KADIR HAS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

ONTOLOGICAL INSECURITY ON THE EUROPEAN UNION'S PERIPHERY: THE CASE OF GREECE-TURKEY BILATERAL RELATIONS

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY THESIS

ISTANBUL, JUNE, 2022

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A thesis submitted to
the School of Graduate Studies of Kadir Has University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in
International Relations

Istanbul, June, 2022

APPROVAL

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DECLARATION ON RESEARCH ETHICS AND PUBLISHING METHODS

I, NASUH SOFUOĞLU; hereby declare

- that this Ph.D. Thesis that I have submitted is entirely my own work and I have cited and referenced all material and results that are not my own in accordance with the rules;
- that this Ph.D. Thesis does not contain any material from any research submitted or accepted to obtain a degree or diploma at another educational institution;
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In addition, I acknowledge that any claim of irregularity that may arise in relation to this work will result in a disciplinary action in accordance with the university legislation.

Nasuh SOFUOĞLU

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Date (24/06/2022)

To My Dearest Family...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to several academics and colleagues/friends whose feedback and support have been invaluable throughout this academic endeavour.

I remain profoundly indebted to my supervisor, Prof. Dimitrios TRIANTAPHYLLOU, for believing in me and for his unrelenting support throughout the course of the research. He has always motivated and heartened me with his focused and to-the-point remarks, excellent pep-talk skills and positive attitude to me and my academic work.

I am also greatly indebted to my thesis monitoring committee members, Prof. Mustafa AYDIN for ensuring that I keep my feet on the ground together with his concise and fundamental feedback and Prof. Bahar RUMELİLİ who has immensely inspired me with her work ethic, manner of work and way of thinking. Additionally, as she is among those academics whose late scholarly contributions have influenced my theoretical and philosophical commitments, I have learned a great deal from her academic works during this academic quest.

I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to several colleagues and friends, namely Assoc. Prof. Hüsrev TABAK, who introduced ontological security to me, Asst. Prof. Özgül BİLİCİ, who helped me with technical and academic details more than once, Res. Asst. Dr. İsmail ALTAY, who drew my attention to several details and publications I missed and Lec. Gökhan SIRMALI, Res. Asst. Dr. Muharrem DOĞAN and Res. Asst. İlker Yasin DURMAZ for discussing the outline of this doctoral thesis with me in the early stages.

ONTOLOGICAL INSECURITY ON THE EUROPEAN UNION'S PERIPHERY: THE CASE OF GREECE-TURKEY BILATERAL RELATIONS

ABSTRACT

Greece-Turkey bilateral relations have been complex and tense for centuries. Accordingly, Greek and Turkish nationalisms have evolved interrelated to and in contrast with one another. Since Greece and Turkey are located on Europe's periphery, the European Union has been the persistent and pivotal third party in their bilateral relations. This thesis argues that the strained bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey are not the result of material disputes but the repercussion of the ontological insecurity in Ankara and Athens. Accordingly, the thesis delves into the historical background, i.e., the contradictory accounts of Greece and Turkey's common and connected history and the European Union's non-normative involvement in Greece-Turkey bilateral relations. Greece and Turkey have developed a biased narrative of their "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas" by forgetting and remembering practices, whilst the EU cannot serve as an ontological security provider and has transformed into an ontological insecurity trigger. As the EU fails to serve as a moral compass for both sides, the conflicting narratives lead to ontological insecurity in Greece and Turkey. The thesis analyses their emotionalised bilateral relations in the context of Ontological Security Studies. In order to put forward and illustrate the thesis' arguments, data on the Hagia Sophia debate and Turkey's EU bid between 1999 and 2020 have been collected and analysed.

Keywords: Greece-Turkey Bilateral Relations, the European Union, Ontological Security Studies, Turkey's EU Bid, the Hagia Sophia Debate.

AVRUPA BİRLİĞİ'NİN ÇEVRESİNDE ONTOLOJİK GÜVENSİZLİK:
YUNANİSTAN-TÜRKİYE İKİLİ İLİŞKİLERİ VAKASI

ÖZET

Türkiye-Yunanistan ikili ilişkileri yüzyıllar boyunca çetin ve gergin olagelmiştir. Buna uygun bir şekilde, Türk ve Yunan milliyetçilikleri birbirleriyle karşılıklı ilişki ve çatışma içerisinde gelişmişlerdir. Türkiye ve Yunanistan'ın Avrupa'nın çevresinde yer alması sebebiyle, Avrupa Birliği Türkiye-Yunanistan ikili ilişkilerinde devamlılık gösteren ve merkezi bir rol alan üçüncü parti olmuştur. Bu tez gergin Türkiye-Yunanistan ikili ilişkilerinin materyal tartışmaların değil Ankara ve Atina arasındaki ontolojik güvensizliğin bir sonucu olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Bu bağlamda, bu tez ikili ilişkilerin tarihsel arka planına – Türkiye ve Yunanistan'da ortak/birbiriyle ilişkili geçmiş olayların çelişkili anlatıları – ve Avrupa Birliği (AB)'nin Türkiye-Yunanistan ikili ilişkilerine normatif olmayan dahiliyetine odaklanmaktadır. AB ontolojik güvenlik sağlayıcısı olma kapasitesini kullanamayıp ontolojik güvensizlik tetikleyicisine dönüşürken Türkiye ve Yunanistan unutma ve hatırlama pratiklerine dayanarak "seçilmiş zaferlerin" ve "seçilmiş travmaların" önyargılı anlatılarını geliştirmiştir. AB iki taraf içinde ahlaki bir pusula olma kapasitesine ulaşamazken çelişkili anlatılar Türkiye ve Yunanistan'da ontolojik güvensizliğe sebep olmuştur. Dolayısıyla, bu tez Ontolojik Güvenlik Çalışmaları bağlamında duygusallaştırılmış ikili ilişkileri analiz etmektedir. Tezin argümanlarını öne sürmek ve örneklerle açıklamak için 1999-2020 tarihleri arasındaki Ayasofya tartışması ve Türkiye'nin AB üyelik süreci mercek altına alınmış ve analiz edilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yunanistan-Türkiye İkili İlişkileri, Avrupa Birliği, Ontolojik Güvenlik Çalışmaları, Türkiye'nin AB Üyelik Süreci, Ayasofya Tartışması.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AGD	Anadolu Gençlik Derneği/Anatolian Youth Association
AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi
BBP	Büyük Birlik Partisi/Great Unity Party
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi/Republican People's Party
CR	Critical Realism
CSU	Christian Social Union
DP	Democrat Party
EaP	Eastern Partnership
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ENP	Eastern Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
FPÖ	Freedom Party
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	International Relations
LAOS	Popular Orthodox Rally or People's Orthodox Alarm
MEP	Member of European Parliament
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi/Nationalist Movement Party
MP	Member of Parliament
MTTB	Milli Türk Talebe Birliği/National Turkish Students Union
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
ND	New Democracy Party
OSS	Ontological Security Studies
PASOK	Panhellenic Socialist Movement
PKK	Partîya Karkerên Kurdistanê
RoC	Republic of Cyprus
SP	Saadet Partisi/Felicity Party
Syriza	The Coalition of the Radical Left and Progressive Alliance
THT	Turkish History Thesis
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WWII	World War II

1. INTRODUCTION

Greece-Turkey bilateral relations have been strained for centuries. The nationalisms in Greece and Turkey have developed interrelated to and in contradiction to each other. As both states are located on Europe's periphery, Europe has been the third party exerting a continual and decisive influence on Ankara and Athens. I argue that the security-related issues are overly contested; thereby, the material disputes between Greece and Turkey conceal the root cause of the rivalry. The crux of the issue lies in emotions. The thesis argues that a multi-layered reading of ontological insecurity in Greece and Turkey accounts for the hostility between Greece and Turkey. Both sides imagine a past, remembering "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas", in terms coined by Volkan and Itzkowitz (1994), and forgetting the rest. Both sides construct a prejudiced narrative by both appropriating and at the same time disregarding their distressing and deplorable memories. Since Europe has been an integral third party to the controversies between Greeks and Turks from the outset, its involvement has been decisive in the trajectory of Greece-Turkey relations. Accordingly, I consider the EU the institutionalised contemporary embodiment of Europe. The EU argues that it is a normative political entity with the capacity to influence the other agencies in international politics, especially on its periphery. As the European Union (EU) fails to implement normative policies and make a moral impact on both sides, these conflicting narratives result in the anxious Self as Being suffering from ontological insecurity. In order to support my line of argument, I analyse the Hagia Sophia debate from 1999 until the reconversion in 2020, and Turkey's EU bid in the same period in parallel with each other.

The introduction comprises three subheadings, namely 'research aims and contributions', 'methodology' and 'chapter outlines'. Under these subheadings, I aim to clarify why the thesis has been written, how it contributes to the Ontological Security Studies (OSS) literature, why Critical Realism (CR) provides a solid meta-theory for OSS and the case for why the nationalisms in Greece and Turkey are antithetical to the other and why Greece-Turkey bilateral relations on the EU's periphery are deeply emotionalised.

1.1.Research Aims and Contributions

The thesis aims to make sense of the malevolence in Greece-Turkey bilateral relations, inter alia. There is a range of extant literature shedding light on the determinants of the bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey. The two main categories spawning a number of sub-categories are (1) the tangible factors such as conflicts and third parties and (2) the abstract concepts, e.g., identity and discourse. The undermentioned academic papers may involve tangible factors and abstract concepts simultaneously. They fall into specific categories in line with the thesis' main aims and their conclusions.

The former category comprises a variety of subcategories such as great power politics (Evangelista 1991), the EU factor (Aybet 2009), the intra-alliance context (Haass and Mcdonald 1988), the regional rivalry and alliance-building (Roussos, 2017), the internal politics and material disputes (Athanassopoulou 1997; Türkeş-Kılıç 2019; Aydın 2003) and foreign policy (Ifantis 2004; 2005). In line with these concepts, a branch of the literature analyses the bilateral relations through the prism of external factors' and third parties' impact on the bilateral relations. Kassimeris (2010) draws attention to the US influence on Greece's policies towards Turkey. Similarly, Bayar and Kotelis (2014) advance that it was not norms and institutions that averted the Imia/Kardak crisis but the US coercing both sides into dialogue and a peaceful resolution of disagreements. Therefore, it was an external factor, not inner willingness, which led to the pacific solution to the dispute. Besides, Hickok (1998) analyses the Imia/Kardak crisis as a conflict between two North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) allies. The coalition failed to mediate between the two or serve as an avenue for a peaceful resolution. Both states failed to take advantage of their NATO membership as common grounds for a peaceful resolution (Oğuzlu 2004a). The thesis argues that the EU has been pivotal to bilateral relations in the context of OSS. As political entities on the EU's periphery, Ankara and Athens are susceptible to the EU's clout.

Following a similar line of argument, a subsection of the literature comprises that concerning the EU playing an integral role in bilateral relations as an instrument for collective identity-building and establishing a motive to solve their disagreements

(Oğuzlu 2004c; 2004b; Ifantis 2009). The EU serves as a secure means for improving bilateral relations (Axt 2005). It also enables a socialisation process between Ankara and Athens (Tsakonas 2010). However, the EU's quest for a new definition of Europe has caused distressing symptoms in EU-Turkey and Greece-Turkey relations (Kotzias 2009). Moreover, Greece and Turkey have both noticed that they are in a liminal position in regard to the EU (Rumelili 2003). The inconsistency of EU policies obstructs its positive role in bilateral relations (Rumelili 2007a).

The EU could provide a secure environment for a peaceful resolution through its normative power and socialisation (Tsakonas 2009). However, Greece's member status and Turkey's non-member status downgrade the EU's positive and normative influence (Önis 2001). Kazamias (2006) argues that the EU's entry onto the stage has also transformed Greece into becoming a 'door-keeper' in the EU's relations with Turkey, which turns the EU into a destabilising factor in turn. Indeed, in the matter of Europeanisation,[1] socialisation has not led to pacific relations between Greece and Turkey (Alioğlu-Çakmak 2019). Correspondingly, the thesis advances the claim that the false promise of EU normativity granting non-European Turkey and less-European Greece, albeit enjoying relative ontological security, ontologically insecure status has been inimical to their bilateral relations.

A large portion of the academic research pays attention to both sides' internal politics and material disputes, to reflect on the characteristics of malevolence in their bilateral relations. Sert and Travlos (2018) argue that internal factors are of paramount importance in the deterioration of bilateral relations. Similarly, "issue management" is believed to dominate bilateral relations (Couloumbis and Kentikelenis 2007) since the main conflicts, namely the Aegean dispute and the Cyprus dispute, are far from being resolved (Siegl 2002; Oğuzlu 2003). The Aegean dispute is considered the primary fault line between the two (Heraclides 2019; Güner 2004; Ayman 2004). Examining the brief rapprochement following two disasters between Ankara and Athens, Ker-Lindsay (2000) concludes that a thaw would only result from a diplomatic settlement between Greece and Ankara rather than events that would result in détente and a third party leading the way. This thesis

[1] Adoption of European features by a non-European/less European subject.

considers the material disputes symptoms of more profound and acuter contentions, e.g., the narrativisation of "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas", as well as abstract concepts, such as existential threat, biographical continuity, sense of belonging, anxiety and ontological security.

The latter sub-section of the literature mentioned above takes into account abstract concepts such as discourse and Self/Other interaction as factors at the bottom of the hostility between Greece and Turkey. There is a broad spectrum of concepts from "historical inaccuracies" (Heraclides 2004; 2010) to national identity (Grigoriadis 2011) to "distrust" and "prejudice" (Aydın 2004) to the "image of the Other" (Millas 2004; 2009; 2019) and narrative (Heraclides 2012).

The thesis situates the bilateral relations in an emotion-oriented context within the confines of OSS. It follows a similar line to the latter category, drawing attention to the disillusionment of Greece and Turkey with the "role of international and regional organisations" leading to the "assertion of nationalist policies which simply reproduced traditional feelings of enmity in both Greece and Turkey" (Tzimitras 2009). Greek and Turkish nationalisms narrativise the same story through contradictory interpretations (Sofos and Özkırımlı 2009). In line with Heraclides (2019b), this thesis argues that material disputes are the symptoms of profound abstract determinants emanating from the "imagined history of the Greeks and the Turks" and the national narrative/intersubjective consciousness "slighting and demonising the other side". Following Onar (2009), the thesis adds the EU to the equation, as Europe is the most instrumental and continual third party with the capacity for positive engagement in bilateral relations.

I contend that material disputes are symptoms which overshadow the root cause of the Greece-Turkey conflict. The nucleus of the Greece-Turkey dispute is ontological insecurity. Greece and Turkey narrativise a past by re-contextualising and re-configuring their "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas". They forget the unwelcome and disgraceful memories and appropriate the applicable ones, thereby constructing a partial narrative.

Ankara and Athens narrativise the same past in a contradictory manner. Thus, they pave the way to developing an anxious Self as Being.

On the one hand, they shape each other as an existential threat so as to justify the advent of modern Greece and Turkey as nation-states - since the former initiated the dissolution process of the Ottoman state and the latter put an end to it - and render Self as Being ontologically secure. On the other hand, they are ontologically insecure because their narrativisation of the same past contradicts each other. In need of recognition of the existential threat, Greece and Turkey have transformed this threat into an object of fear. Therefore, they alleviate their ontological insecurities in the domain of the real by diverting attention from the contradictory narratives of the same past events and directing attention to the material disputes in the domain of the empirical.

I do not aim to shed light on whether the EU has been prejudiced against Turkey or not regarding Turkey's EU bid and Greece-Turkey bilateral relations. I divide Europeanisation into two categories, i.e., value-based Europeanisation and culture-oriented Europeanisation. The value-based Europeanisation comprises institutionalised Europeanisation, namely EU-isation. An EU candidate state may achieve value-based Europeanisation via adopting European values, norms, and the EU acquis. The culture-oriented Europeanisation demands emotional attachment. Accordingly, the candidate state ought to have a historical and cultural association with Europe. I dub the debacle of normative power in the Europe concept 'Europe-lessness'. I contend that the upsurge in the culture-oriented definition of Europe by the EU member states has triggered the downfall of EU normativity. The thesis concludes that, as a third party, the EU is capable of being an ontological security provider and ontological insecurity trigger simultaneously. The analyses of Turkey's EU bid from 1999 to 2020, Greece-Turkey bilateral relations between 1999 and 2020 and the early stages of nationalism in Greece and Turkey reveal that Europe transformed into an ontological insecurity trigger on the periphery. The vehement and omnipresent culture-oriented rhetoric in Europe has alienated Turks and provoked ontological insecurity in Turkey.

Within the boundaries of OSS, the research has attempted to answer the following main research questions – "why are Greece-Turkey bilateral relations strained?" and "why are amicable bilateral relations difficult to achieve?" – and subsidiary questions – 'is the perception of physical threat a false reflection of the ontological insecurity in Ankara and Athens?", "are the material disputes a symptom rather than the root cause?", and "are the main reasons for unstable bilateral relations related to ontological (in)security?"

1.2.Methodological Commitments

Methodology is a set of rules made use of in quest of answering a number of queries. Even though it should not be reduced to ontology and epistemology, methodology is closely interwoven with them. Ontology refers to the philosophy of being and is concerned with what exists in the world and the nature of reality. Epistemology is related to how to acquire knowledge and the study of knowledge. In essence, methodology may be regarded as a group of premises, principles and procedures. It enables researchers to conduct scientific analysis based on ontological and epistemological assumptions. Accordingly, social science research is required to be hinged on methodology. Hence, I form the methodological foundations of this thesis following CR principles.

CR is a philosophy of science initiated by Roy Bhaskar in the 1970s. Bhaskar has published several books, to lay the foundations for CR. CR's most fundamental principle is that ontology is a far cry from epistemology. There is an actuality independent of human perception, not based on empirical evidence (Yalvaç 2010). Bhaskar (2008) delineates the disparity in terms of "transitive objects of knowledge" and "intransitive objects of knowledge." The idea of "transitive objects of knowledge" refers to the dimension where the production of knowledge happens, whilst "intransitive objects of knowledge" implies "the real thing this knowledge is about, the underlying social structures and generative mechanisms that make the apparent phenomenon possible" (Yalvaç 2014). The accumulation of empirical knowledge is not equal to amassing scientific results, i.e., there are other layers to discern. CR's in-depth understanding of ontology is stratified and divided into three dimensions. These three dimensions are the real, the actual and the empirical. The real consists of the mechanisms generating actual

events, the actual comprises the events mentioned above, and the empirical is composed of experiences (Sayer 2000).

There is a link between these three domains elucidated by "emergence". Elder-Vass (2005) has defined "emergence" as "when a whole has properties or powers that are not possessed by its parts." In other words, the interaction between two or more features begets new occurrences possessing traits alien or exogenous to the foundational components (Archer et al. 1998). Basically, "experiences" are evidence of the "events", and "mechanisms" bring about the "events". In other words, the upper stratum is the evidence of the lower stratum, and the lower stratum has a particular impact on the upper stratum. Nevertheless, the correlation between strata is not linear. Once an event or an experience happens, it becomes something else, constructed by mechanisms, albeit consisting of more than mechanisms per se. Thus, experiences have an impact on events or events affect mechanisms.

