Suvarierol, "The Cyprus Obstacle on Turkey's Road to Membership in the European Union", *Turkish Studies,* Vol. 4, No 1, 2003, p. 55-78.

48 Ümit Cizre, "Demythologizing the National Security Concept: The Case of Turkey", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 57, No 2, 2003, p. 213–229.

49 Eran Halperin et al., "Promoting Intergroup Contact by Changing Beliefs: Group Malleability, Intergroup Anxiety, and Contact Motivation", *Emotion*, Vol. 12, No 6, 2012, p. 1192-1195.

It is not this article's aim, however, to explore the emotions following the 1974 intervention. Our goal is to discuss Cyprus as another hot space for EU-Turkey relations following the accession in 2004. Some scholars speculated that through accession, the island's destiny was finally determined as European, that Turkey's fears have come true. As Müftüler-Baç and Güney argued, the EU installment to the island was not brand-new but came step-by-step.[50] It started when Greece and Turkey, in 1961 and 1963, respectively, became associate members of the European Communities. The air changed when the United Kingdom - the colonial heir of the island - and Greece became members in 1973 and 1981, respectively. Another moment of truth was the Helsinki Summit, in which the EU decided that Cyprus territory being undefined and unsettled is not an obstacle for membership.

While Turkey was in line for years waiting to become an EU member, a "problem" space with a blurry identity skipped the line. What is vital is that the RoC's accession not only offended Turkey but also jeopardized its membership process. Following the EU's decision to suspend the negotiations on eight chapters in 2006, in 2009, the RoC also decided to unilaterally block six chapters and set "normalization" as the precondition for Turkey's progress on the accession.[51] Therefore, Cyprus was a hot space due to the dead-ends and disappointments it caused in EU-Turkey relations. The EU, which earnestly tries to keep its territories out of conflict, embraced this territorial dispute and failed to resolve it.[52]

Figure 2. Hot Place Criteria for the EU-Turkey Relations After the Cold War

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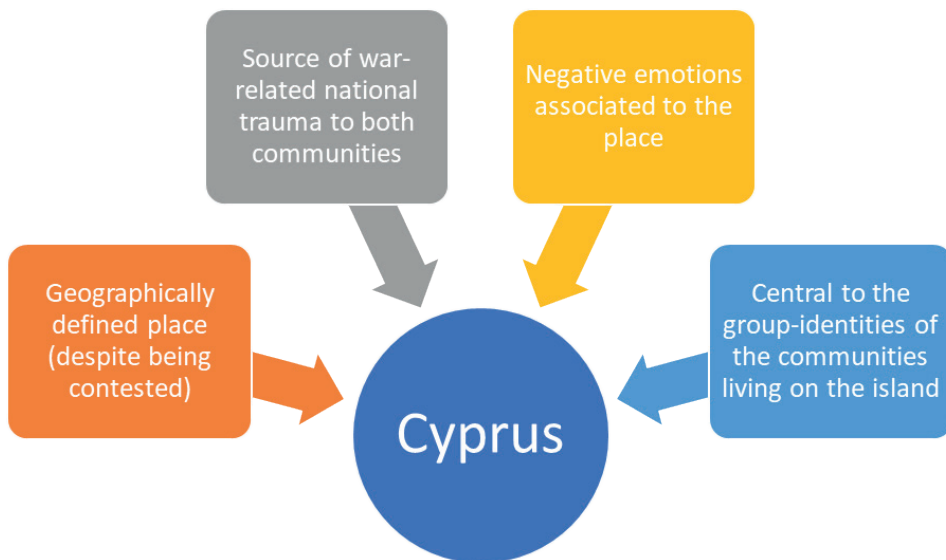
50 Meltem Müftüler-Baç and Aylin Güney, "The European Union and the Cyprus Problem 1961–2003",. *Middle Eastern Studies*. Vol. 41, No 2, 2005, p. 281-293.

51 Directorate for EU Affairs, "Current Situation", 29 March 2021, https://www.ab.gov.tr/current-situation_65_en.html (Accessed 29 March 2022).

52 Thomas Diez, "Turkey, the European Union and Security Complexes Revisited", *Mediterranean Politics,* Vol. 10, No 2, 2005, 168; Thomas Diez, "Expanding Europe: The Ethics of EU-Turkey Relations", *Ethics & International Affairs,* Vol. 21, No 4, 2007, p. 421.

To test the criteria of hot places, first, Cyprus is a geographically defined place. The partition of the island is politically contested and the future of the current settlement is unclear. No country in the world, except Turkey, recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Nevertheless, we argue that Cyprus is an identifiable space. Second, historically the island has witnessed years-long strife and finally a violent confrontation between the communities which affected their psychological attributions to the island. Third, each community radiates negative emotions such as anxiety and fear towards the other side. Finally, for both communities, the trauma is at the heart of Cypriot identities. To this day, most cannot simply be Cypriot: they are either Greek or Turkish Cypriot. As Volkan emphasizes, the Turkish Cypriots' large-group identity is still haunted by "living in enclaves."[53] Meanwhile, the Turkish intervention of 1974, which the Greek Cypriot side sees as an "invasion" of their territory, connotes a massive trauma in the Greek Cypriot being. Both communities reproduce the stories of 1974 to consolidate their identity and stitch once again the trauma to their core instead of trying to heal it. Perhaps, the EU accession can be construed as their closest moment to create a shared identity as Cypriot. However, as Volkan envisioned: "To attempt a common identity for Cypriot Greeks and Cypriot Turks is to chase an illusion."[54]

2011-2021: Peak of Migration Politics in the EU-Turkey Relations

The period between 2011 and 2021 is when the relations experienced a severe downturn in terms of Turkey's accession negotiations. In addition, the growing regional challenges and the migration issue created a severe challenge for both actors. The biggest challenge started in 2011 with the Syrian Civil War. Consequently, rapidly rising migration flows into Turkey and Europe led both actors to develop a pragmatic relationship with the 2013 visa liberalization talks and 2016 Readmission Agreement. Such a strategic partnership and increasing pragmatism in the relations changed how both actors formulated their emotional geographies and understanding of spatiality.

As Eder argues, the neoliberal transformation in Turkey affected the high rural poverty and unemployment rates.[55] Consequently, as the massive privatization policies commodified the agricultural and urban lands, irregular migrants in Turkey started to face severe challenges as they were added to the growing urban and rural poor populations. In addition, the whole of Turkey and the gateways to Europe turned into geographies loaded with distinct emotions.

As the EU increases its walls against the migrants and externalizes its migration policies by letting Turkey become a transit and host hub for them, the living conditions for migrants in Turkey worsened. In terms of geopolitics and spatiality, Karadağ, based on semi-structured interviews with border practitioners, argues that the Turkish practitioners project Turkey as superior to Europe in terms of border management and the migration issue.[56] For migrants, as Svašek argues, the issue

53 Vamık Volkan, *Kıbrıs Savaş ve Uyum Çatışan İki Etnik Grubun Psikanalitik Tarihi,*. İstanbul, Everest Yayınları, 2008, p. 106.

54 Ibid.

55 Mine Eder, "Turkey's Neoliberal Transformation and Changing Migration Regime: the Case of Female Migrant Workers", S. Castles, D. Ozkul, and M. A. Cubas (eds.), *Social Transformation and Migration*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, p. 133-150.