Within the confines of methodological commitments, I consider material disputes "evidence" in the domain of the empirical in accordance with the table 1.1. They are outcomes/repercussions of ontological insecurity categorised as "mechanisms" in the domain of the real. Since "events" and "experiences" transform into entities of their own once they occur, they also have an impact on the continuity of "mechanisms". Continuity matters because the units crave certainty, irrelevant of its essence's character, i.e., amity or enmity. CR provides a methodological avenue for analysing Greece-Turkey bilateral relations on the EU's periphery in the context of OSS.

Domains	Examples	
Empirical - observable experiences	Annan Plan, Cyprus dispute, maritime dispute etc.	experiences
Actual - actual events which have been generated by mechanisms	speeches of elites and politicians, decision-making etc.	events

Real - mechanisms that have generated the actual events	ontological insecurities, anxiety, sense of belonging, biographical continuity etc.	mechanisms

Table 1.1: The stratified reality of Critical Realism

I underline the fact that Greece and Turkey are ontologically insecure due to their contradictory narratives of the same past events and the lack of EU normativity on the periphery. I argue that analysis of the aforementioned issue ought to be made in the domain of the real where "mechanisms" lead to (1) neurosis disrupting decision-making, e.g., "actual events", in the domain of the actual and (2) result in "experiences" in the domain of the empirical. The emotionalised Self as Being implements incomprehensible and controversial policies, thereby triggering material disputes such as the Eastern Mediterranean dispute.

Data on Turkey's EU bid and the Hagia Sophia debate from 1999 to 2020 have been collected to advance and support the arguments of this thesis. The 1999-2020 period is divided into four categories, symbolising milestones in Turkey's EU bid and the Hagia Sophia debate. The news indicates a particular pattern of behaviour, the intensity of emotions and the course of events in each period. The news and information are collected from a variety of sources, namely the online editions of a number of newspapers, i.e., *Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, the BBC, *AA* (Anadolu Ajansi), *eKathimerini.com*, *DW*, The National Herald, *Takvim*, *Karar*, EUObserver, Reuters, the Conversation and Euronews; a Turkish magazine *Fedai*; the online archive of Cumhuriyet; the websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Republic of Türkiye; and reports on Turkey published by the Commission of the European Communities and from EU Parliament discussions and resolutions.

In addition to the aforementioned data collection methods, narrative analysis is preferred as the data analysis method. There is an assumption that qualitative researchers arrive at a consensus where information is shared among people through stories and storytelling (Marvasti 2004). Therefore, what matters most in qualitative analysis is comprehending the content and context of such stories. Narrative analysis is an attempt to fathom various

genres forming a story. There are multifarious units with their own narratives, such as states, nations, institutions and individuals. Narrative analysis is not interested in whether specific stories are true or not. A unit resorts to narrative to make sense of the world and its social interactions (Shenhav 2006). The most vital contribution of narrative analysis to this thesis is that it sheds light on what the story is. Thus, the narrative is a valuable means to analyse the ontological (in)security of Self as Being because Self as Being comprises 'biography' and 'continuity'. It probes into the drivers of particular stories and under which conditions these stories are conveyed. Such narratives indicate an agent's comprehension of its own being, which is compatible with OSS assumptions. Also, narrative analysis examines how diverse pieces link with each other and bring a meaningful whole into existence. There are many examples of the implementation of narrative analysis in international relations (Tekin and Meissner 2022; Cornfield 2010).

Additionally, Jelena Subotic's (2016) article titled "Narrative, Ontological Security, and Foreign Policy Change" deserves special attention, due to its understanding of narrative as a means of safeguarding and maintaining "state ontological security through offering autobiographical continuity, a sense of routine, familiarity and calm." The paper's argument is exemplary in the use of narrative analysis as a means to discern state, ontological security and foreign policy. Indeed, narrative analysis provides fertile ground for perceiving the construction of the continual biography of the unit. The next section considers the chapter outlines and draws a map of the geography of the thesis.

1.3.Chapter Outlines

The thesis consists of four chapters apart from the introduction and conclusion, namely the *Theoretical Framework* (chapter one), *Nationalisms in Greece and Turkey* (chapter two), *Greece-Turkey Bilateral Relations on the EU's Periphery* (chapter three) and *Hagia Sophia as an 'Ontic Space' for Greeks and Turks alike* (chapter four).

1.3.1. Theoretical framework

OSS is a promising avenue for international relations (IR) theory, so as to reconceptualise international affairs regarding the anxiety/fear correlation. Reading Leviathan by Hobbes with a critical eye, Rumelili (2020) posits that anxiety is not a "competing factor" but a "constitutive condition." In other words, anxiety is a "constitutive condition" that leads to fear. It is fear that causes a deterioration in interstate relations and precipitates conflict. In tandem with the "positive security" concept (Roe, 2008), Rumelili (2020, 265) highlights the fact that "people defer to the State not only out of fear [freedom from], but also because of its ability to control the future and thereby to order the present [freedom to]." Ontological security as a positive form of security is innate in IR theory.

A unit is not a conflict-evader – a statement that contradicts the mainstream IR theory postulations. OSS alleges that a unit is an uncertainty-evader. Uncertainty – regardless of the essence of the status quo, e.g., amity/enmity – disrupts a unit's self-narrative and, thereby, threatens a unit's Self as Being. Once debilitated, Self as Being falls prey to anxiety. Thus, ontological security is conditional on the presence of agency (Berenskötter 2020, 274).

The distinction between anxiety and fear is one of the hallmarks of OSS. Rumelili (2020, 267) asserts that a unit is "anxious about non-entities, possibilities, and uncertainties and fearful of known entities and objectified risks." In other words, one is afraid of a fear object – a palpable entity – whilst anxiety is a state of angst – devoid of a fear object. Anxiety is the norm. It is usual and typical; thereby, it cannot be eradicated. It is not a matter of presence/absence but rather a matter of angst level. Depending on the level of anxiety, a unit is ontologically secure/insecure. It is attainable to contain and elude some degree of anxiety; nevertheless, it cannot be eradicated. Therefore, "whoever has learned to be anxious in the right way has learned the ultimate" (Kierkegaard 2000, 153).

Anxiety is not merely an ordinary "mental state" but, in actuality, the constitutive element of the Self (Rumelili 2020, 267). It provides fertile ground for all the emotive drives and impulses that units undergo. Furthermore, OSS substitutes the "independent primal

motive" for anxiety, as the "relentless pursuit of absolute physical security in the face of ever-present threats [is] a response to anxiety, rather than the independent primal motive" (Rumelili 2020, 268). Hence, parties in conflict must address the anxieties that prompt power politics and competition for material interests.

Narrativisation matters, due to the fact that a unit's Self as Being hinges on self-narrative to excess. Once constructed and continuously revised, the Self develops a sense of belonging to the vicinity and milieu. Indeed, ontological security is confidence in the stability of biographical continuity, the milieu and the environment. Also, it is being susceptible to the other's perception of the unit. The presence/absence of a sense of belonging is one of the determinants of the level of anxiety.

A unit's sense of belonging may contradict its national narrative and biographical continuity. It is a situation that provokes anxiety as well. A sense of belonging provides fertile ground for the Self to thrive and repel anguish. Nevertheless, the incongruity between sense of belonging and national narrative aggravates the level of anxiety.

Misrecognition and denial also aggravates anxiety. The Self as Being seeks recognition of another that it aims for in order to construct a secure sense of belonging to it. Misrecognition and denial by this particular other result in ontological insecurity. Greece and Turkey are also subjected to ontological insecurity, due to the special relationship between the two, i.e., the fear object is also the catalyst for the existential birth.

Greece and Turkey have been at daggers drawn for decades. They have been contending for material interests – continental shelf, air space, the Aegean islands – up until now. The brief peace intervals between Greece and Turkey have been imposed on them either by external powers or by the current state of international politics. The external power entangled most in and exerting implicit/explicit influence on bilateral relations was the EU in the post-Cold War era. This thesis postulates that the material disputes are merely symptoms of the emotionalised bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey. Ankara and Athens are prisoners of their contradicting national narratives. The contradiction

results in deep-lying anxieties on both sides. In the absence of EU normativity, ontological insecurity takes hold of Greece and Turkey.

1.3.2. The symbiotic relationship between ontological security and nationalism

Although they also share similarities, Greek and Turkish nationalisms have had their own trajectories. The Greek War of Independence was an uprising in an attempt to remove the 'Turkish yoke'. The Turkish War of Independence was the last stand against invading armies. The Greeks followed irredentist policies after independence, whereas the Turks aimed to consolidate power in Anatolia. Greece has been narrativised as an Aegean civilisation based on Ancient Greece, whilst Turks have depicted themselves as the descendants of the bringers of civilisation to their Anatolian territories from Central Asia.

On the other hand, Turks have at times ostracised religion and remodelled Turkish culture in Anatolia on its roots in Central Asia. Both Selves as Being constantly construct and re-narrativise their past in an attempt to strengthen the sense of belonging to Europe. Accordingly, Greece appeals to Europe's past, underlining Ancient Greece as an inspiration for the Enlightenment, while Turkey draws attention to Europe's future, where Turkey announces itself as a bridge between the West and the East. Athens makes a case based on European civilisation and culture, whereas Ankara imagines a Europe founded on norms and values inclusive of anyone, regardless of civilisational and cultural differences. As their attempts either partially or fully fail, Greeks and Turks appear to suffer from anxiety and must deal with their anxiety. In an ontologically insecure state, both unconsciously seek a safe harbour in nationalism. Therefore, the story of Greek and Turkish nationalisms is of paramount importance.

The chapter follows the traces of Greek and Turkish nationalisms, sheds light on the differences in both sides' narratives of the same events and draws attention to the nationalisms in Greece and Turkey as the starting point of ontological insecurity in Greece and Turkey in Europe's periphery.

The events of 1821 are called the Greek Revolution in Greece and the Mora Uprising in Turkey. The events of 1922 are remembered as the National Liberation War in Turkey and the Asia Minor Catastrophe in Greece. These two events have been the precursor of nationalism in Greece and Turkey. In an attempt to safeguard the biographical continuity, Greece and Turkey alike have narrated the past events in contrast. As the biographical continuity has been ensured on both sides, it also resulted in contradicting memories of the same past events. The nationalistic reading of the memories has turned them into "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas". These nationalistic acts of remembering have projected an existential threat to the east in the case of Greece and the west in the case of Turkey.

As the existential threat at the doorstep is still existent, the ontological insecurity is still not coped with. Self as Being on both side is still anxious, which leads to emotive reactions to the material events. Indeed, subjective rationality that clouds both political entities' judgment takes hold of Self as Being in Greece and Turkey.

Greek and Turkish nationalisms have evolved in correlation with each other. They constructed themselves and one another simultaneously through dialogue and contention. The two entities are defined as anxious due to the emotive character of Greece-Turkey bilateral relations. This perpetual anxiety preserves their nationalistic sentiments, which leads to contentious issues such as the Aegean dispute and the Eastern Mediterranean dispute on the domain of the empirical. This thesis aims to draw attention to the domain of the real, where the anxieties of both entities lead to a state of ontological insecurity. This neurosis disrupts decision-making in the domain of the actual. Thus, the disordered polyphony of voices generates incoherent and controversial policies, which leads to heated disagreements such as over the Cyprus issue and the minority issue in the domain of the empirical.

1.3.3. The EU as an ontological insecurity trigger

The chapter concerned aims to shed light on the contemporary Greece-Turkey bilateral relations, through an analysis of Turkey's EU bid. I argue that Turkey has anticipated that

value-based rhetoric would take place over Turkey's bid to join the EU. However, culture-oriented discourse has in fact predominated in the debate about Turkey's Europeanness/non-Europeanness in Europe. Turkey has debunked the false promise of EU normativity. 'Europe-lessness' has provoked old anxiety caused by omission from Europe in the pre-nationalist era and triggered by non-admission to the EU in the nationalist era in Turkey. The lack of a sense of belonging to Europe has been one of the main factors contributing to the advent of a new form of Turkishness – the Islamist variant in Turkish nationalism. The failure of Ankara's Europeanisation has aggravated Greece's anxiety, originating from Greece's less-Europeanness and the contradictory national narratives of the common history between Ankara and Athens. Greece and Turkey have both worked themselves up into an ontologically insecure state. The EU, which was supposed to be an ontological security provider, has turned into an ontological insecurity trigger on the periphery.

In the mid-20th century, Europe spawned a universal soft power in the form of the EU. Political entities located on the EU's periphery, Greece and Turkey, have declared their will to Europeanise in the form of EU-isation. Greece, which has enjoyed the approval of the core European entities, has internalised European norms and values. Since Ancient Greece inspired the Enlightenment, Greece has Europeanised itself with relative ease. However, Greece is considered less European in the 'European gaze' since Athens is not entirely Europeanised. Its sense of belonging to Europe is still partial; thereby, it is still not ontologically secure. The non-admission of Turkey to the EU by the 'European gaze' further instigates its ontological insecurity. Turkey, on the other hand, has been intermittently going through Europeanisation. The debacle of EU's normativity has been flabbergasting for Turkey. In the absence of "Normative Power Europe",[2] existential anxiety has surfaced, leading Ankara to an ontologically insecure status. The ontological insecurity of Greece and Turkey has further emotionalised their bilateral relations.

Being in an ontologically insecure status, Greece and Turkey question each other's Europeanness. They stigmatise each other as non-Europeans trying to cope with Europe-lessness on the periphery. Ankara has dealt with its in-between – neither wholly European

[2] The EU is an ideational actor made up of common principles, and it promotes norms in global arena.

nor non-European to the fullest extent – position by blaming it on Greece. Turkey has argued that Greece is the impetus to Turcosceptic discourse in Europe, and that Greece is non-European in fact. On the other hand, Greece argues that Ankara follows policies that are an affront to European norms and values, e.g., the reconversion of the Hagia Sophia. Athens, as the embodiment of Europeanness, stands up against the non-European Turkey. However, the gatekeeper status downgrades Greece's Europeanness and implies that Athens is less European.

Ankara and Athens are both located on the periphery of Europe. They both aspire to the recognition of the 'European gaze'. Europe-lessness, albeit to different degrees, has further worsened the conflict-ridden bilateral relations. Turkey, already considered culturally alien and non-European, has suffered from its image in the 'European gaze'. The lack of sense of belonging to Europe, which Turkey has hankered after for centuries, has provoked ontological insecurity, resulting in the rise of the Islamist variant in nationalism in Turkey. The deficient approval of the 'European gaze' has triggered ontological insecurity in less-European Greece. The respectively non-European and less European status in the 'European gaze' has further deteriorated the relations between Ankara and Athens. They have denigrated and disparaged each other; thereby, further driven a wedge between them.

1.3.4. Hagia Sophia debate: an embodiment of ontological insecurity

Nationalism is a venue for ontic, psychological and moral self-affirmation. The later chapter indicates that Hagia Sophia is an ontic space for Greeks and Turks alike. It is the ultimate sacred symbol of Turkish glory – a secular sacred monument as the embodiment of modern Turkey and a re-sacralised grand mosque of the Islamist variant in Turkish nationalism in recent months – and the quintessential divine symbol of Greek Orthodoxy. Since the sacred monument is of paramount importance in both states, it makes a quintessential reference point for both.

Since their Selves as Being suffer from ontological insecurities due to their in-between position – less European Greece and non-European Turkey – on Europe's periphery,

Greece and Turkey implement emotive and provocative policies within the confines of subjective rationality. They have constructed Greekness and Turkishness in opposition to each other to a certain extent, leading to the construction of a perennial existential threat for Ankara and Athens. The Hagia Sophia debate demonstrates that the conflict that Greece and Turkey take part in is an ontological one.

The 'chosen glories', e.g., the 1821 National Liberation War for Greeks and the 1453 conquest of Constantinople for Turks, and 'chosen traumas', e.g., the fall of Constantinople in 1453 for Greeks and the Sevres Syndrome for Turks, of both Selves as Being are more or less connected to Hagia Sophia as an ontic space for both. Greece and Turkey remember the same events in contradictory terms. The Hagia Sophia debate manifests these contradictions.

The debate about Hagia Sophia's status is emotion-laden because of its significance for both Greek and Turkish nationalisms. In the corresponding chapter, the debate is analysed in the context of Greece-Turkey bilateral relations and Turkey's EU bid. The Hagia Sophia debate and Turkey's EU candidacy between 1999 and 2020 are categorised into four periods in accordance with the frequency and acuteness of events. This thesis finds similarities in the same periods of the Hagia Sophia debate and Turkey's EU bid and also distinctions between different periods, manifesting a gradual deterioration in the Hagia Sophia debate and Turkey's EU bid in parallel with each other. As religion permeates Turkish society and politics, the Hagia Sophia debate gradually intensifies. Greece has gone through a similar course of events. The reconversion debate has appealed to Greece and Turkey to a greater extent over time. The chronology of the Hagia Sophia debate and Turkey's EU bid indicates that the Hagia Sophia debate has been deepened and broadened in line with the deterioration of Turkey's EU bid.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Security Studies has been evolving for decades. It has been described in realist and liberal terms as mainstream theories dictate. However, the critical concepts have emerged in contradiction to the mainstream theories' materialist and rationalist concepts. OSS is one of these critical tenets. There is a long history of OSS, from psychoanalysis to sociology and then to IR. The multidisciplinary history of OSS has led to a new understanding of states' intentions and why states do what they do. It had paved the way for the development of cognitive and emotive analysis of states' acts, nurtured by constructivism thus far. In doing so, OSS draws attention to several notions such as a sense of belonging, narrative and biographical continuity. It offers incentives to ascribe meaning to states' behaviours in the context of critical reasoning. Thus, it serves as a springboard for a new approach to Greece-Turkey bilateral relations on the EU's periphery, often fraught with ontological insecurities.

The thesis sets a multi-layered theoretical framework for the analysis of Greece-Turkey bilateral relations on the EU's periphery. In this context, the thesis offers a multi-layered reading of ontological insecurity. There are three levels of ontological insecurity in Greece and Turkey, namely (1) ontological insecurity triggered by nationalism in Greece and Turkey alike, (2) ontological insecurity triggered by the debacle of EU normativity, and (3) the ontic space, Hagia Sophia, as a catalyst for aggravation of the ontological insecurity in Greece and Turkey. Therefore, the body of the thesis comprises four chapters to discuss OSS as the theoretical framework in the first chapter and to shed light on the three layers of ontological insecurity in modern Greece and modern Turkey, i.e., (1) the Greek and Turkish nationalisms as ontological insecurity stimulus in Chapter 3, (2) the EU as an ontological insecurity trigger in Chapter 4, and (3) Hagia Sophia, the ontic space, as an impetus to ontological insecurity in Greece and Turkey in Chapter 5.