56 Sibel Karadağ, "Extraterritoriality of European Borders to Turkey: an Implementation Perspective of Counteractive Strategies", *Comparative Migration Studies*, Vol. 7, No 1, 2019, p. 1-16.

of belonging started to emerge where daily violent incidents happened between migrants and local communities as xenophobic and exclusionary attitudes increased.[57] [58]

In addition to feelings of inferiority and superiority, such xenophobic and exclusionary attitudes are also related to emotions. As a 2020 survey on Turkey's political attitudes shows, the level of approval of Syrian migrants in Turkey is only 8.2%, whereas 55.2% of the population show discontent towards them, with a previous peak in 2018 at 66.6%.[59] The primary cause of this discontent is argued to be Syrians' cheap labor, which allegedly increased the unemployment rate. Consequently, migrants tend to experience emotions of not belonging to any spatial geographies, but emotional geographies where both actors in Turkey and the EU reiterate such imaginations. Another study conducted by Karakulak also verifies these findings.[60] Based on a cross-sectional survey in 11 countries, 87% of the 361 young adults living in Turkey have negative or rather negative feelings towards the refugees. Such a finding also does not vary across socio-economic factors or the degree of interaction with the refugees.

Countering globalization, the massive migration waves triggered the rise of far-right populism in Europe and the very idea of "Fortress Europe",[61] which envisioned raising borders against migrants.[62] To contain and stop migrants from coming to Europe, the EU and Turkey signed the Readmission Deal in 2016, extending the EU's borders to Syria and Iraq. Such a spatial change in the EU's imagined and hard borders is a new phenomenon also for both actors. Moreover, from an emotional perspective, the Readmission Deal enabled especially far-right populists in the EU to perceive Turkey as the "gatekeeper",[63] an actor that is ideationally and geographically distant.

Added to its ambiguous and turbulent accession path to the EU, Turkey thus became the EU's migration hub, considerably easing the level of anxiety in the minds of EU politicians and individuals having anti-migrant sentiments.[64] Relating this to Ahmed's definition of "cultural

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57   Svašek, "On the move: Emotions and Human Mobility".

58   Emre Erdoğan and Pınar Uyan Semerci, "Scapegoats to Be "Served Hot": Local Perceptions About Syrians in a Fragile Context", 12 April 2020, https://cesran.org/scapegoats-to-be-served-hot-local-perceptions-about-syrians-in-a-fragile-context.html (Accessed 13 June 2022).

59   Mustafa Aydın et al., *Kantitatif Araştırma Raporu: Türkiye Siyasal Sosyal Eğilimler Araştırması 2020*, İstanbul, Kadir Has Üniversitesi Türkiye Çalışmaları Grubu, Akademetre ve Global Akademi, 2021.

60   Arzu Karakulak, "The Pandemic-Prejudice Link: Young Adults' Feelings About Refugees Amid the Covid-19 Pandemic", *IPC-Mercator Analysis*, 2022.

61   Brown, "When Eurosceptics Become Europhiles: Far-right Opposition to Turkish Involvement in the European Union"; Anna Casaglia and Rafella Colletti, "Territorializing Threats in Nationalist Populist Narratives: an Italian Perspective on the Migration and Covid-19 Crises", *Space and Polity*, 2021, p. 1; Jiska Engelbert et al., "Everyday Practices and the (Un)making of 'Fortress Europe': Introduction to the Special Issue", *European Journal of Cultural Studies,* Vol. 22, No 2, 2019, p. 133-143.

62   Nazif Mandacı and Gökay Özerim. "Converting International Migrations into Issue of Security: Radical Right Parties in Europe and Securitization of Migration", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 10, No 39, 2013, p. 105-130.

63   Aslı Selin Okyay and Jonathan Zaragoza-Cristiani, "The Leverage of the Gatekeeper: Power and Interdependence in the Migration Nexus between the EU and Turkey", *The International Spectator,* Vol. 51, No 4, 2016, p. 51-66.

64   Mehmet Gökay Özerim and Selcen Öner. "What Makes Turkey and Turkish Immigrants a Cultural Polarization Issue in Europe? Evidence from European Right-Wing Populist Politics", O.C. Norocel, A. Hellström, and M. B. Jørgensen, (eds.), *Nostalgia and Hope: Intersections between Politics of Culture, Welfare, and Migration in Europe*, Cham, Springer Nature, 2020, p. 67-84.

politics of emotion",[65] the relationship between far-right sentiments is directed at triggering people's emotions to create distant emotional geographies between the EU and Turkey.

In sum, EU-Turkey relations progressed differently between 2011 and 2021 in terms of how spatiality and emotional geographies are created and imagined. While its accession negotiations show no progress, Turkey established a pragmatic communication channel with the EU to control the waves of migration. Such pragmatism re-established and continued Turkey's exclusion from the EU in terms of creating a new spatial dimension as a gatekeeper. Emotionally, the rise of far-right populist sentiments both in the EU and Turkey contributed to the creation of an inferior-superior duality.[66] Such a duality has been occurring both at leadership and societal levels. Thus, carrying elements from the cases of Kreuzberg and Cyprus, Syria became a hot place that created discomfort for the anti-migrant communities in Turkey and Europe. In addition, the case of Syria triggered positive and negative emotions and reflected the trauma of Syrian people.

Figure 3. Hot Place Criteria for the EU-Turkey Relations After the Cold War
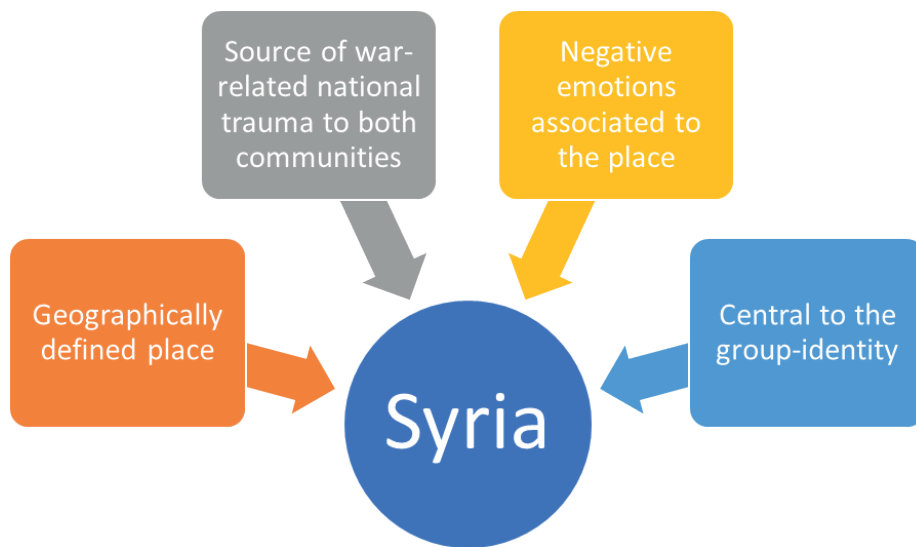
We argue that the Syrian case checks all boxes that identify it as a hot place. Despite its territorial integrity having perished, Syria is a country that is defined and located in the Middle East. There has been an ongoing war since 2011 and the citizens of the country are deeply affected by it. Not solely the Syrians but also neighbors just like Turkey and the EU are influenced by the influx of migration the war has caused. As Atasoy and Demir argued, individual attitudes towards refugees are fraught with emotions with a negative valence.[67]

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65 Sara Ahmed, *The cultural politics of emotion.*

66 Catherine Macmillan, "Competing and Co-Existing Constructions of Europe as Turkey's 'Other (s)' in Turkish Political Discourse", *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, Vol. 21, No 1, 2013, p.104-121; Senem Aydın-Düzgit and Bahar Rumelili, "Constructivist Approaches to EU–Turkey Relations", Wulf Reiners and Ebru Turhan (eds.), *EU-Turkey Relations,* Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, p. 63-82.

67 Ahmet Atasoy and Hasan Demir, "Suriyeli Sığınmacıların Kırıkhan'a (Hatay) Etkileri", *Journal of International Social Research*, Vol. 8, No 38, 2015, p. 457-470.