The main aim of the theoretical framework is to circumstantiate the fact that OSS provides fertile ground for making sense of the contentious bilateral relations on the EU's periphery, with a focus on Greece-Turkey bilateral relations. The topic allows for the filling in of the gap in the literature through the prism of OSS premised on CR as a

metatheory/philosophy of science. The thesis' focal point is to address the ontological insecurity on the EU's periphery. OSS indicates that the controversial character of the bilateral relations is not brought about by discord due to material considerations, but by the units' ontological insecurity. A unit constructs its Self as Being through self-narrative. A unit highlights specific memories as critical junctures and milestones. It preserves those memories employing routinised narrative-telling; thereby, the Self as Being, 'becoming' in the Heideggerian sense, is incessantly under construction. Construction is an everlasting process which is why biographical continuity matters. This biographical continuity reassures the Self as Being of certainty of past, present and future; after that, the certainty allows a sense of belonging to take hold.

Greece-Turkey bilateral relations is a contentious issue that has been ongoing for decades. Even though there have been interludes in these conflict-ridden relations, brinksmanship and scepticism have been omnipresent and predominant at the heart of their bilateral relations. The bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey may be regarded as one of the manifold contentious relations most fraught with animosity and disputes in global politics. It has seen wax, in the Davos Process, and wane, in the Kardak/Imia Crisis, through continuous interactions between the units. Nevertheless, it has been somehow a downward spiral, rather than upward, that has defined the bilateral relations thus far, even though both states have iterated their commitment to the same political and economic union, that is to say, the EU and both of them are staunch members of the same defence alliance, i.e., NATO. How is it that these two status quo states committed to the same alliance system, that also happen to have a great deal to gain from amity and so much to lose in enmity, cannot find common ground or reconcile for the sake of their own interests, and are caught in a vicious cycle of brinkmanship and cynicism? Greece has been committed to Europeanising its Self as Being with adamant adoption of EU norms, despite drifting off course on occasion. In other words, Athens has embarked upon a quest to assume a secure sense of belonging to the EU. The temporary setbacks to the Europeanisation process are partially triggered by strained bilateral relations with Ankara, demonstrating the travails of constructing a novel self-narrative. Meanwhile, Turkey oscillates between its deep-rooted conservative self-narrative, which is drastically

sceptical of neighbouring states and a fluctuating Europeanisation process, together with a lack of a sense of belonging to the EU.

There is a connection between the relations between Greece and Turkey, and the EU's impact on their relations as a third party. On the one hand, the anxious bilateral relations aggravate ontological insecurity leading to the failure of Europeanisation. On the other, the lack of EU normativity triggers ontological insecurity resulting in the anxious bilateral relations.

The claims on nationalism and inheritance of specific genes are closer to fiction than historical facts. Nationalism as we know it is an artefact invented in the 19th century. A nation-state undergoes anxiety stemming from a lack of direct lineage from a particular ancient group, genes and culture. Nations in the Balkans with similar tendencies, to a certain extent, possess a "Greater" chimaera or mirage, which is irredentist to a certain extent (Kaplan 2005). Their references to and longing for the high point of their ancestors' valour result in overlapping and contradictory claims to the same territories. Myths are mirror images of intersubjective memories. These intersubjective memories serve as the cornerstones of ontological (in)securities, since Greeks and Turks prefer to refer to a specific period or event of the past from differing viewpoints.

Many IR protagonists consider it particularly unlikely for any unit partaking in international relations to jeopardise its material interests for the sake of its sense of belonging and biographical continuity. A state is supposed to be rational, interest-seeking and acting on material facts. Conversely, some cases and events debunk such consistency. The case of Greece-Turkey bilateral relations is an anomaly to the reasoning mentioned above, and is in line with the debunking of the idea of consistency in materialistic expectations. Greece implements a policy of pursuing a sense of belonging to European civilisation and continuity of a specific narrative of Greekness stemming from Ancient Greece. Turkey has embarked upon a quest for a sense of belonging to European civilisation, with the advent of the Republic strengthening Turks' commitment to modernisation in the nationalist era, which has led Ankara to seek EU membership. Ankara's willingness to assume a European Self as Being alleviates Athens' ontological

insecurity, as Greece considers its Self as Being innately European due to the Enlightenment inspired by Ancient Greece, and strengthens its Europeanness through EU-isation. Conversely, the failure of Europeanisation in Turkey provokes Athens' ontological insecurity, which, in turn, sparks off material disputes. The Hagia Sophia debate serves as a convenient reference point in analysing Greece-Turkey bilateral relations on Europe's periphery due to (1) its historical and cultural significance as an 'ontic space' in both nations, (2) the unprecedented increase in the intensity and frequency of the debate about Hagia Sophia's status, in parallel with the debacle of Turkey's EU bid between 1999 and 2020, (3) its embodiment of the subjective rationality taking hold of both states' decision-making mechanism and (4) it is the quintessence of ontological insecurity permeating through Greece and Turkey alike.

Ontological security has been elaborated on by the protagonists of psychology, sociology, security studies and IR. It is a relative incomer to the IR field and, thereby, a novel viewpoint from which to comprehend security issues and protracted conflicts. It enables scholars to make sense of the relevance of ontological (in)security in international relations. OSS demonstrates that a state is not only focused on survival but also on the continuation of the Self as Being. In this thesis, Greece-Turkey bilateral relations are analysed through the OSS prism. In this chapter, I situate OSS in security studies, concisely define ontological security and elaborate on the concepts utilised in the theoretical framework.

2.1. Where Ontological Security Fits in Security Studies

Security studies possesses extant and lasting literature which has been expanding and thriving for decades. Therefore, it was imperative to analyse and put in order such an immense amount of literature to realise its trajectory and where it is headed. Rothschild (1995) thoroughly peruses security studies, scrutinises the canons of security studies and assembles what has been said about these studies heretofore in an orderly manner. In sum, the horizontal – from military to political, economic, social, and environmental security, and from the security of nation-states to the security of international institutions, regional and local administrations, non-governmental organisations, public opinion, the press,

market etc. – and vertical – from states to individuals as a downward extension, and from nations to the international system as an upward extension – the range of security studies is delineated (Rothschild 1995, 55). The aforementioned categorisation and elucidation indicate that security studies have expanded to such an extent that ontological security has become relevant and vital to deciphering a unit's behaviours and decision-making process.

Following on from the idea of death as the most fundamental impulse in relation to the longing for security aphorism, and Rothschild's definition of the trajectory of security studies, Huysmans (1998, 235) firstly concurs with the assertion that "fear of death" is a combination of (1) fear of others who are willing to kill so as to eliminate uncertainty and (2) fear of getting killed, i.e. biological death, and, secondly, Huysmans asserts that the "fear of death" also implies "fear of uncertainty." This "fear of death" requires the substitution of uncertainty with a fear object – a unit or past traumas – which, in turn, would enable the unit to implement policies so as to overcome the fear object (Huysmans 1998, 235). Huysmans (1998, 238) calls it a "mediation of death" through the construction of political agglomerations, e.g., the Church and state. Such institutions implement policies to fend off uncertainty and establish certainty. Furthermore, the institution's features that serve as mediation for death are contingent upon the type of anxiety that the units suffer from – in accordance with Tillich's three forms of anxiety and the institutions alleviating the dominant anxiety of that particular epoch.

Huysmans (1998, 231) coins the term "thick signifier", arguing;

> *One tries to understand how security language implies a specific metaphysics of life. The interpretation does not just explain how a security story requires the definition of threats, a referent object, etc. but also how it defines our relations to nature, to other human beings and to the self.*

OSS demurs against the mainstream perception of "what drives state behaviour," leading to questioning of the rationality element in security studies (Steele 2008, 149). Therefore, it is imperative to elaborate on the reciprocal relationship between security and abstract concepts, e.g., being, memory, anxiety, time, and space. Hence, the ontological aspect of security moves to the forefront of security studies.

2.2. Defining Ontological Security

Security is the linchpin of international politics in the most fundamental sense. Most IR theories benchmark units' interactions against survival as a concept. Waltz (1979, 91) contends that "survival is a prerequisite to achieving any goals that states may have". In this sense, IR theory is regarded as a "theory of survival" by mainstream scholars (Huysmans 1998, 226). Rumelili (2020, 258), on the other hand, argues that there is a deep-rooted mechanism, i.e., anxiety, that precipitates survival instinct.

McSweeney (1999, 154) asserts that a Being becomes capable of "relational stress" once a person develops consciousness – losing its innocence/ignorance. The socially constructed world that we live in is described as a "risk society", where insecurity and uncertainty are ubiquitous (Beck 1992). The "commonality of need" is substituted by the "commonality of anxiety" as an impetus of the risk society (Beck 1992, 49). It is the perils of the risk society that debilitate units. Concordantly, a social actor, either individual or collective, constantly underlines its distinct self in space and time so as to fend off these pitfalls. It constructs and reassures its self-narrative through routinised speech acts.

States are social actors driven by not only physical but also social impulses (Wendt 1999). Campbell (1992, 56) articulates that the "state grounds its legitimacy by offering the promise of security to its citizens who, it says, would otherwise face manifold dangers." A state fulfils its primary responsibility insofar as the state provides security to its citizenry. Additionally, following the assertion that "states are social actors," it becomes irrefutable that these units "have needs, human needs, other than survival" (Steele 2005, 529).

Herein, the question that warrants explanation is to what extent the attribution of human characteristics to nonhuman beings is accounted for. Both critical IR theorists and mainstream IR theorists resort to anthropomorphism. Ejdus (2019, 1) asserts that "international political discourse abounds with reference to emotions". Such psychological references indicate that ontological security is as pertinent to units as somatic security. Indeed, agency implies volition. Units are not individuals. However,

agency engenders certain similarities between the two concepts. Units may not have feelings; nevertheless, they act on motives that may transform into emotive impulses.

States are real insofar as the narratives of their Selves are real (Neumann 2004, 259). An idiosyncratic fact is that both states and individuals talk (Epstein 2010, 341; Ejdus 2019). Discourse is a trait that is shared by both states and individuals. Epstein (2010, 342) exemplifies the point with Australia's stance towards whaling having remained unaltered since 1978. It takes dedication and diligence to establish and alter the course of a policy. A unit's policies are established, followed and changed through the years by numerous policymakers. Also, Pedersen (2019, 16) accentuates the fact that the "inner dialogue among a polyphony of Russian voices uttering a multitude of material, ideational, and ontological security" in agreement with each other. One of these voices prevails over the others and dominates decision-making. Ergo, a unit's narrative enables ontological security-seeking. Correspondingly, Krolikowski (2008, 116) contends that "traumatic" and "disruptive" events cause a unit to enter a state of anxiety which leads to ontological security-seeking. The disquieting events that undermine the foundations of a unit set the scene for narrative conversion – change in continuity.

A cohesive sense of self, and affirmation of that self by others, is a prerequisite for being ontologically secure (Ejdus 2018, 891-2). 'Self' matters in IR since the assumption of a 'unit longing for physical security' implies that states possess agency. A unit would neither long for nor hanker after nor need anything without a sense of self. There is indeed a deep-lying mechanism leading to survival instinct, namely anxiety (Rumelili 2020, 270). The premiss that states seek survival tacitly amounts to states seeking ontological security. A state provides ontological security to its citizenry insofar as the state seeks and finds ontological security for itself on the international stage (Zarakol 2017, 51; Innes and Steele 2014, 16-17). In other words, the impulse to provide ontological security to the citizenry leads a state to seek ontological security for itself by developing steady relationships and constructing a firm sense of belonging, e.g., to an alliance (NATO) or a supranational institution (EU) in international politics. The modern state is an "ontological security-providing institution", which infers that it is plausible to regard the state "as an ontological security-seeking agent itself" (Zarakol 2017, 49). Being an

ontological security provider, a state becomes an ontological security seeker; thereby, providing ontological security to citizenry contributes to constructing self-narrative and Self as Being. On the whole, presuming that a nation-state cannot provide ontological security to the citizenry, the state cannot ensure its own ontological security as an ontological security-seeker.

Greece and Turkey are both in a quest for a transnational sense of belonging, to alleviate their anxieties. However, this process contradicts and disrupts the already-established sense of belonging to the nation and leads the way to a "compulsiveness born out of unmastered anxiety" (Giddens 1991, 41). The contradiction between two senses of belonging emanates from Europe's self-narrative (a culturally and ontologically European Being) and 'European gaze', which labels Greece as less European and Turkey as non-European.

2.3. Concepts

"Primary ontological security," as R. D. Laing has coined the term, hinges on an existentialist stance. An "ontologically secure person," as R. D. Laing puts it, experiences the socially constructed world "as a real, alive, whole, and in a temporal sense, a continuous person" who accordingly socialises in the world as a social reality replete with "others experienced as equally real, alive, whole, and continuous" (Laing 1960, 40). Indeed, an "ontologically secure person" constructs a resilient and adamant sense of reality, and successfully contends with the perils and hardships of life.

R. D. Laing identifies schizophrenia as a rational choice in the face of danger. It is a well-reasoned answer in the form of withdrawal from the menaces emanating from the other and from social interactions. People wear intangible masks on certain occasions to socialise, with a protective cocoon surrounding them. R. D. Laing presumes that such masks are not only a means to socialise securely but also a means to survive in a terrifying world. The enticing impulse to adopt a persona begets psychotic and schizophrenic behaviour. It is how an individual copes with the "pervasive anxiety of primary ontological insecurity" (Laing 1960, 39).

Laing (1960) distinguishes "being existentially born" from physical birth. The birth is the inception of the process whereby the baby becomes aware of its existence in time and space, i.e., "with continuity in time and a location in space", as Laing (1960, 41) puts it. The infant grows awareness of its existence as real and alive. Existential birth is relevant to this doctoral thesis because I argue that Greece and Turkey were born during their own National Liberation Wars, which they fought against each other. During their existential birth, they met what would become their perennial existential threat. They have been living next to the perennial existential threat ever since.

From the outset of the "becoming" of Being, the primary ontological security envisages an individual as a "real, alive and whole" Being who recognises itself as a genuine entity distinct from anything else. Being embarks upon its voyage with its existential birth. Accordingly, the same Being is to be extinguished by death. Such an individual possesses a resolute sense of ontological security. However, primary ontological insecurity points to an opposite account of an individual's becoming, a perennial process. In this case, the individual regards itself as unreal, unanimated and dead. There is nothing other than a vague and blurred line distinguishing it from the remainder of the world. Its very existence/Being is unsettled and questionable. Indeed, such an individual is deprived of spatial and temporal continuity (Laing 1960, 41-42).

Laing indicates that he aims to make sense of "the process of going mad" (1960, 9). Laing steers away from mainstream psychiatry as a strictly formed discipline, so as to embark upon a quest to frame a concept of psychosis through the lens of existential assumptions and arguments. This line of reasoning paves the way for the development of a novel approach to security studies and international affairs in IR. Laing (1960, 17-25) asserts that it is indispensable to fathom the distinction between "being-in-the-world" and the individual's "being himself in the world." Therefore, it is imperative to diverge from mainstream international relations theories and realign the theoretical framework with OSS. The modus operandi of units at the international level can be conceptualised in compliance with the ontological and the existential.

2.3.1. Being

Heidegger analyses the human being. He aims to dwell on being in the human being so much so that he calls the human being Dasein which literally means "Being-there." Whilst "Being" refers to existence or presence, "there" implies time. "Being-there" does not amount to being in a particular space at a particular time in the spatio-temporal sense in the Heideggerian literature. Heidegger (2001, 80-84) emphasises time as a concept by coining "Being-in", which means being involved in the world. "Being-in" amounts to taking part in something, doing something or deliberating about something.

The term "Dasein" is used by several philosophers. Whereas it means "human existence" or simply "presence" in Hegelian terms, Dasein is ascribed a more convoluted meaning in Heideggerian thought. There are manifold entities in existence throughout the world. They are tangible in the object-world. Nevertheless, they are not Dasein. Dasein's ability to think and reason burdens it with the responsibility of decision-making. Mulhall (2013, 15) propounds that "in Heidegger's terms, Dasein's own Being (as well as that of other beings) is necessarily an issue for it." As Kierkegaard calls it, the Beast is not bothered with life choices in order to maintain a continual life. On the other hand, Dasein is concerned with its own future since it happens to be the one Being with the faculty of consciousness and thought (Heidegger 1962).

People are obliged to make existential choices and momentous decisions about what they should do, which distinguishes Being from Beast, as Kierkegaard suggests in the "Concept of Anxiety" (Kierkegaard 2000, 139). Social interactions define individuals as much as individuals contribute to social life construction. Vietta (1951, 159) asserts that "the world does not appear as what it is (world as phenomenon), but as what man makes of it (world as idea)" in the Heideggerian sense. Dasein epitomises the individual itself. Mulhall (2013, 17) posits that "for Dasein, living just is ceaselessly taking a stand on who one is and on what is essential about one's being, and being defined by that stand." Dasein decides what to do next in the context of its understanding of the world. In the process, Dasein may be engulfed by anxiety. Under the circumstances, Dasein's judgement would

be clouded, and a decision, irrational to the mainstream, would be reached, e.g., the partial erasure of Turkish heritage in modern Greece and Greek heritage in modern Turkey.

Nonbeing is an integral part of being, to the same extent that being defines the individual. Tillich (2000, 35) regards fear of nonbeing as the awareness of being finite. There is a spatio-temporal constraint on being. Nonbeing somehow becomes entwined with being itself, since being is a process of becoming. Becoming, in fact, refers to what this thesis calls narrative. The end of becoming epitomising nonbeing raises ontological awareness, which leads to anxiety. Awareness of being finite emanates from it. In other words, an agent which is aware of its finitude constantly endures the unknowability of future. This agent alleviates the ensuing anxiety through routine narratives of past events. Tillich (2000, 32) considers courage as key to overcoming anxiety, spawned by the awareness of being finite. The courage to prefer cognitive reaction or answer an over emotive one, vis-à-vis anxiety. Rumelili (2020, 258-61) describes Tillich's "courage to be" as "authenticity" in the Heideggerian sense, which is also called a "leap of faith" in the Kierkegaardian sense.

Nonbeing is contingent on the spatio-temporal state of Being. Indeed, nonbeing is subsequent to the being that it neutralises. According to Tillich (2000, 40), this dependency indicates two inferences. Firstly, Being is ontologically prior to nonbeing. Secondly, nonbeing hinges dramatically on the attributes of Being. Nonbeing does not possess any qualities beforehand. The characteristics are bestowed on nonbeing via its relations with Being. These traits arouse the types of anxiety that Being suffers from. For this reason, nonbeing is pertinent to the thesis, since the units the thesis analyses are subject to anxiety rather than fear, in essence.

"Anxiety is a fundamental part of the human condition" in the Kierkegaardian sense (Evans 2009, 109). It is Being's struggle against nonbeing's encroachment. This endeavour to ward off anxiety demonstrates that being in human beings stands for ontological awareness. In the Heideggerian sense, a Being is a Dasein conscious of its finitude. In Tillich, ontological awareness means to be conscious of the fact that nonbeing is immanent in being. The struggle between Being and nonbeing is perennial. It is how a

Being carries on and exists in daily life. Thereby, Being is actually a process - or being-in-the-world as it is in the Heideggerian literature - in other words, being answers existential questions as it goes on in everyday life.