Furthermore, emotions that are normally found to be contrasting or rarely matched together, such as guilt and ambition, affection and disaffection, fear and hope, are all part of refugee life. Both for the host countries and the refugees, Syria is a space that is the symbol of war and trauma. While restrictive policies in host countries may force them to return, Syrian refugees do not perceive their home country as safe.[68]

Last element is the centrality of the trauma to group identity. As much as war-related trauma is part of a group identity, being a refugee also constitutes a distinct place in one's identity. The displaced people do not enter the destination country as tabula rasa, but they arrive as part of a 'mass' the identity, beliefs and attitudes of which have already been constructed, generalized and stereotyped in the public's mind. Hence, they are "pre-emptive suspects" or in Hillyard's words "suspect communities."[69] From an overall point of view, Syria is a hot place but unlike other cases, the place is empty. Whereas Kreuzberg and Cyprus are home to their communities, the Syrian community is constantly on the move and spread all over the world. So perhaps when all cases are considered, we can identify Syria as the "hottest" of all places since the trauma is so fresh and it is reproduced to this day.

Conclusion and Further Research

In this article, we have located spatial imaginations studies under the microscope of emotions. Taking the EU-Turkey relations as a case study, this study offers three different periodizations and the concept of hot places into studying spatiality and emotions. We have attributed certain spaces in the history of EU-Turkey relations and demonstrated how these physical spaces became cognitively stimulating and emotional geographies for each party.

For the first period from 1959 to 1989, the spatial and emotional relations are primarily defined between Germany and Turkey, particularly in Kreuzberg, Berlin. Consequently, when considered in terms of a hot place, Kreuzberg became a place that resembled the discomfort of both Turkish and German communities as they struggled to integrate. For the second period, we pinpoint Cyprus as the second hot place in which the EU became a part of this issue shortly after the Helsinki Summit. Mixed with nationalism and history, Cyprus became an issue standing in the way of Turkey and its EU membership and remains unsolved. As a result, Cyprus is a hot place that symbolizes discomfort, negative emotions, and national trauma both for the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. For the final period, this study observed the Syrian civil war and its spatial and emotional repercussions for EU-Turkey relations between 2011 and 2021. Not only do the far-right populist and nationalistic sentiments contain exclusionary and negative emotions towards the migrants, but the migrants also face dilemmas of belonging between the two emotional geographies. Consequently, Syria represents a hot place that carries discomfort for communities, positive and negative emotions, and the trauma of Syrian people.

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68 Maha Yahya et al., *"Unheard voices: What Syrian Refugees Need to Return Home"*, Washington, DC, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2018.

69 Paddy Hillyard, "Suspect Community: People's Experience of the Prevention of Terrorism Acts in Britain (1995)", *Capital & Class*, Vol. 19, No 1, 1993, p. 173.

This paper's contribution to the literature lies in its extension of the concept of hot places. Hot places in Volkan's work are mentioned only in a confined manner.[70] In this paper, we located hot places in the larger literature of emotional geographies. Additionally, we extended the spatial limitations as well as identified the criteria to diagnose a geography as a hot place. Further research should develop the concept with possibly considering more of its dimensions. Moreover, this study was limited in sticking to the existing literature in its cases. Hence, further research should bring more diverse cases to the fore and analyze them in-depth.

From an overall point of view, we would like to underline that border politics married with emotional attachment can constitute a dangerous weapon. Political parties contribute to the surfacing of securitization of borders and spaces through the politics of fear and anxiety.[71] Because spaces are as vulnerable to manipulation as peoples, we urge the detachment of negative collective emotions from geographies. Especially in the cases of displacement and human suffering, all possible tools should focus on facilitating integration.

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70 Volkan, *Divandaki Düşmanlar: Bir Türk Psikanalistin Serüveni.*

71 Stuart Hall et al., *"Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order."* Macmillan International Higher Education, 2013.

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