Many ontological security proponents in IR base their theoretical stance on Anthony Giddens' take on ontological security. Giddens makes use of several philosophers' works on existence, being and anxiety, among other subject areas, such as those of Kierkegaard, and Paul Tillich in his renowned book "Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age", published in 1991. He asks several existential questions and answers them in a thorough manner. The last and most comprehensive existential question he asks himself is related to self-identity. He rigorously mulls over "self as identity" in an existentialist sense. He expounds how anxiety disrupts "self as identity", and paves the way for the continuation of ontological insecurities. As an alternative to Giddensian reasoning, the deliberations over 'self' are nurtured by Heideggerian reasoning in this thesis. I offer a different approach to scrutinising anxiety's intrusion into an individual's mind, namely 'Self as Being'. Being, as meticulously delineated above, is tantamount to 'becoming'. It is a perpetual process of 'carrying on' in daily life. This Heideggerian 'involvement in daily life' defines the individual. Therefore, what anxiety disrupts is not 'self as identity' but Self as Being.

Self as Being is a continual process, thereby not a given one. An individual gets involved in daily routines. Consequently, the Self as Being is regularly constructed and maintained. The construction and preservation of Self as Being is mediated through biographical continuity, since a biography is the narrative of everyday social interactions that the unit constructs and perpetuates in the spatio-temporal sense. The unit continually narrates everyday events as it carries on.

This thesis deliberates over ontological (in)securities of specific units. As philosophers, as mentioned earlier, elaborate on Being in the human being, the thesis focuses on the ontology of the units, i.e., unit as Being. Being is defined by its past preferences, actions, discourses, etc. All these display Being's narrative of what happened in fact.

2.3.2. Anxiety

The ontological security literature has given birth to the assertion that anxiety is not only a "competing factor" but a "constitutive condition," and anxiety must be "integrated into IR theory" (Rumelili 2020). Drawing from this line of argument, the thesis defines anxiety in line with existentialist thought and merges it with Being and memory to demarcate the thesis' intellectual commitments.

Kierkegaard has deliberated over and answered philosophical queries in tandem with theological ones. He has sought answers to his existential conundrums, such as those concerning Being and anxiety. Even though his theological assessments are not pertinent to the thesis, his definition of anxiety as awareness of nothingness is noteworthy. Kierkegaard regards innocence as ignorance, on account of the dearth of discord in the state of repose. The lack of dissension means that "there is indeed nothing against which to strive" (Kierkegaard 2000, 139). In the Kierkegaardian context, "nothing" amounts to nothingness which arouses anxiety. Kierkegaard (2000, 139) further dwells on anxiety as a concept: "awake, the difference between myself and my other is posited; sleeping, it is suspended; dreaming, it is an intimated nothing." Insofar as there is a difference between the Self as "myself" and nothingness as "my other," there is anxiety. Hence, anxiety is a trait of an individual rather than a "beast," since "anxiety is freedom's actuality as the possibility of possibility" (Kierkegaard 2000, 139). The most significant conclusion Kierkegaard draws is the well-known differentiation between anxiety and fear. He contends that fear springs from a particular threat in contrast to anxiety which is ambiguously free-floating without a particular object (Kierkegaard 2000, 139). Anxiety is rife with dizziness, ambivalence and confusion, due to the inability to direct anxiety to an object of fear.

Kierkegaard never offers a linear causality. His thoughts and reasoning are intricate and convoluted. His correlations are bidirectional at the very least. Kierkegaard attests that the individual is constructed by a "synthesis" of body and soul, which are united in spirit, and anxiety plays a significant role in its formation (Kierkegaard 2000, 140). The aforementioned state of innocence somehow becomes relevant at this point in

Kierkegaard's train of thought. The presence of innocence means an individual is more than a beast. Thus, the spirit is immanent in the individual since there would not be anxiety, freedom as possibility of possibility, in an individual without spirit, i.e., the cognitive and emotive part of Being. Anxiety not only unsettles the body/soul dyad but also constructs and ascribes meaning to it.

Tillich (2000, 41) lays the foundations for three types of anxiety epitomising threats posed to Being by non-being. These are as follows – anxiety of death, anxiety of meaninglessness and anxiety of guilt and condemnation.

Non-being threatens an individual's self-affirmation, thereby Being itself, in several ways, namely ontic, psychological and moral. The anxiety of death is the most ubiquitous and inexorable one of all. Existential reasoning defies any reference to immortality. Immortality is an abstract and vague concept. Death is certain and unsettling. Somatic death implies an evident and opaque demarcation line between Being and non-being. The ultimate loss of Being disarrays the intricate equilibrium between them. From this disruption of balance, anxiety emerges. The anxiety of non-being is what cannot be handled. It is metamorphosed into an object of fear to such an extent that it poses a threat to Being. Thus, there happens to be a solid fear object to cope with rather than being engulfed by anxiety itself.

Whereas anxiety of death is occasioned by the existential threat to Being's ontic self-affirmation, the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness is spawned by the existential threat to Being's psychological, mental and emotive self-affirmation. Creativity is located at the epicentre of the deliberations over such anxieties. Creativity refers to living creatively or spontaneously partaking in everyday life in this context. Emptiness and meaninglessness transform into existential threats to Being's cognitive and emotive, or spiritual as Tillich calls it, life. Tillich (2000, 47) delineates meaninglessness as "anxiety about the loss of an ultimate concern" such as the loss of sacred space, e.g., Hagia Sophia, in the case of Greece, while emptiness is defined as the "threat of nonbeing to the special contents of the spiritual life," e.g., the meaning of the Aegean islands for Greece – the Greek heartland – and Turkey – a border zone. The shortfall of creative participation in

the Hagia Sophia debate leads to ontological insecurity in Greece. Similarly, Turkey's non-Europeanness in the "European gaze" prevents Ankara from being creatively involved in European issues, resulting in ontological insecurity in Turkey.

The third anxiety type is related to moral self-affirmation. Once an individual possesses conscious volition, exposure to the anxiety of guilt and condemnation emerges. The individual commits itself to the acts of moral self-affirmation in everyday life. Being yearns for moral self-affirmation and acts accordingly so as to realise its moral potentiality. However, wherever Being is present, nonbeing accompanies it. Nonbeing is immanent in Being, seeking moral self-affirmation as well. The duality begets obscurity, which is conducive to the anxiety of guilt.

Furthermore, such a dichotomy instigates the despair of becoming a lost cause, that is, the anxiety of condemnation. Moreover, guilt emanates from the inadequacy of an individual's narrative — the said narrative props up biographical continuity. Hence, guilt as anxiety over incoherent narrative is detrimental to an individual's biographical continuity. For instance, Greece ought to have emotionally justified its uprising against the Ottoman state – a coping mechanism with the anxiety of condemnation – since Greeks had significant privileges over non-Muslim subjects. However, they rationally seized the moment as they had been entrapped in an obsolete state belonging to the pre-nationalist period in the age of nationalist revolutions.

In fact, all these different types of anxiety are immanent in each other. Ontic, psychological and moral threats to Being may reciprocally trigger each other and initiate a downward spiral. Anxiety lies dormant in any Being. It is actuated and engulfs everyone ubiquitously once structures – made of myths, order, power and meaning – upon which societies based are shattered. Such structures keep anxiety at bay. A pacific unit partakes in the system constituted by the aforementioned structures. Such a Being copes with unit-level anxieties by means of structure-level assuring mechanisms. Structure-level coping mechanisms become impotent during transition periods. Nonbeing surges to a high level, and is embodied by a duality under such circumstances. Tillich (2000, 62) delineates them as the "anxiety of annihilating narrowness, of the impossibility of escape and the horror

of being trapped" and the "anxiety of annihilating openness, of infinite, formless space into which one falls without a place to fall upon." Also, Tillich (2000, 38) presumes that a Being exposed to the terror of anxiety is inclined to form at least one object of fear. This is how a subject avoids angst. Anxiety is inevitable. It is spawned by nonbeing which is a component of existence itself. However, it may be alleviated by substituting anxiety with an object of fear.

The term "anxiety" refers to the "state in which Being is aware of its possible non-being" (Tillich 2000, 35). Non-being becomes complementary to Being in this regard. One's awareness of its finitude, i.e., apprehension of one's inevitable death, leads to absolute anxiety, namely the anxiety of non-being. Anxiety and fear are based on the same ontological bedrock. However, anxiety is palpably distinguished from fear by existentialists such as Kierkegaard and Heidegger. There is a discernible object that serves as a catalyst to fear. It functions as a scarecrow, i.e., an object of baseless fear that must be comprehended, confronted, and withstood. However, there is not any perceptible object that threatens Being in anxiety-induced cases. Anxiety implies non-being, i.e., a dearth of an object of fear. Although there is a source of threat, there is not any object which materialises the unembodied menace, that is to say, nothingness itself. The unchanneled feelings and emotions float freely in the absence of a tangible object of fear, which leads to impotence and helplessness. Fear is innate in anxiety and vice versa. The interwoven character of the reciprocal relationship between fear and anxiety is exemplified, with death as a gateway and as an incident by Tillich (2000, 37-38).

On the one hand, death as an incident is an object of fear: a perceptible object such as a car accident or a fatal disease by which the subject is terrified. It instils the fear of dying. On the other hand, death as a gateway to non-being from being substitutes the aforementioned tactile object with anxiety. Dying denotes non-being in this case. What differentiates anxiety from fear is the catalyst, i.e., non-being (Tillich 2000, 38-39). In other words, it is the excruciating feeling of despair — the absence of a coping mechanism in the face of an existential threat emanating from the idea of absolute non-being.

Anxiety engulfs and overwhelms Being to the extent that Being invents coping mechanisms or resorts to fear objects for the sake of its biographical continuity. Being presumes that the overwhelming anxiety must be addressed. Otherwise, Being would be subjected to existential consequences, i.e., anxiety induced by inevitable and imminent nonbeing. This thesis concurs with the argument that anxiety is ubiquitous and pervasive. It disrupts the daily routine of Being and exerts influence over the everyday decisions of Being. Therefore, it must be addressed to analyse Being's social interactions.

2.3.3. Memory

Memory is a phenomenon that has occupied the minds of philosophers since Durkheim and his disciple Maurice Halbwachs. There are several divergent definitions of memory. The relevant definitions of the term are explained one by one in this subsection.

Memory is fundamentally an act of remembering events, experiences, and people. However, remembering is not necessarily a precisely-defined process. There is not a singular blueprint for how to remember. It is actually a narration that involves accentuating and revising. Memory is immensely germane to the thesis on account of its connection with cognitive acumen and emotive reactions, together with its intersubjectivity.

Misztal (2003b, 6) argues that "memory is intersubjectively constituted." It is a process of remembering. The act of remembering is done by sharing a memory with others and revising past events in a dialogue with others. Additionally, Boyd (2008, 134) asserts that "it is the process by which people construct personal narratives supportive of integrated and efficacious identities in the present."

Collective memory is a socially constructed phenomenon that ascribes meaning to society and its surroundings. Each person in a group possesses its own memories and, simultaneously, collective memories that the person shares with the remainder of the group. There are several definitions of collective remembering. Nicholson (2017, 218) gives a definition of collective memory, and contends that intersubjectivity of memory

leads to collective memory, which is comprised of the transformation of a polyphony of numerous individuals remembering past events or experiences, forged into one negotiated and settled memory. Moreover, once an agreement has been reached, the collective memory may become a given, albeit constantly contested, reassured and reconstructed, in the collective memory of future generations (Shahzad 2011, 380). Collective memory is defined by Wertsch (2008, 120) as "a representation of the past shared by members of a group such as a generation or a nation-state." The collectivity prefers certain particular memories over others and simultaneously forgets and remembers, developing a reasonable and cogent narrative. This narrative comprises a shared storyline and admired heroes (Adams et al. 2013, 446). The backstory is not merely acute nostalgia. It is a compass that navigates Being through its path.

Regarding units – a nonhuman being with agency – such a coherent narrative leads to biographical continuity, which amounts to Being-in-time, i.e., the unit in the existential sense. Meaning-making reassures a unit of its past, present and future. However, memory is not only revised and shaped by the unit but also exerts influence on the unit.

Memory is a means to preserve one's Being-in-time – a medium for constructing and reassuring biographical continuity. Memory is an intersubjective phenomenon, as it is a faculty of the human mind. Thereby it is possessed by agglomerations of people, e.g., a clan or a nation. It is a practice of remembering and forgetting via socialisation. The collective remembering and forgetting practices are buttressed by means such as reference to architecture and monuments (Maurantonio 2017, 6). Such historical sites and locations of remembrance, whether mythological or not, are landmarks of commemoration, instilling certain narratives into a society (Misztal 2003b, 16).

Collective memory plays a significant role in the "socially constructed" citizenry of states. It gives a sense of order to a particular agglomeration of people. Therefore, memory is political, given that it imposes a specific reality on people through forgetting and remembering specific historical memories (de Brito et al. 2001, 38). Memories are recurrently reassessed for the sake of Being's narrative. Forgetting and remembering are components of a perpetual process that enables the construction of Being by narration.

Moreover, it is pivotal in a unit's coping mechanism, which is resorted to vis-à-vis anxiety. Forgetting is as crucial as remembering for nation-states. However, the unit's memories may contradict those of another party that the unit seeks recognition from, i.e., the "European gaze". The national narrative of these units may be challenged by a probable sense of belonging to the EU.

Once memory becomes collective, discussed and shared, it becomes political. However, it should be noted that the collective memories that matter as a component of a unit's self-narrative do not involve every event that happened in chronological order (Berenskötter 2014, 269). The debate about memory is regarded as a "critical situation" unsettling a state's Self as Being and Being's interactions with others by Subotic (2018, 298). Thus, the past exerts influence on the present and future. The contentious past begets anxiety in the present which leads to ontological insecurity. Makhortykh (2020) calls such memories "historical memory," which indicates what an existential threat is and provides security by references to past traumatic or heroic events.

Traumatic and violent past events are social phenomena from which all the units have somehow suffered. On this account, collective memory may engender both amity and enmity. For instance, the Conquest/Fall of Constantinople in 1453 epitomises the Turkish occupation of the City in Greek minds, which constitutes an age-long trauma and shame. On the other hand, memory may also serve as an impetus for détente between two rival neighbours – such as Turkey and Greece. Additionally, Wertsch (2002, 88) posits that a decisive victory over occupation forces as a backstory is a plausible means of collective memory construction. For example, Turkey's collective memory of the National Liberation War mainly hinges on the story of a decisive victory over invaders and collaborators. To this end, memory is resorted to for the construction of national myths, heroes, commemoration days, memorials, festivals etc., which are essential and rudimentary pillars of nation-states (Schwartz and Schuman 2005, 184; Gustafsson 2014, 76-77). All in all, collective memory is comprised of mythical ingredients stirring up emotions and solidifying group consciousness, through a traumatic event that differentiates who is in the group and who is not (Adams et al. 2013, 455).

Collectivities are constructed by a narration of the past and references to collective memories. For this reason, memory is integral to the formation and continuation of units (Sierp and Wüstenberg 2015, 322). Narratives are the subjective accounts of experiences and events that a person or a unit undergoes. Once constructed, they become a *vade mecum*. Smorti and Fioretti (2016, 299) postulate that "a memory was born in the act of encoding the experience of an event." A further definition of it is given by Linde (2015, 4), who argues that a person narrates its "life story" by retelling a "collection of stories" throughout its lifespan. They form the unit's narration of its own story. The unit persistently retells these personal stories to others. Wertsch (2008, 123), on the other hand, regards it as "schematic narrative templates" that consist of a number of "episodes." The narration happens through speech acts. Politicians, leaders or institutions narrate specific memories to the citizenry and the external units, e.g., the European institutions. The narrative becomes a political act that transforms memories into a "comprehensible, chronological, and causal sequence of individual events" (Smorti and Fioretti 2016, 305). Accordingly, the unit as an institution passes down the narrative through mentoring, apprenticeship, records, databases, libraries, etc. (Linde 2015, 6-7).

Memory lives and thrives on the self-narrative. The narrative is not only a means of remembering memories but also a means of ascribing meaning to them. It is "a way of structuring knowledge" (Leon 2016, 19). On that account, memory and narrative are relevant to OSS. Additionally, the certainty/uncertainty dyad plays a significant role in the OSS's lines of argumentation. The certainty/uncertainty dyad respectively instils ontological security/insecurity in essence. Basically, memory provides a group with certainty, i.e., a settled past and an appropriate future – a spatio-temporal continuum. Any inconsistency in narrative springs from disruption to certainty regardless of the essence of certainty – peaceful coexistence or a frozen conflict. Consequently, the disrupted narrative leads Being to an ontologically unstable and insecure state.

Durkheim asserts that social cohesion stems from respect for differences and peaceful coexistence rather than uniformity (Misztal 2003a, 133). Correspondingly, Rumelili (2018) analyses such disruptions to narratives that lead to ontological insecurity

throughout Europe, underlines that a continuous self-narrative emancipated from ontological insecurities may be achieved via the transformation of a belligerent other into a pacific one, and asserts that memory is pivotal in reassuring ontological security. Such a narrative construction is feasible to relate to the bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey.

Memory literature provides a blueprint for how to cope with the past. The peculiar character of memory allows units to construct a novel narrative that upholds their biographical continuity. The intersubjectivity of memory paves the way for the social construction of collective memory and the politics of memory. Collective memory leads to a novel self-narrative constructed by a political debate. All in all, memory is a social construction of the past in conformity with present concerns (Tota 2003, 64). It is a process that is continuously formed by a polyphony of voices.

Rumelili (2018, 290) also indicates that transforming one's past into the constructive other figure via "disassociating" and "securitising" rather than through the idea of the malignant external other is plausible. The EU has concordantly been striving to construct a sense of belonging among European citizens, by addressing past atrocities and war crimes committed in Europe, since the 90s (Sierp 2020). Memory plays a significant role in the EU's overtures to address its ontological insecurities. Accordingly, the EU resorts to remembering specific memories such as World War II (WWII) and the Holocaust (Sierp 2020, 7).

The narrative partakes in the construction of Self as Being. As a matter of fact, the narrative plays a pivotal role in Being to the extent that the coherence of Self as Being hinges heavily on the narrative of collective memories since a unit is, in fact, a mnemonic community. The globalised world that introduced people and units to an unprecedented number of technological advancements together with mass-level access to the internet, has ushered in an era of fractured memory, or irreconcilable memories, for nations that have been the primary beneficiary of collective memory for the last few decades (Misztal 2003b, 18). Memory has become a means of divergent groups assembling around ethnicity, religion, etc.

Denationalisation of memory is the harbinger of anxiety for nation-states. It disrupts the sense of belonging to the nation, coupled with the newly emerging sense of belonging to the EU, which contradicts the sense of belonging to the nation. The EU still excludes particular episodes of its past, e.g., colonialism, from its implementation of memory politics, although it has recently initiated a more inclusive approach that omits forgetting (Sierp 2020). The EU's attitude is a thorny problem for Greece-Turkey bilateral relations. Whilst a culture-oriented approach has taken priority over value-laden Europeanisation, the states in question resort to remembering and forgetting simultaneously, which is at odds with the EU's modus operandi regarding memory politics. These states' sense of belonging becomes disrupted, to a differing extent, by the EU's remembering act under the present circumstances.

2.3.4. Certainty/Uncertainty dichotomy

The orthodox definition of security refers to a limited understanding of security, reasoned within the scope of the long-established Westphalian international politics. A state, first and foremost, must safeguard and preserve, inter alia, its territorial integrity, i.e., physical security, in this context. The Westphalian reasoning draws attention to somatic security. However, ontological security of one's self is a strain of security which is as vital as and, occasionally, more important than physical security (Steele 2008b, 2). As an existentialist account of ontological security, this thesis argues that a unit must have agency to have ontology and the will to secure it, in tandem with Berenskötter's (2020, 274) assertion that ontological security is contingent upon the presence of agency. Being an actor with agency enables partaking in international relations. Agency is the capacity to make and implement a decision in this regard. It is a property of units, together with self-narrative, that leaves those units susceptible to anxiety. All in all, units long for ontological security. It is a universal impulse that discloses why the certainty/uncertainty – regardless of its essence, i.e., pacific or hostile – dyad and "unknowability of future" matters in international politics.

A unit is in dire need of ontological security – security of the Self as Being – as much as somatic security. It is the self that establishes, confirms and verifies the authenticity of the unit. The unit makes sense of the world and acts accordingly as a Being-in-the-world rather than a physical entity. The level-headed and prudent Self as Being keeps the unit physically and mentally safe. It is uncertainty that is inimical to the unit rather than conflict per se. As it is aware of the longing for ontological security, a unit routinises its interactions with other entities and resorts to memory politics to construct a particular self-narrative.

A unit becomes vulnerable to anxiety under the conditions where the unit develops a sense of Being with agency – a thinking and intelligent Dasein, in the Heideggerian sense, who possesses the ability to act at one's own discretion, distinguishing it from the "beast" in the Kierkegaardian sense. Agency gives way to the "possibility of possibility" – in other words, volition. Free will enables anxiety to grow, while it is kept at bay by certainty emanating from and fortified by routines and memory politics. Ergo, it is uncertainty that disrupts self-narrative and triggers anxiety. Following in the footsteps of schools of thought that analyse uncertainty, Rathbun (2007, 534) demarcates four schools of thought – namely rationalism, realism, cognitivism and constructivism – from each other in an attempt to elucidate that their understanding of uncertainty does not refer to its emotive aspect, in spite of the fact that their definitions of uncertainty vary. The conventional wisdom of uncertainty surmises that it is always possible to predict probable events, and an educated guess is always feasible. There is plenty of room for subjectivity; however, subjective differences do not hinder rational decision-making informed by probable causalities and the underlying causes of raison d'état.

Mainstream IR assumes that units are wary of conflicts. They aim to ensure their security and avoid physical perils. Accordingly, mainstream IR scholars devote themselves to material capabilities to mull over the physical security of units. They focus on how to thwart or deter somatic threats. On the other hand, OSS offers a novel approach to security studies, given its argument that conflicts are not inevitably inimical to units. Realist reasoning asserts that uncertainty, regarded as an anomaly, leads to a security dilemma. There are decades-long conflicts that rage through states and regions. Is the uncertainty

of others' intentions enough of a reason to maintain animosity for decades? Mitzen (2009) contends that certainty is a more appropriate definition rather than uncertainty in this regard. Conflicts may serve as routines that units would rather not disrupt.

Mitzen (2006b) mentions uncertainty as a fundamental concept in OSS, leading to anxiety, thereby ontological insecurities. States look for certainty regardless of its nature – through frozen conflict or peaceful coexistence – since uncertainty may lead to power transitions, disrupting the biographical continuity and subsequently ontological security (Chacko 2014). Mitzen's (2006a, 272) uncertainty implies that calculated decision-making is improbable. Lawmakers neither foresee nor predict probable outcomes, motivations or interrelations. Under the circumstances, causality is imperceptible, and educated guesses are implausible. Such an uncertainty where a unit is puzzled and incapacitated takes rational action and reasoning out of the equation. Such uncertainty leads an agent to deliberate over the most fundamental and existential queries, i.e., 'possibility of possibility'. Thenceforth, ontological insecurity engulfs and subsequently debilitates Self as Being insofar as Being cannot rationally act. Following in the footsteps of Mitzen, Rumelili (2020, 262) distinguishes the structural realist definition of uncertainty from the "unknowability of future" and the succeeding anxiety. Whereas the structural realist argument posits that uncertainty is an impulse derived from the survival instinct and a self-help system, the "unknowability of future" draws attention to the "emotional ramifications of uncertainty" (Rumelili 2020, 262). In the Hobbesian sense, units are deprived of the knowledge of future possibilities. It is an object-world fraught with "possibility of possibility." Consistently, a unit, bereft of a clear understanding of his or its milieu and surroundings, becomes overwhelmed by all-pervasive anxiety.

Mitzen (2006a) underlines the deficiency of "irrationality" as a concept in the uncertainty literature. There are prospective events that decision-makers take into account. Nevertheless, there is manifold information that cannot be accounted for to the fullest extent. Thus, it is unknown how many probabilities the future holds. Rationality is not applicable to decision-making under those circumstances. Following Anthony Giddens' line of enquiry into daily routines, Mitzen proposes (2006a, 278) "routinisation" to cope with uncertainty. Routinisation creates a sense of a stable environment where causality is

well-grounded. This is why, faced with uncertainty, units adhere firmly to routines, since uncertainty jeopardies the integrity of Self as Being, and the unit feels an impulse to concretise the boundaries of his or its existence and self-narrative.

Certainty may be conflict-ridden. It may be a frozen conflict that units have learnt how to live with in time. A conflict-ridden environment may provide a sense of certainty that units comprehend, and so they act accordingly. Mitzen (2006b) exemplifies the argument with the concept of security dilemma. Security dilemma, once established, provides a particular state of routinised relations to units. The conflict-ridden essence of their relations transforms into the status quo. A derailment from enmity and animosity would be regarded as disrupting the units' self-narrative. The units are already attached to the routinised relations providing ontological security.

Certainty is not preordained to possess a conflict-ridden essence. Peaceful relations may spring up, and Being may adopt novel routines and a conciliatory self-narrative. Following the assumptions of Mitzen (2006a) regarding the EU as a security provider to its member states, this thesis contends that the EU is a case in point. The EU provides ontological security to its member states through cooperation, ensured and promoted by a familiar and transnational sense of belonging. The common European sense of belonging is a protective cocoon that provides certainty to its units. The EU constructs a culture-oriented and history-centric European narrative. Mitzen (2006a, 275) asserts that "cooperation among EU member states is so ingrained that national interests can be difficult to disentangle from European ones in many issues." It is a solid example of routinisation/established habit. The EU has constructed a transnational sense of belonging. It makes use of memory politics, and constructs a European self-narrative. Past events are remembered and routinised via various institutions and means, such as the Council on Foreign Relations and Common Foreign and Security Policy. Such institutions enable routinisation and the construction of habitual acts, such as union-wide commemoration days and holidays, museums, parades, and joint parliamentary sessions.

The units use routines so that actual uncertainties that lead to pervasive anxieties are not aggravated. Deep-lying anxieties stemming from actual uncertainties are intense and

question the existence of Being, to the extent that the unit becomes debilitated. Routines provide units with stability and certitude that they desperately require to assure their own Being of its agency, and to comprehend what they really are. Once a unit enters into uncharted territories, the unit is compelled to construct its routines for the sake of stability. Otherwise, the unit would face engulfment by anxiety. Thus, routinisation and memory politics are prerequisites for constructing Self as Being.

2.3.5. Routinisation and memory politics

Rational choice is contingent on ontological security. A social entity is assumed to be psychologically stable and shrewd. Otherwise, a unit would be prone to anxiety and unable to make or act upon a decision. Ontological insecurity is the profound and debilitating anxiety of "unknowability" of the contingencies and perils that a unit is obliged to confront. It is improbable to stay prudent and level-headed once ontological insecurities engulf an agent. As a matter of fact, an ontologically insecure unit is destabilised to the extent that the dearth of a unified and cogent sense of Self as Being hinders calculated decision-making.

Ontological insecurity is rarely encountered in everyday life, given that chaos and uncertainty are constantly kept at bay. Otherwise, trauma surges up, and remains at a high level within the unit once its cognitive-emotive stability is unbalanced and impaired. Existential threats take hold of a unit unless trauma is somehow restricted and constrained. Routinisation and memory politics contribute to constructing a protective cocoon that staves off trauma-triggered anxieties (Innes and Steele 2014; Gustafsson 2014; Malksoo 2015). Routinisation and memory politics occasion and construct an intersubjective cognitive-emotive order.

A protective cocoon is a bulwark against the ontological threats and existential perils that Self as Being would be overwhelmed by if it did not exist. It enables Self as Being to reason and to apply critical thinking to the matters in hand. The ontological threats are detrimental to the roots of Being's existence, to the extent that Being cannot sensibly undergo real-world experiences due to such grassroots menace. A unit puzzled and

perplexed by ontological queries would not aptly perform its duties – making rational choices, albeit relatively.

This thesis argues that units seek ontological security via routinisation and memory politics. As previously mentioned, routinisation and memory politics lay the foundations for a robust and resilient sense of belonging. Additionally, relations between units are susceptible to routinisation as well. If not recognised by the other side, an attempt to routinise relations may lead to a state of denial and enmity between units – through remembering and forgetting practices. An attempt to routinise relations, thus, could ignite ontological insecurity for both sides (Greve 2018, 865).

Ontological security signifies confidence in the biographical continuity and coherence of the milieu and the environment. Mitzen (2006b, 346) contends that "ontological security-seeking is the drive to minimise hard uncertainty by imposing cognitive order on the environment". The fundamental ontological and existential questions are overwhelming to the extent that Being cannot function as a unit vis-à-vis all of the threats the unit is obliged to confront simultaneously, without the protective cocoon of routines and forgetting/remembering. The self-integrity provided by the protective cocoon enables Being to focus on the object world.

Routines contribute to narrativisation, which constructs an understanding of the object world and evokes a feeling of certainty and continuity in a unit (Berenskötter 2020, 280-1). Furthermore, forgetting/remembering practices provide and maintain "a sense of continuity between the past and the present" (Rumelili 2018, 288). Additionally, "material environments" that are ascribed meaning by memory politics function as a "source of ontological security", thereby a sense of continuity in "material environments", transforming them into "ontic spaces" – as seen in the debate about Hagia Sophia's status between Greece and Turkey (Ejdus 2017, 27). They become spatial representations of Self and play a pivotal role in the self-narrative. Indeed, these ontic spaces serve as a bedrock underlying and assuring the self-narrative.

These routines and memories may possess positive and negative connotations, which is not pertinent to their impact on Being's self-integrity. “Rigid routines” restrict a unit to an “inability to learn”, whereas “flexible [interstate] routines” enable “learning and transformative change” (Mitzen 2006b, 364). Also, routinisation may be either bipartite or multipartite. There may be others that are involved in routinisation. Even if a unit remains committed to the relevant routines, the other(s) may unsettle the routine(s) to the extent that certainty becomes disrupted, the level of anxiety rises dramatically, and Being's self-integrity is challenged (Gustafsson 2016, 615). Routinisation plays a significant role in constructing Being, together with memory politics. Thus, a unit is attached to routinisation and memory politics in parallel with the efficiency of routinisation and memory politics in constructing Being.

Zarakol (2017, 51) postulates that there are two pillars of routinisation, namely institutionalised and non-institutionalised. The latter comprises everyday practices of citizens, e.g., daily routines, social interactions and so on. On the other hand, the former is a nationwide “ontological framework” which provides and manages ontological security that enables a stable and coherent self (Zarakol 2017, 51). States seek ontological security through institutionalised means; nevertheless, the non-institutionalised source of routinisation is still relevant to states’ ontological security-seeking process, albeit indirectly. There is a symbiotic relationship between the non-institutionalised and institutionalised pillars of ontological security. The various means used by an institutionalised pillar of routinisation, such as speech acts and commemoration days, contribute to constructing non-institutionalised everyday routines. In turn, non-institutionalised routines may exert influence over an institutionalised source of routinisation, e.g., its duration, preservation and revision.

The protective cocoon generated by routinisation and memory politics provides fertile ground for determining the properties of Self as Being – regularising its decision-making and transforming the object world into a coherent and plausible whole. A protective cocoon is tantamount to self-narrative. It is a self-narrative formed by routinisation and memory politics and, subsequently, functions as a protective cocoon against chaos. Self-narrative is formed through memory politics – remembering and forgetting, fabricating

national myths, commitment to the nation, the practices of history panels etc. Routinisation ensures the consistency of self-narrative constructed by memory politics. It refers to acting and reacting in accordance with postulates spawned by self-narrative.

Chaos is kept at bay at all costs, since the unit would not perform any one of its duties in the object world otherwise. Therefore, certainty does not involve either a positive or negative connotation, but remains impartial and neutral about the essence of certainty/uncertainty. Indeed, certainty may emanate from amity as much as enmity. Hence, Self as Being develops an ardent attachment to routinisation and the outcomes and offspring of memory politics. In fact, it has a compulsive affinity for self-narrative. Self-narrative becomes an end in itself, rather than a means to navigate through the object world or international politics, since an alteration in self-narrative would mean the demise of Self as Being. It becomes intransigent and uncompromising in the face of disruption to routinisation and memory politics.

2.3.6. Self-narrative

Traumatic events are debilitating and unsettling for units. Such experiences give way to not only uncertainty, e.g., an opening for the possibility of change, but also repercussions in the form of remembrance of these traumatic events. Nevertheless, Innes (2017, 357) reiterates the axiom that "memory is imperfect." Narratives are political, given that they are contestable. It represents specific events in a way that conforms to the emotive and cognitive state of the unit. Therefore, the internal process of becoming or narrativisation may generate others, another unit or a past event, inter alia.

Narratives are potent means regardless of the vessel they ascribe meaning to. Even though this thesis does not regard narrativisation as "fantasy" in a Lacanian sense as Eberle (2019) does, narrativisation is construed as a unit's reflection on its past. Through self-narrative, units comprehend their milieu and environment and construct their Self as Being (Subotic 2016, 612). A state is regarded as a spatial entity, unless the state as a unit constructs its unique self-narrative and, thus, its biographical continuity, which complements its Being as a spatio-temporal entity (Agius 2017, 112). Therefore,

narratives exert influence on the world of politics, foreign policy and international affairs, given that narrative contributes to the construction of the most fundamental constituent of a unit, namely Being itself. A unit resorts to its self-narrative so as to make sense of their surroundings, bilateral relations and international politics. A narrative always favours a particular vantage point of an event at the expense of other viewpoints. It is mostly selective and serves a purpose.

Furthermore, it warrants reflexivity, since Self as Being informs foreign policy, bilateral relations and the unit's perception of international politics. Narrative omits and includes – forgets and remembers – precise details. Hence, it becomes an emotive as much as a cognitive process.

One of the main assumptions of OSS is that a unit's Self is constructed by its biographical narrative (Delehanty and Steele 2009, 531). Moreover, it is argued that units are, in actuality, biographical narratives (Berenskötter 2014). Indeed, a unit that is an intact sovereign state in the context of Realism is actually "being-in-time" or "becoming" – unable to be complete and whole in an orthodox definition of the word – in OSS (Berenskötter 2020, 276). The self-narrative is fundamentally a story of the unit's take on what has happened. The story is recursively narrated, given that Self as Being is a process of becoming. An everlasting narrativisation constantly reconstitutes Self as Being, drawing from Heidegger's Being-in-time. Indeed, a self-narrative supplies a unit with biographical continuity, and enables the unit to realise what the unit is and what his or its place in international politics is. Therefore, a unit hinges on self-narrative in order to comprehend international affairs to a large extent. A unit continuously gains experience by establishing and maintaining its bilateral relations and partaking in events. The self-narrative is created and developed as the experiences accumulate.

Beliefs of Being are crucial, insofar as those beliefs are Being's understanding and interpretation of the object world, which may either alleviate anxiety or aggravate or arouse it. The narrative of a particular biography is fundamental to the construction of the Self as Being, given that the mechanisms of Self as Being – the backstory of units, heroic figures, events, and national myths – are assessed by analysis of such narratives.

Furthermore, Steele (2005, 527) asserts that "in reflexively monitoring their behaviour, actors produce a discursive biographical narrative." Units, either revisionist or status quo-seeking, vindicate their actions if they conform to established international norms, or account for them if those actions are a far cry from the extant international tenets. All in all, traumatic events are "disruptive and consequential" (Subotic 2016, 616). Self-narrative comes into existence by articulating what has happened and developing/producing narratives of those happenings.

The thesis argues that politicians and leading figures address artefacts – monuments, national flags, historical sites and so on – and events – commemoration days, past events as critical junctures, etc. – so as to establish Self as Being. Self-narrative hinges on biographical continuity. However, it is not a storyline that contains every single event in a linear sense. On the contrary, it omits particular events – and includes others – in order to create a meaningful and coherent biographical continuity. Thus, the Self as Being gets a grasp on "its place in 'the world'", internalises its existence in a spatio-temporal sense, and fathoms their past, present and future (Berenskötter 2014, 269). Narrative functions as the touchstone, which enables a blueprint for comprehending why units seek ontological security and the consequences of ontological security-seeking behaviour.

2.3.7. Sense of belonging

Belonging is a sense of attachment to and affinity with the vicinity and milieu. It informs a Being of how to carry on and it addresses angst. It is a state of accord in which Self as Being – 'becoming' or 'being-in-the-world' – blooms and where Self as Being is content, fulfilled and intact (Miller 2003, 218).

There are many critical junctions exerting force over the units throughout the world. Globalisation is one of those turning points. Following the intricate interconnection between the global and the local, the term "glocal" was coined, so as to underline the changing spatio-temporal sense of the period. The units' ontological commitments are challenged by the shrinking of time and space in this connection. The new state of international affairs has unsettled the trajectory of nation-states, and this weighs on these

units, which in turn hinges on their certainty and a sense of belonging to a nation. The ensuing ontological insecurity engenders the need for (1) the reassurance of symbols such as national myths and heroes and (2) authenticity in confronting anxieties and constructing a novel sense of belonging. Kinnvall (2004, 742-3) calls it the "de-territorialisation of time and space that affects daily life; in a world of diminishing territorial barriers, the search for constant time- and space-bound identities has become a way to cope with the effects of modern life". The protective cocoon that units rely on gradually wears off vis-à-vis the new globalised phenomenon.

Being is in a constant process of becoming. Self-narrative is located at the core of Being. Thereby, there is a deep-rooted desire to sustain the continuity of self-narrative. It perpetually constructs a story of itself and what is happening. Security as a "thick signifier" paves the way for scrutinising the distorted remembering acts, the self-narratives of units, their emotive responses to anxieties, and the hurdle of a sense of belonging.

"Chosen traumas" and "chosen glories" contribute to constructing narratives that bring about Being and, subsequently, a sense of belonging, which, in turn, leads to ontological (in)security (Kinnvall 2004, 755). Stories about past events provide biographical continuity – stability and certainty. Traumatic events are conducive to mortification and animus, which, in turn, occasion the reinforcement of alienation and othering. They are bequeathed to new generations as memories, myths, etc. Kinnvall (2004) asserts that nationalism, together with religion, is a potent trauma-provider that is challenged by globalised international politics and nonstate or supranational actors, e.g., the EU.

A sense of belonging is a two-pronged affinity. On the one hand, it hinges on the propensities of Self as Being and its expectations from what it longs for. On the other hand, it is related to the view of the unit by others. Furthermore, a sense of belonging is a prerequisite for cultivating amicable relations. A "dialectic of self-definitions and definitions imposed by others" conditions the quality of sense of belonging or the presence/absence of belonging (Voloder and Andits 2016, 301). As a matter of fact, the

sense of belonging is an innate affinity. However, the affinity is susceptible to the validation of others, i.e., a significant other or an institution such as the EU.

I perceive a particular pattern in how to ensure and strengthen ontological security. The bottom-line argument of this thesis is that daily routines and memory politics occasion a sense of certainty. It is a process of narrative construction. Past events are narrated in a particular way, and the self-narrative is routinised in a spatio-temporal sense by the unit.

Neocleous (2012, 196) regards the narration of past events as states' cherry-picking traumatic past events to perpetuate "contemporary order". In contrast, this thesis further advances the idea that the routinised reassurance of past events – memories – contributes to constructing a self-narrative that functions as a protective cocoon that enables an anxiety-free state, in which Self as Being regards itself as uniform, cogent and consistent in time and space. It is indeed a state of certainty. A stable sense of belonging, e.g., a sense of belonging to the EU, is contingent on the aforementioned state of certainty. The presence/absence of a sense of belonging is a primary determinant of anxiety level. Moreover, an inconsistency between a sense of belonging and the national narrative provokes anxiety as well. It is an emotive/cognitive process. Thus, it is somehow both rational and irrational, which I call "subjective rationality". The emotive aspect is theorised by Rumelili (2020) as the "unknowability of future", as mentioned above.

The sense of belonging is a thorny issue for Greece-Turkey bilateral relations, on account of the incongruity of their dual sense of belonging. There is an established sense of belonging to the nation on the one hand. On the other hand, there is a nascent and precarious sense of belonging to the EU. Gully and Itagaki (2020, 254) mention the "migrant double bind" or "German paradox" as it is called by "Neighbourhood Mothers" in Germany, where "migrants are simultaneously told that the Holocaust is not part of their history because they are not 'ethnically' German and then castigated as un-integratable for their alleged indifference to Holocaust remembrance." The aforementioned predicament is an epitome of the sense of belonging quandary Greece and Turkey are in.

2.3.8. Misrecognition

"Recognition" implies existence in international politics. It gives a sense of being real and present among other units with agency in global politics. A unit experiences a sense of belonging to an international society of likeminded units. It is an external means to realise one's own Self as Being. Recognition is a prerequisite for being-in-the-world in the Heideggerian sense. Misrecognition/denial of recognition, therefore, insinuates an exogenous interference with a unit's biographical continuity. The interference weakens and undermines biographical continuity, which provokes anxiety.

Mitzen (2006b, 359) argues that the "recognised role" takes over from "subjective identity" in time. The Self as Being assumes the role that others provide it with. Hagström and Gustafsson (2015, 11), on the other hand, argue that the actor either takes the role and goes through a period of shame, or refuses it and gets insulted. Either way, a unit's national narrative is in contradiction to its image via-a-vis another unit. This incompatibility may exacerbate the anxiety of the subject.

The recognition that is granted to another by the unit may trigger a "national sense of loss, tragedy and betrayal […]" among the unit's own citizenry (Subotic 2016, 620). A unit develops a national narartive that leads to certain presumptions about others. These may be considered mis/recognition. A change in the mis/recognition may trigger a reaction at the grassroots level. Anxiety experienced at the grassroots level due to a change in biographical continuity, in fact, is a major obstacle in the path of any possible reconciliation.

Mis/recognition also enables a unit to deprive another of positive qualities and thereby countervail "any feeling of guilt through the nonrecognition […]" (Lindemann 2014, 484). Therefore, misrecognition/nonrecognition is a *sine qua non* for alleviating the emotional repercussions of nonconformity with whatever the international rules of conduct may cause.

Gustafsson (2016, 617) coins the terms “thin recognition”, which means the recognition of a unit as a “sovereign state belonging to the international community” and “thick recognition”, which amounts to the acknowledgement of the “difference and uniqueness” of a unit. A unit may misrecognise or deny another unit’s self-narrative. It is irrelevant whether the self-narrative or the (mis)recognition is genuine and factual. The unit’s image in others’ mind must not contradict the self-narrative regardless of its factuality, since the self-narrative and the image are merely social constructions. Therefore, there is no correct way of recognising another unit. It is the contradiction in narrative definitions and the rebuttal of another unit’s self-narrative altogether that externally lowers the level of anxiety of Self as Being. Misrecognition and denial disrupt the self-narrative, which provokes anxiety.

States recognise each other on a routine basis. The mutual recognition is one of the means through which a unit realises its Self as Being. The recognition may transform into misrecognition, i.e., denial of recognition. A unit’s national narrative and, subsequently, the Self as Being may change over time, or the image of the Self in another’s mind may alter. This change would occasion a contradiction between the self-narrative and the image. The contradiction is a traumatic experience, eliciting a feeling of being insulted, and an injury to one’s pride and a loss of status (Ringmar 2011, 7).

Misrecognition may incite nationalistic sentiments in the misrecognised unit; once the unit realises its false image in the eyes of the other, its sense of belonging to the other weakens. This feeble sense of belonging leads to an existential void which is filled by nationalistic sentiments.

An ontologically secure Self is contingent upon a recognised Self (Narozhna 2022, 78; Mitzen 2006b, 358). The absence of this recognition results in an existential crisis. The Self as Being generates inadequate self-narrative, leading to counterproductive foreign policy moves under the circumstances.

Traces of mis/recognition can be found in statements, representations and behaviour (Gustafsson 2016, 618). The subject observes and ascribes meaning to these practices. A

unit reads its own image in another's practices. Any incongruity between the unit's interpretation of its own image in these practices and its self-narrative triggers anxiety.

Turkey-EU and Greece-EU relations are a case in point. Their self-narratives are in contradiction with their image in the" European gaze". The "European gaze" serves as a means for providing fulfilment for one's Self as Being in Greece and Turkey. Therefore, its misrecognition and denial aggravate their anxiety. Both Greece and Turkey have experienced an upsurge in nationalistic sentiments at the beginning of the 21st century. Greece has gone through the rise of the far-right, triggered by the 2008 Greek government debt crisis. Their less European status has permitted Greeks to cognitively reduce their anxiety while not undoing their Europeanisation. The non-Europeanness of the Turks, on the other hand, has amplified their anxiety and led to de-Europeanisation and the insurmountable rise of the Islamist variant in Turkish nationalism.

2.4. Closing Remarks

There is extant literature on ontological security in IR which asserts that ontological security is pertinent to the units themselves as much as to somatic security. Ontological security as a concept emanates from the assumption that a unit is in dire need of possessing a coherent and cogent sense of Self as Being, which is brought about by a mixture of routinisation and memory politics, constructing a protective cocoon that enables the formation of a novel self-narrative. Fundamentally, OSS concerns the security of the Self. Kinnvall and Mitzen (2020, 245) postulate that "the conceptual core of ontological security is the focus on the relational constitution of the self in the context of anxiety." Accordingly, this thesis furthers the claim that OSS should be deployed to comprehend to what extent emotive and cognitive uncertainties have an impact on units.

OSS is a means, like any other theory, to shed light on the object world. It makes sense of international affairs, bilateral relations, events, the foreign policies of units, etc. It accounts for why a unit would perform certain moral actions even if such behaviour would compromise its somatic security. Disrupted foreign policy routines and ruptures in already-narrativised memories – the 1821 Greek Rebellion in the Turkish narrative and

the 1821 Greek Revolution in the Greek narrative – render the results of foreign policy decisions and actions unpredictable. A unit routinises its foreign policy and bilateral relations to prevent radical challenges to its self-narrative because OSS assumes that a unit's policies must comply with his or its Self as Being. Following the distinction between fear and anxiety drawn up by existentialist thought, this thesis contends that, as fear is induced by menaces to somatic security, anxiety is triggered by disruptions to the Self as Being. If the biographical continuity and consistency of Self as Being are preserved, the ontological security needs of the unit are met.

An unwavering and coherent Self is imperative to any unit. It enables agency which, in turn, triggers action. Stability and consistency in the aforementioned sequence are contingent on routines and remembering/forgetting practices. The existential longing for daily routines and established Self alleviate anxiety arising out of ontological pandemonium. In tandem with the assumptions and assertions above, routinised bilateral relations and foreign policies prolong Self as Being.

Subjectivity and relativity are decisive in foreign policy and bilateral relations. A unit's Self as Being is constructed through a self-narrative, and the presence of a self-narrative verifies that the unit is not wayward or erratic. On the contrary, it is feasible to account for its actions in relation to its self-narrative. In other words, units' actions are informed by their perception of what happens in their milieu. The relations between various units and routinised foreign policy inclinations bring about a cognitive and emotive protective cocoon that keeps anxiety at bay. Ergo, "state needs may not be rational (such as to achieve national glory), but their pursuit usually is" (Jakša 2017, 38). OSS provides a vantage point that elucidates the mechanisms for and impulses towards units' quasi-erratic and -nonsensical actions and decisions.

The ontological insecurity-inducing sources can, simultaneously or separately, be internal and external. In other words, there are endogenous and exogenous impediments to altering the course of 'becoming' – Being-in-time in the Heideggerian sense and Self as Being in my terminology. There may be either internal pressure to pursue a particular course of action, or international norms or restrictions that a unit ought to abide by. The

former is indispensable because of the prerequisite for having biographical continuity, whereas the latter is required by the need to be affirmed by others and to be a component of international society – a sense of belonging.

The "positive security" concept provides fertile ground for addressing threats to the ontological security of agents and how to ally with and dispel them through routinisation. Roe (2008, 778) elaborates on the concept and turns the spotlight on the sharp distinction between "freedom from (negative)" and "freedom to (positive)." Following Smith's (2005, 486) conceptualisation of security as "not a value in itself, but [is] the reflection of, and an attitude towards other values, and especially the core values of the order," Roe (2008, 789) underlines mutually constructed values as the units' holy grail obliged to be secured through routinisation. The correspondence between positive security and ontological security is discernible and evident. People and society must cherish their way of life, and delineate what defines them – human rights, gender equality, individualism etc. – instead of falling prey to fears instilled into society. Thus, the threats to society's lifestyle, existence, and people's individual lives are warded off. Indeed, it is a blueprint for ensuring one's ontological security through the "positive security" concept.

OSS diverts the attention of IR and security specialists from long-discussed physical security, and fills a lacuna in security studies by realigning the focus on the security of Being. There are manifold ways of enquiring into and elaborating on OSS – Lacanian "fantasy" (Eberle 2019), "special relationships" (Opperman and Hansel, 2019), and sense of threat (Suzuki 2019), etc. This thesis, on the other hand, embarks upon the quest with a prudent and ardent focus on Existentialist philosophy, memory politics and narrative, in an attempt to (1) bolster the concept's existentialist pillars, e.g., Being and anxiety, (2) solidify the concept's stance in IR on narrative and memory politics and (3) last but not least, vindicate and endorse OSS as a contribution to IR. OSS is promising, given its aforementioned features. It is a blueprint for analysing bilateral and inter-unit relations in international affairs and making sense of the impulses behind enmity.

Existentialist Ontological Security enables us to analyse Greece-Turkey bilateral relations from a viewpoint that transcends the duality/dichotomy-focused prism. Thus, the analysis

is made in the domain of the real instead of domains of the actual and empirical, where duality-focused academic works usually make their analyses. The Self/Other-focused analyses the academy has provided thus far is substituted with an inner narrativisation that makes use of the fear object in an attempt to cope with/overlook existential anxiety. As Greeks have rebelled against their "benefactor", which bestowed upon them a privileged status over other non-Muslim subjects on the western shores of Anatolia, İstanbul, the Aegean Sea and the Balkans, they narrated their uprising as a national reawakening that was bound to happen due to the backwardness with which the "Turkish tyranny" imprisoned them. Indeed, Greek revolutionaries forgot specific memories and remembered others, to underline that it was the age of revolutions and the dawn of nation-states. They followed this up by joining the European community of nation-states and entering the modern civilisation-focused international system. It is an attempt to alleviate anxiety through a fear object and subject themselves to the "European gaze", and to narrativise one's Self in line with biographical continuity instead of dichotomy/duality.

3. THE SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY AND NATIONALISM

A comparative analysis of the development of nationalisms in modern Greece and modern Turkey is carried out, with a brief discussion of the European involvement in the context of OSS in Chapter 3. Following a multi-layered understanding of the ontological insecurity on Europe's periphery, the thesis argues that the existential birth of modern Greece and modern Turkey (the Greek War of Independence and the Turkish National Liberation War) resulted in the emergence of a fear object on both sides, to alleviate Greek and Turkish ontological insecurities incited by their unstable biographical continuity and their respective weak or complete lack of sense of belonging to Europe.

The bilateral relations of Greece and Turkey is one of the most convoluted disputes in global politics. The political, legal, military and economic aspects of the dispute are merely symptoms of the issue. The kernel of the issue is emotive. Myths, symbols and trauma transmute the essence of these bilateral relations. The advent of Greek and Turkish nationalism has taken a toll on the relations between modern Greece and Turkey. Therefore, it is imperative to analyse the nationalism movements on both sides, and their repercussions on contemporary bilateral relations in the context of OSS. Accordingly, the debate about Hagia Sophia's status is analysed in chapter 5, since Hagia Sophia is a national symbol for Greeks and Turks alike.

The bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey are an extension of their past relations. Fighting against each other for sovereignty and interacting with each other for centuries, they are entrapped by their ontological insecurity. Mistrust is pervasive in both societies, and the material disputes emanate from their ontological insecurity. The fear and stereotypes that the ontological insecurity begets undermine their bilateral relations and create a climate of distrust.

Symbols are not materially destructive; nevertheless, they are meaningful. They are means either to cope with anxiety or provoke it or both. A symbol of valour for one may

be a symbol of trauma for the other. The signing of the armistice of Mudros on H.M.S. Agamemnon may not symbolise anything for the Turks. However, it is a reference to the leader of the united Greek army landing on the Western shores of contemporary Turkey and invading Troy, which is the site of one of the most prominent events in Greek mythology. As another example, the French General Franchet d'Espèrey entered İstanbul on horseback in 1919 – on a supposedly white horse gifted by local Greeks – in the same way as Mehmed the Conqueror did centuries ago (Lewis, 1968, 240). In fact, the historical records and visuals indicate that the horse had a dark hide (Eldem 2021, 227-57). Symbols manifest emotions. These manifestations bring about reverberations. The allegedly white horse the French General mounted heralded a bright future for the Greeks and a woeful one for the Turks. Turks have imagined the event as the harbinger of gloomy days and have a distorted memory of that moment. H.M.S. Agamemnon has become a reference point for all the sufferings the Greeks' forefathers endured at the hands of the despicable "Turk", a reminder of their sorrow, and a symbol to alleviate their anxiety by means of a sense of closure. A reference to the past has alleviated the Greeks' anxiety and ensured their ontological security, whilst another reference has provoked anxiety among the Turks, and worsened their ontological insecurity.

The historical background matters because what happens in the domains of the empirical and the actual also has an impact in the domain of the real. The domains are, in fact, complementary. Mechanisms such as anxiety, biographical continuity and a sense of belonging in the domain of the real bring about events such as a polyphony of voices – people, elites, bureaucrats, politicians etc. – making decisions in the domain of the actual. These events lead to experiences such as the continental shelf dispute and the air space issue in the domain of the empirical. These experiences, in turn, either provoke or alleviate the anxiety already existing.

The advent of a national narrative/intersubjective consciousness has resulted in two nation-states on both sides of the Aegean Sea. Both fighting their National Liberation Wars against each other, they have found themselves in a precarious situation. Athens relinquished the *Megali Idea*[3] (Great Idea) concept, just as Ankara declared that the

[3] The aim of reviving the Byzantine Empire by establishing a Greek state incorporating those lands.

Mîsâk-ı Millî[4] (National Pact) had already been realised, and Turkey was not going to implement expansionist policies. Then, why have bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey been defined in terms of enmity instead of amity? This thesis seeks an answer to this question.

I argue that OSS proves suitable for analysing the root causes of the enmity in Greece-Turkey bilateral relations. OSS draws attention to the entities that have been victimised, leading to profound emotions like anxiety. Although they would prefer not to be victimised, these units mythologise and mythicise their memories and traumas. The Self as Being/becoming internalises emotive reactions such as guilt, hatred and fear. These emotional reactions are passed down via narrativisation. Once the emotive reactions seep into the Self, they become the established truth. An entity represents more of an anxious state than a rational actor under the circumstances.

An entity is ultimately not rational since it is an amalgamation of individuals. An individual is an inextricable complement of the Self. The Self and individuals are interwoven (Volkan and Itzkowitz 1994, 10). An affront to the Self distresses the individual as well. The individual possesses its own Self; nevertheless, it is also a part of a nationwide Self. It, like the remainder of the components, is under the influence of memories, myths, traumas and glories. They define the Self as Being/becoming. Therefore, they tacitly determine the trajectory of relations between nations. When the Self is distressed, anxiety takes over. The Self, together with all its components, relieves the anxiety via routinising myths, events, folklore, rituals etc. Thereby, the narrative is safeguarded and preserved.

Ontological insecurity triggers nationalist sentiment, and results in the rise of nationalism. Therefore, Greek and Turkish nationalisms are of paramount importance to the thesis' analytical purposes. Analysis of the main focus, i.e., Greek-Turkish bilateral relations, warrants a thorough analysis of Greek and Turkish nationalisms.

[4] The aim of national independence for Turks.

3.1. Greek Nationalism

The essence of Greek nationalism is based on what was a liberation movement. It aimed to secede from a pre-modern political entity for the very survival of a nation based on modernity. Secession has enabled the Greek intelligentsia to distinguish the Greeks from the "backward" and "barbaric" Turks. It was also a charm offensive aimed at westernising what has been deemed Oriental, i.e., the Greeks, in Europe. Indeed, it was Europe's interest in Ancient Greece that led to the rise of the diaspora intelligentsia's intellectual awareness. Thus, the will to Europeanise and to de-Orientalise/Ottomanise have moulded their construction of what "Greekness" means.

Greek nationalism had had a two-pronged – positive and negative – approach to history. The positive one refers to Ancient Greece, which edified and inspired the Enlightenment, i.e., our past as an inspiration for Western civilisation. The negative one is marked by *Tourkokratia*[5] – the emancipation of the Greeks from the 'Turkish yoke'. *Tourkokratia* was an extension of the idea of the "zealot" and "backward" Byzantine in the first Greek historiography, or what amounts to the first official Greek historiography (Kızılyürek 2002, 31). Greek intellectuals later transformed the Byzantine past into a positive phenomenon – a prerequisite for biographical continuity. Constantine Paparrigopoulos (1815-1891), considered the founder of modern Greek historiography, excluded the Byzantine past from the narrativisation of Greek history. He constructed the biographical continuity based upon Ancient Hellenism, Macedonian Hellenism, Medieval Hellenism (Byzantine), neo-Hellenism (*Tourkokratia*) and modern Hellenism (Heraclides 2002, 57). He regarded the Hellenism of the Byzantine and Ottoman era as centuries-long subjugation. His contemporary, Spyridon Zembelios, integrated the Byzantine Empire into the Greek historiography, thereby delineating the Greek narrativisation as comprised of three main periods, namely the ancient age (Ancient Greece), the middle age (Byzantine Empire) and the modern age (modern Greece) (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013, 75). Once dubbed *Romekratia*[6] by Paparrigopoulos, the Byzantine past had negative connotations similar to *Tourkokratia* (Özsüer 2019, 164). However, *Tourkokratia* has

[5] Greeks call the Ottoman period *Tourkokratia,* with a negative connotation.
[6] Greeks called the Byzantine period *Romekratia,* with negative connotations until it was incorporated in the official historiography.

been far more efficacious in promoting a sense of unity among Greeks (Flemming 2000, 14). As *Romekratia* was integrated into Greek historiography for the sake of biographical continuity, *Tourkokratia* has become the symbol of the only era of bondage and captivity in Greek historiography. The exclusion of *Tourkokratia* has been a proclivity/construction, just as the inclusion of the Byzantine era into the national narrative has been a choice. An uninterrupted continuity has been constructed as the historiography has highlighted the "uniqueness", "unity", and "continuity" of Hellenism (Kızılyürek 2002, 45). The forgotten and disclaimed Byzantine past has become an integral part of the narrative for the sake of biographical continuity.

Myths about the Byzantine period have played a pivotal role in constructing the "Turk" as an existential threat, and strengthening the biographical continuity in the Greek national narrative, since these myths were already popular and widespread among Greek Orthodox Christians. As permanent peace was established between the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and Greece in 1850, the incorporation of the Byzantine era into the national narrative was brought to a conclusion. Greek Orthodox Christians have often manifested the belief that *Tourkokratia* is the result of the wrath of God (Özsüer 2019, 179). The myths that make a false promise of the "restoration of the Byzantine Empire" and the "reconquest of Constantinople" have been intended to give the Greek Orthodox Christians a sense of community (Hatzopoulos 2009, 85). Additionally, pre-nationalism myths have filled a lacuna in Greece as the nation is rooted in, inter alia, values and morals derived from these very myths. Reappropriating the community in the context of modern nationalism, the established myths have heralded concepts such as the end of enslavement and the rise of the phoenix from the ashes. The phoenix, a long-lived bird, associated with Greek mythology, became a national symbol at the outset of the Greek Revolution. These myths enabled the incorporation of *Romekratia* into the narrative as a positive element, and the exclusion of *Tourkokratia* as a negative one. This incorporation and exclusion accounted for and vindicated the 1821 Greek War of Independence.

The Byzantine past denotes biographical continuity just as Ancient Greece epitomises the sense of belonging to Europe. Thus, biographical continuity has been ensured in time and

space. However, the Byzantine past is religious, while the Ancient Greek past is pagan. This evident dichotomy had to be downplayed and trivialised to keep the biographical continuity intact. Moreover, the Ecumenical Patriarchate did not become the political and religious leader of the Greek Orthodox Christians until the Ottoman era. Impartial historiography would have recognised these privileges enjoyed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodox *millet*. However, emotions took hold of Greeks.

Tourkokratia has been constructed as a dark period that interrupts the biographical continuity of the Greek Self, as in becoming/Being in the Heideggerian sense. In the words of Adamantios Korais, a significant proponent of the Greek Enlightenment, "do not forget that you suffered at the hands of the barbaric Turkish nation" (Millas 2020, 274). Korais asserted that "Greeks are not in possession of their properties, kids and wives under the Turkish tyranny" and "the virgins and kids are kidnapped and raped on a daily basis in Thessaloniki […]" (Millas 2020, 275-76), and asked "has anyone ever seen a kingdom, a democracy, an autocracy or a tyranny which spilt the innocents' blood as much as Turks?" (Millas 2020, 284) and further inquired "will we remain the slaves of the despicable Muslims and tyrants of Hellens?" (Millas 2020, 287). First and foremost, Greeks have been obliged to forget that the "togetherness" of Greeks and Turks lasted for centuries (Volkan and Itzkowitz 1994, 103). Heraclides (2002, 102) regards the Ottoman era as neither utter concord nor "400 years-long bondage and captivity". Indeed, after annexing Constantinople in 1453, Mehmed II sought public approval for his rule among all his subjects – a policy that disgruntled the Ottoman state and stupefied Christian subjects. It took the 1821 Greek War of Independence, irredentism coupled with the *Megali Idea*, the spread of national consciousness among Greek Orthodox Christians with the use of indoctrination, and the advent of the Young Turks to estrange and antagonise the two parties.

Ordinary Greeks had to abandon their daily routines, values and customs to become the people of modern Greece that were alive in the minds of Philhellenes and the Greek intelligentsia. The Greek intelligentsia moulded a nation-state and a modern society from the "'good' parts of the Romeic identity", the "culture of Ancient Greece", and the "glories of Byzantium" (Volkan and Itzkowitz 1994, 87). The ordinary Greeks were alien

to pagan Ancient Greece and had not been fluent in the ancient Hellenic language as they spoke the Romeic language. Herzfeld (1986) argues that there had been three hindrances to Hellenization, namely (1) laymen did not have the will to assimilate into something else, (2) Greek Orthodox Christians were wary of becoming Hellene, which insinuated becoming pagan and (3) the Romeic language involved Turkish, Arabic and Persian words. The sense of discontinuity was evident. Defiled by Roman, Frankish and Turkish dominion for centuries, a purified Greek language was conducive to the advent of the national consciousness (Van Dyck 2009, 189). As the Hellenic culture was reconstructed and reconceptualised, the realisation of the disruption to the biographical continuity provoked anxiety. The "Turk" was held accountable for the discontinuity; thereby, became a fear object causing anxiety.

Additionally, the Greek intelligentsia endeavoured to ensure biographical continuity by the study of folklore culturally. The positive findings were cherry-picked to develop a remarkable past. These findings forged the essential links maintaining biographical continuity. The negative findings were projected on the "Turk" as the most "suitable target" (Volkan 1999, 146). Thus, biographical continuity was preserved by assigning the negative connotations of *Tourkokratia* to the "Turk". Therefore, Greekness was cleansed by gaining freedom from the "inner Turk". The "Turk" had to be "uncivilised" and to inherit negative traits developed in the past, since the Greek nation had always been "civilised". Hellenization warranted estrangement from the "Turk" and cleansing of whatever Turkish trait Greeks had adopted beforehand. The Self was purified by means of projection. The fear object, i.e., the "Turk", exacerbated the anxiety.

The negative traits of Greeks had to be projected on the "Turk". *Tourkokratia* was instrumentalised to this end. Attempting to keep the biographical continuity intact, the "Turkish yoke" concept implies that Greeks had never been assimilated with the Ottomans. The Greek intelligentsia asserted that the "barbaric Turks" had ushered in an era of underdevelopment, and the dark age inflicted amnesia on Greeks. The myth of *Tourkokratia* was narrated as a period of backwardness, persecution, and tyranny over the course of many years. Thus, *Tourkokratia* served as a protective cocoon against Europe's allegations of backwardness.

The "Turk" embodied the backward Muslim world, the uncivilised Orient and inferiority in Europe in the 19th century, as Greeks took up arms against the Ottoman state. Europe otherised the "Turk" first, and Greeks followed suit. Accordingly, Greeks reconstructed the "Turk" as a bellicose race that had persecuted the Greek nation so as to substantiate its Europeanness. The Greek Orthodox subjects had not assimilated into the "Turk" and defied the "Turkish tyranny", regardless of the persecution, thereby the Greeks reconstructed the existential threat and integrated into Europe. Europe's otherisation of the Turks in the shape of creating a fear object out of Turkey has continued in the modern era. The EU has discussed Turkey's EU bid by referring to Turkey's Europeanness/non-Europeanness in the context of a heritage-laden discourse, which is discussed in Chapter 4.

The negative traits had to be forgotten for the sake of biographical continuity. Renan (2018, 251) argues, "the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common, and also that they have forgotten many things". The national narrative consists of chosen memories. The narrative forgets disruptive, unsuitable, and demeaning memories.

Accordingly, *Tourkokratia* has been remembered as the dark side of the Greek past. It is also a means to account for the 1821 Greek War of Independence and "why Greece is not as advanced as the other European states or as successful as its ancestors" (Millas 2016, 33). On the other hand, it constitutes an existential threat and disturbs the biographical continuity, as in the sense of statehood – an entity possessing Self as Being – to a certain extent. Biographical continuity is a prerequisite for a stable Self as Being, and the Greek national narrative accordingly remembers *Tourkokratia* as the only era during which the Greeks had been subjugated and kept in bondage. Anxiety aroused by this period leads to contemporary ontological insecurity in relations with Ankara – the contemporary embodiment of the "Turk".

The Greek Self has ended up otherising the "Turk" as it has attached negative connotations to Tourkokratia. In other words, the Self has made an existential threat out

of the Ottoman era. Therefore, *Tourkokratia* has led to the "Turk" as the image of the ultimate existential threat. Accordingly, all the Balkan states seceded from the Ottoman state have otherised the Ottoman era on account of their quest for Europeanisation and nationalism. They have forgotten the Ottoman past and denied the Ottoman legacy, to alleviate the anxiety of meaninglessness, since Europeanisation refers to the adoption and internalisation of European norms, and nationalism warrants dissociation from the pre-modern state of affairs.

The Ottoman state is not considered a distinct political entity in Greece. As Greeks call Ottomans and Turkey the "Turk", they construct a biographical continuity in their narrative of the existential threat – the pre-modern Ottomans who did not consider themselves Turkish are constructed in a nationalist sense in Greek discourse, and seen as an integral part of modern Turkish nationalism. Any act of remembering the Ottomans and the Ottoman era refers to the fear object, i.e., the "Turk", although the Ottomans did not develop Turkishness until the late 19th century. Similarly, they also redefine and reconfigure *Tourkokratia*, a pre-modern period in the context of modern nationalism. It is not remembered in the context of Ottoman rule and the Ottoman yoke, but as *Tourkokratia* (Turkish rule) and the "Turkish yoke".

Consequently, these constructions are transformed into myths and memories, leading to a perpetual anxious state of the Self as Being/becoming. Therefore, the Turks of Turkey still arouse anxiety in Greece, since there is biographical continuity in the transition from the Ottoman state to the Republic of Turkey. Moreover, the past trauma and anxiety have been prolonged by a modern-era dispute, namely the rise of *Enosis*[7] in Cyprus and the subsequent 1974 Cyprus War.

3.1.1. Territoriality of Hellenism

Greek nationalism put forward territorial claims on its Turkish counterpart. Its territoriality was correlated with language and references to pre-modern history. Modern Greece expanded its territories from 1832 onwards at the expense of the Ottoman state.

[7] The aim of the political union of Cyprus and Greece.

However, the borders of modern Greece have never met the aspirations of the Greek nationalists. An official language spoken by internal and external Greeks did amount to a monolithic nation, regardless of the Greek diaspora spread over other states, while the true territories of modern Greece have fallen short of the imagined territories of the greater Greece (Van Dyck 2009, 191). Accordingly, Greeks have longed for mostly Ottoman cities such as Constantinople/İstanbul and Smyrna/İzmir. The fall of Constantinople has embodied not only the demise of the Byzantine Empire, but also the fall of the City – the capital of Hellenism – and the loss of Hagia Sophia – the mother Church of all Orthodox churches (Özsüer 2019, 313). Their annexation would complement the Greek Self as it would be the next step in Greek Being/becoming in the Heideggerian sense.

As liberal tenets withered away in Greece in the mid-19th century, the conservatives came to the forefront and determined the future of Hellenism, which resulted in the *Megali Idea* (Kızılyürek 2002, 35). The *Megali Idea*, coined by İoannis Kolletis in 1844, strengthened the emotional attachment to the state, legitimised governments and elites, determined national interests and rallied Greeks around a grand mission until 1922. It embodied the aspirations towards regional leadership, while accomplishing a 'civilising mission' in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean (Koulos 2020, 7). It was the ultimate embodiment of the Greek national narrative/intersubjective consciousness in the 20th century. As Herzfeld (1986, 130) contends, "[…] the Great Idea […] called for the recapture of Constantinople and the resumption of the liturgy in the great church of Hagia Sophia […]". Indeed, the irredentist claims to the Balkans, Anatolia and the Eastern Mediterranean have required the integration of Orthodoxy into Hellenism (Grigoriadis 2013, 93). A synthesis of nationalism and religion has been the *sine qua non* for creating a sense of belonging to the Greek nation-state among Orthodox Christians in the aforementioned space. The addition of the *Megali Idea* into the narrative embodies biographical continuity in space, whereas the integration of Orthodox Byzantine into the narrative manifests biographical continuity in time. The actualisation of biographical continuity in time and space signifies the Heideggerian Self as Being/becoming at play. The Asia Minor Catastrophe has presaged the end of Greek irredentism (known as

katastrophi/ καταστροφή in Greek). The end of Greek incursions (national trauma) heralds the dawn of a new era in Turkey (national glory).

The *Megali Idea* was a challenging task from the outset, as the external Hellenes had not possessed a national narrative/intersubjective consciousness. It was imperative that the external Hellenes were indoctrinated to diffuse and strengthen Hellenism. The Ottoman territories became a theatre of operations with its vast Greek Orthodox population. *Tourkokratia* and *Enosis* were the two concepts contributing to the national narrative. The longing for emancipation and sovereignty was transformed into an ardour for the recapture of Constantinople in the 19th century. The City, which was lost by Constantine (Constantine XI of Byzantine) would be recaptured by another Constantine (Constantine I of Greece) (Kızılyürek 2002, 66).

The demise of the *Megali Idea* has not entirely obliterated the "Greater Greece" dream from Greek minds. The "Greater Greece" idea has continued to exist in history and geography textbooks, during military service etc. (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013, 107). The trauma has been remembered heretofore. The permanent loss of Asia Minor has protracted Greeks' anxieties and ontological insecurities until now.

How has the Greek nation coped with the repudiation of the *Megali Idea,* which was a "political and ideological programme" concretised in the Hellenic national unity (Vakali 2021, 20)? An instrument devised for nation-building, the abolition of the "political and ideological programme" has provoked anxiety among Hellenes who, in those terms, considered the retreat of the Greek army katastrofí/καταστροφή.

3.1.2. Instilling religion into Hellenism

Religion played a pivotal role in Greeks' daily lives before the 1821 Greek War of Independence. There were two faces of the same revolutionary movement among Greeks during the National Liberation War. On the lower stratum of Greek society, the ordinary Greeks did not rise up for the independence of the Greek nation but against the "Turkish

yoke", contrary to the Greek intellectuals inspired by modern nationalist sentiments (Grigoriadis 2013, 20).

Religion has intermingled with Greek nationalism. The role of the clergy has been enhanced by means of their allegedly leading role in the fight against the Ottoman state. Paintings have played a pivotal role in the construction of this narrative. The painting depicting Monk Samuel blowing up a monastery located in Kouggi Castle is one instance of visual memory. It is a representation of a clergyman sacrificing himself and his flock for the sake of the nation and emancipation. Furthermore, the "Turk" image otherised by the Greek nationalism also serves to bolster the idea of the "Muslim existential threat" against the Orthodox character of Greek nationalism. Therefore, the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque is a pertinent reference point.

The clergy allied themselves to the ranks of the Greek revolutionaries at the advent of the Liberation War, although the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and Phanariots opposed the liberation movement. Thus, the clergy ensured the Church's place in the national myths and narratives. The defection marked a significant milestone in the national narrative and historiography as it irrevocably instilled religion into Greek nationalism. This critical juncture was immortalised in a painting by Theodoros Vryzakis depicting Germanos III of Old Patras blessing the flag of Greek resistance at Agia Lavra Monastery in 1821. In fact, Palaion Patron Germanos had neither supported the Revolution nor been near Kalavryta (Özsüer 2019, 261). The painting became a well-known and indispensable component of Greek visual memory of the rebirth of the nation.

Moreover, Annunciation Day and Greek Independence Day are commemorated on May 25th, although it is evident that the National Liberation War of Greece was initiated neither on this day nor in Agia Lavra monastery near Kalavryta, Achaea, Greece. This is myth-building at play. There are memoirs of several witnesses narrating the advent of the Greek War of Independence in different theatres and at different times (Özsüer 2019, 260-61). The commemoration of independence on the same day as Annunciation Day instils religion into the Self and constructs the national myth of a divine cause. Thus, the national myth buttressed by sanctitude is still widespread among Greeks, albeit losing ground. The

prevalence of the myth among Greeks demonstrates how entrenched and pivotal it is in Greece. The chosen narrative of a sacred war against "Turkish tyranny" is an anchor resisting moves towards a more positive agenda even today.

The 50th commemoration of Greek Independence Day coalesced Hellenism and Orthodoxy into a single whole. The remains of Patriarch Gregory V of Constantinople were brought back in a battleship named "Byzantion" from İstanbul to Piraeus as part of the celebrations. The Greek clergy transported the remains to Athens, where King George I and Queen Olga greeted the cortege among a cheering crowd. The Ecumenical Patriarch Gregory V of Constantinople, who staunchly opposed the 1821 Greek War of Independence and the Greek Enlightenment, emerged as a national hero at the end of the day (Kızılyürek 2002, 44). A national myth was created so as to alleviate the anxiety of meaninglessness and guilt/condemnation. The myth has provided epistemic justification for the bloodshed and atrocities the National Liberation Movement brought about, and instilled religious and nationalistic meanings into the 1821 Greek War of Independence in later years.

The narrativisation of the nation bears a marked resemblance to the tale of Christ, with its "metaphysical concerns" and "search for immortality" (Millas 2009, 108). In Christian historiography, the archangel Gabriel heralded the birth of Jesus Christ on March 25th. In commemorating the Greek Revolution on March 25th, a striking analogy has been drawn between Virgin Mary giving birth to Jesus Christ and the motherland safeguarding the Greek nation, and the Greek revolutionaries heralding the birth of the nation-state, as in Gabriel heralding the birth of Jesus Christ (Herzfeld 1986, 22). Approximately a hundred years later, the landing of Greek forces in İzmir/Smyrna was analogised with the Resurrection (the rising of Christ from the dead) (Erdem 2014, 107). Correspondingly, Tourkokratia, defined as the dark ages of the Greek nation, corresponds to the widespread moral turpitude before the birth of Christ. Both the Greek War of Independence and the advent of Christ ushered in an era of prosperity – in the former case following the founding of the Greek nation-state. Also, both events are dubbed "Resurrection" (Anastasi in Greek), marking a milestone in the story of a period in Paradise (Ancient Greece) interrupted by a period of atonement (*Tourkokratia* in the Greek narrative) as a

result of a period like the abomination of Sodom and Gomorrah (in the Byzantine Empire) leading to the self-sacrifice (thysia in Greek) of Christ and the Greek heroes and, finally, the Resurrection of the ethnos, i.e., the nation (Millas 2005, 403). The engravings of the mass at the Agia Lavra monastery and the blessing of the Greek revolutionaries' weapons by Germaos III have been displayed in public buildings and schools throughout Greece, and the banner in the painting titled "Oath-taking in the Church of Agia Lavra" has been exhibited as the "Holly Banner of Revolution" in the abovementioned monastery (Grigoriadis 2013, 33). These depictions and the banner itself are perfect examples of visual memory, enabling Greeks to remember and preserve biographical continuity. Similar metaphors have been constructed, widening schisms between societies, and sowing the seeds of anxiety in Greece. Greeks commemorate the Greek genocide[8][9][10] on September 14th – as the day the mother of Constantine the Great allegedly found the remnants of the cross Jesus had been crucified on – rather than as the day the Turkish army entered Smyrna/İzmir on September 9th, so as to instil religion into the Greek national consciousness (Özsüer 2019, 265). Resurrection is a liberating act in the form of insurrection – emancipation from the overlord (Hatzopoulos 2009, 90). Accordingly, Greeks launched an insurrection against the "Turkish yoke" and liberated themselves by founding modern Greece. Instilling a divine character into the story of the nation, all three forms of anxiety – namely death, meaninglessness, and guilt/condemnation – are coped with. The narrative results in divine perpetuity, dispelling the anxiety of death. It ascribes meaning to the sufferings, deaths, and atrocities (committed by both sides), allaying the anxiety of meaninglessness and guilt/condemnation.

3.1.3. Myths of the nation

Greeks regularly referred to myths in their appeals to their fellow Europeans. These myths were a means to (1) call on the Greeks to join the nationalist cause, (2) detach the Greeks from the Ottoman state, and (3) simultaneously cultivate a sense of belonging to Europe

[8] The supposedly deliberate mass killing of Christians in İzmir/Smyrna.
[9] For news about the remembrance day see https://greekcitytimes.com/2020/09/14/september-14-commemorating-the-genocide-of-the-greeks-of-asia-minor/, https://orthodoxtimes.com/14-september-day-of-remembrance-of-genocide-of-greeks-of-asia-minor-by-turkish-state/.
[10] For a Greek MeP's "question for a written answer" to the European Parliament on 2021 see https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-004308_EN.html.

by demonstrating their non-Oriental character which thus indicates their Europeanness. The Greeks depicted themselves as a bulwark against the Turkish incursion into Europe, i.e., the "gatekeepers of Europe". These myths emotionalised the appeal to the Europeans, and enabled subjective rationality to guide the European reaction to the stories of the Greek suffering at the hands of the "Turk".

These myths had a functional role in the birth of the Greek nation. They were reconceptualised and reconstructed to develop the national narrative, as in the case of the dance of Zalongo. The dance of Zalongo[11] was transformed into a well-known national myth during the 1821 Greek War of Independence. The mass suicide of women from Souli with their children built up a powerful and vivid, albeit distorted, image in the national narrative. It embodied the "national integrity" of the Greeks in their war against the Ottoman state (Özsüer 2019, 276). The dance of Zalongo myth has remained an essential myth among the Greeks, as it has been used to manifest the valour and audacity of the Greek Self.

The Secret School myth is another pillar of the Greek national narrative. It is a false story of the Ottoman ban on education among Greeks and the founding of numerous secret schools by Greeks – mostly clergymen – throughout the Ottoman territories. The myth became a component of visual memory by means of the "Secret School" painting by Nikolaos Gyzis in 1886. The Secret School myth constructed an image of the clergy defying cultural and religious assimilation. It was the clergy perpetuating the Greek language and culture. The Greek language, especially, was the "sacred language of the chosen people […] capable of expressing the Word of God" (Mackridge 2009, 179). Linos Politis, a Greek historian, has argued that people who unrelentingly believe in the Secret School myth experience an intense disappointment in actuality (Özsüer 2019, 290). The debunking of the myth set off a sharp emotive reaction to the interruption to the biographical continuity. The anxiety provoked by this disruption has aggravated the aversion to the fear object. These myths were favoured and promoted for decades. They are still remembered by the Greeks, albeit waning. Such ingrained myths and beliefs

[11] After the defeat at the hands of the Ottoman forces on 1803, the Souliot women allegedly threw their children off a cliff and then jumped off the same cliff by dancing and singing to avoid enslavement.

wither away rather slowly from the national narrative. Therefore, they still exert an impact on the decisions the anxious Self makes.

There are a number of references to the sins that were committed in Hagia Sophia and Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade, which unleashed the wrath of God – i.e., the invasion of Constantinople by the Turks – and Hagia Sophia would be re-occupied by Orthodox Christians once the sins were forgiven by God. (Özsüer 2019, 182-83). There are a number of narrated tales – "to Thelima tou Theou" (the will of God), "To Diskopotiro tis Agia Sofias" (the golden cup of Hagia Sophia), "Parthen i Poli, Parthen i Romania" (the city is taken, the land of Rum is taken), "O Papas tis Agia Sofias" (the padre of Hagia Sophia), "İ Agia Trapeza" (the holy table), "To potami pou stamatise na kylaei" (the river that stopped flowing), "Ta Psarıa tou Kalogerou" (fish of the monk), "Oı Kritikoi Polemistes" (the Cretan warriors), "O Marmaromenos Vasilias" (the marbled king) – that regard the fall of Constantinople as an interval heralding the inevitable reoccupation of Hagia Sophia and the continuity of Hellene culture (Özsüer 2019, 183-87). Hagia Sophia is the quintessential reference point. Accordingly, the debate about the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque is elaborated on in Chapter 5.

Folk songs/ballads are an extension of the myths. The verbal memory of the national consciousness, ballads are among the means for remembering and passing down memories. The "Turk" had played the existential Muslim threat role since the 1821 Greek War of Independence, which ushered in the era of the "Turk" as the national fear object in Greek ballads (Özsüer 2019, 248-49). Having at one time been preferred to Latins and Catholics, the "Turk" became the archenemy of the Greeks. The Greeks have forgotten the atrocities committed by the Latins and Catholics on the territories of the Byzantine Empire, just as they have forgotten the Italian and German incursions into modern Greece. These temporary existential threats faded away in the Greek national narrative, whilst the Turkish existential threat reclaimed its place in the Greek national narrative. The perpetual remembrance of the "Turk" as ultimate existential threat turned Turks into fear objects in Greece.

Once seen as the saviour of Greek Orthodox Christians from French tyranny, who had been invited to annex the Aegean Islands and Cyprus by the Greek inhabitants suffering under the French feudal system, the image of the Ottomans was transformed into "Turkish tyranny". Therefore, the image of the "Turk" as the fear object was not given but constructed. The Greek Revolution consists of metaphors, myths and images. They have been established through routines such as the national pilgrimage, and commemorating the Annunciation and Greek Independence Day on the same date in contemporary Greeks' daily lives. These pre-modern, familiar and mostly religion-related myths are supposed to establish the Greek Self and alleviate anxiety. Thus, the "Turk" becomes the fear object – the absence of which would arouse anxiety.

Greeks' national narrative derives from the memories and myths of Ancient Greece and the Byzantine Empire. Thus, Greeks identify with the Parthenon and Hagia Sophia alike (Kızılyürek 2002, 46). The complexity of narrativisation has taken its toll on the construction of the Self as Being/becoming. In this context, a part of the Self that emanates from Ancient Greece aspires to Europeanness and advocates Europeanisation, whereas another part of the Self which sprang from the Byzantine past is sceptical of the West, its institutions and tenets. This dichotomy puts Athens in an anxious state of mind. Being anxious distorts its foreign policy choices, just as dichotomies also yield the same result in the Turkish narrativisation.

3.2. Turkish Nationalism

The Ottoman state struggled against the surge of modernity in the last years of the empire. Fundamental and drastic reforms were both adopted and then abolished in different periods. These attempts to keep up with modernity stoked up various nationalism movements throughout the empire, albeit in different years.

Turkish nationalism was the last resort after various attempts to preserve the empire. The Turkish intelligentsia attempted to safeguard the empire from Western incursions through Pan-Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism – the means to fend off the inevitable dissolution of the empire. The 1912 Balkan Wars dealt a devastating and revealing blow to the

Ottomans. The secession of the Balkan lands implied the imminent dissolution of the empire. The beginning of the end resulted in an existential crisis among the Ottomans, since the Balkans had been the heartland of the Ottoman Empire for centuries.

The *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (Committee of Union and Progress) had been founded in İstanbul in 1889. Many of its members were of Balkan origins. The memory of lost territories was kept alive and incited "defensive assertiveness" among Turks (Kızılyürek, 2002, p. 159). A desire for revenge took hold among the Turks; as Enver Pasha said, "I am ready to dedicate my life to vengeance" (Kızılyürek 2002, 159). Thus, the Turks embarked upon a quest to discover the Self as Being defined not by religion – the Muslim Self – but by language – the Turkish Self (Mackridge 2009, 178). The bitter memories of the secession of the Balkans also occasioned an anxious hatred towards the secessionist *millets*/National Liberation Movements. Turkish nationalism was realised and embraced, following their recognition of the bitter truth. Indeed, the loss of the Balkans was a critical juncture precipitating the outset of nationalism among Turks.

Nations develop emotive reactions to past traumas. They adopt epistemic patterns of reasoning. These epistemic patterns delimit and mould emotions and behaviours in the future. Therefore, perceptions are more relevant than truth concerning the emotions experienced by the Self as Being. The Balkan Wars were a traumatic experience to the Ottomans and remembered as a "chosen trauma" by the modern Turks due to (1) the fact that they had suddenly broken out, (2) the guarantee of the Great Powers for the status of the Balkans as Ottoman territory had been rebutted and (3) the ineptitude, desolation and segregation of the Ottoman state (Odabaşı 2020, 56). Accordingly, the Turks remember the Balkan Wars as the "Balkan atrocity", "Balkan massacre" and "Balkan calamity" instead of a series of battles (Odabaşı 2020, 56). The appalling stories, true or not, of acts of brutality have transformed the Balkan Wars into detestable tales of atrocity and carnage in Turkish narrativisation. The very naming of the Balkan Wars implies the high level of anxiety experienced by the Turks.

As Turks residing in Anatolia learned about the calamities in the Balkans, the refugees from the Balkan Wars brought devastating stories of atrocities with them to Anatolia.

Therefore, Turks not only followed the news about atrocities on their doorstep but also came into contact with the victims of the aforementioned cruel acts first-hand in Anatolia (Odabaşı 2020, 63). Therefore, they fell fall victim to anxiety, albeit at second hand. The Balkan Wars led to profound negative emotions such as fear, guilt, fury and vengeance among the Turks. The reverberations of these solid negative emotions incited nationalist sentiment, heralding the advent of national consciousness. They contributed to the dawn of Turkish nationalism. The Turks resorted to a sense of solidarity with their kin, to create a sense of belonging to modern Turkish nationalism, i.e., the Westernised/Europeanised nation-state, and the construction of the Self as Being based on the narrativisation of atrocities, betrayal and a sense of Turkishness.

The "Turkish nation" had already been alive and evident before the Turks had developed national awareness in the minds of the Greeks. The Greek national narrative constantly referred to the "Turk" with a negative connotation (Heraclides 2019). Therefore, the image of "Turk" was constitutive due to the *Tourkokratia* of the Greek Self as Being/becoming in the Heideggerian sense. The image of the Greek in Turkish narrativisation (even though it was Ottoman more than Turkish) was also constitutive, since the Turks were stigmatised as "backward" and "barbaric" in Greek narrativisation. The Turks realised that they were under assault not as Muslims or Ottomans but as the "Turk". It was an anxious moment for the Turks, just as *Tourkokratia* was an anxiety catalyst for the Greeks.

The Greek existential threat plays a pivotal role in the Turkish narrative due to the Phanariots' role in the Ottoman bureaucracy and the Greek Orthodox Church's autonomy. The Greeks had been the only non-Muslim *millet* who enjoyed privileges to such an extent. Thus, they could preserve their religion, customs and language almost unscathed. They had also been the first *millet* to successfully rise up, take up arms and secede from the Ottoman state regardless. The image of the Greek existential threat was held responsible for the subsequent ethnic unrest in the Balkans. Indeed, the Greek nation-state widened its territories at the expense of the Ottoman state between 1832-1913 and later the Republic of Turkey. In 1918, the Greek residents of İstanbul, encouraged by the Patriarchate, harassed Turks, raised Greek national flags in churches and the Patriarchate,

and paraded a picture of Venizelos in Taksim Square (Tsakiridou 2002, 12). Therefore, the Turkish Self was bedevilled by the disquieting memories of wars. The Turkish Self simultaneously considered that the Greeks should acknowledge the privileges they had enjoyed in the Ottoman era. Unsettled by its own image in terms of the Greek existential threat, and a sense of betrayal by the most privileged *millet*, the Turkish Self cannot compromise on material disputes such those over as the Aegean Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean, which are the symptoms of deeper issues in actuality.

Turkish nationalism is reactionary (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013; Millas 2020). First, it is reactionary because Turks had not come across the modern definition of nationalism until the nationalist uprisings in the Balkans. Their first encounter with modern nationalism was violent and threatening. Second, Turks had had a secure and instrumental Muslim Self as Being, which provided biographical continuity and a sense of belonging. Therefore, Turks were ontologically secure as a component of the Muslim entity in the pre-modern era.

Turks went through two major Europe-related traumas, namely (1) the Balkan Wars and (2) the National Liberation War from Turkey. Together with the earlier national uprisings in the Balkans, these were the two critical junctures, ushering in the outset of Turkish nationalism. The anxiety arising from these two critical junctures led to the dawn of Turkish nationalism. Moreover, the Greek incursion into Anatolia occasioned a continuity in Greek-Turkish rivalry (the 1974 Cyprus War is the latest link in the chain), which transformed Greece into an existential and continuous threat. Therefore, Greece became the fear object of the Turkish Self as Being *ad initio*. The national uprisings in the Balkans, the Balkan Wars, and Turkey's National Liberation War gave birth to Turkish nationalism. The debacle of Turkey’s EU bid, the heritage-laden discussion of Turkey’s Europeanness/non-Europeanness in Europe and the deterioration of the bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey is considered in relation to this historical background in the next chapter.

The first examples of nationalist sentiment are encountered in the writings of Ahmet Vefik Paşa, Süleyman Paşa and Necip Asım, who studied the pre-Ottoman past of the

Turks in the 19th century (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013, 29). Although only a small group of Ottoman intellectuals drew attention to Turkishness, they had been the precursors of the founding fathers of Turkish nationalism, such as Ziya Gökalp and Yusuf Akçura. These intellectuals constructed Turkish nationalism, which underscored national myths, storytelling and narrative as a means of remembering the past and forming society.

The Turkish intelligentsia based the nation-state upon laicism, Western modernity and a monolithic – classless – society (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013, 50), in contrast to the latest Islamist variant in Turkish nationalism of the early 21st century. The nation-state was constituted as the ultimate opposite of the Ottoman Empire. It implied that the reaction to the dissolution of the Ottoman state was a symptom of an emotive response to the existential anxiety the Turks found themselves experiencing.

The early Turkish nationalism was established on two pillars. First, this nationalism sought its roots in the pre-Islamic Turks of early Republican Turkey. Second, Turkish nationalism had a territorial character from the outset. These two hallmarks were manifested in the Turkish History Thesis (THT) of the 1930s. THT disregarded Ottoman history to a certain degree. In doing so, THT reduced the Ottoman past to its own Tourkokratia. Whereas the Greeks regarded the Ottoman past as "backward" and "barbaric", the Early Republican Turks belittled and depreciated the Ottoman era. Thus, the biographical continuity was further weakened. The territoriality of Turkish nationalism warranted the territorial claims on Anatolia. These claims aimed at downgrading the Greek narrative and substantiating the current set of conditions simultaneously. A number of counterarguments against the Greek claims developed, such as that the modern Greeks are not the descendants of the Ancient Greeks, and that the Byzantine Empire had actually been the Eastern Roman Empire (Millas 2005, 329). Correspondingly, the territorial claims were made with reference to the Bronze Age (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013, 87); thereby, preserving the biographical continuity.

3.2.1. Territoriality of Turkish nationalism

Nationalism, albeit a modern concept, reconceptualises and reconfigures pre-modern myths and symbols so as to construct a modern nation. The process successfully heralds the coming of the nation-states. For instance, *vatan* referred to a person's hometown or place of residence in the pre-modern era, whilst it has become synonymous with the French word *patrie*, which means homeland in the modern era (Ozkirimli and Sofos 2013, 27). *Vatan* had not had any sentimental connotation for the Ottomans. However, the meaning of the word was re-contextualised. In the modern era, it is mythicised by nationalist imagination. It is the motherland that people fight and die for. It possesses positive connotations, implies a sense of belonging and, if profaned, arouses hatred/apprehension. The very foundations of nation-states are comprised of symbols and myths that narrativise past traumatic events, turning these states into anxious entities. Therefore, nationalism is based upon anxiety. Whenever anxiety arises, nationalist sentiment further pervades states.

A threat to the *vatan* and the territoriality of Anatolia for the Turks, the landing of Greek forces in İzmir/Smyrna, and remembering the loss of Selanik/Thessaloniki, set in motion the national mobilisation in Anatolia. The Turks regarded the landing of the Greek army at İzmir/Smyrna as an existential threat to Self as Being/becoming. Turks overcame their bewilderment instilled by the Allied occupation until the time of the Greek occupation. The Kemalists could rally the people en masse under the threat of an invasion, just as the Chinese could only rise up against invasion by the Japanese (Deringil 2019, 269). An unforeseen and vague precondition precipitated the genesis of the Turkish nation. The existential threat (the Greek landing at İzmir/Smyrna) to the Self as Being/becoming triggered anxiety and enabled the dawning of the nascent nation. The anxiety-triggered birth of the nation placed the nation in a dire predicament. The eradication of the existential threat would paralyse and distress the being/becoming-in-the-world of the nation in the Heideggerian sense, since it meant the loss of the constitutive condition (the threat to Anatolia). In other words, anxiety is justified by the Self as Being/becoming to exist. The Self, never sure of the demise of the *Megali Idea*, has always felt existentially threatened by an alleged incursion.

3.2.2. Instilling religion into Turkish nationalism

In retrospect, Turks have not enjoyed a coalescence of nation and religion as in the case of the Greek Orthodox community of Ottoman state. The nation has not been subsumed under a veil of religion as is the case with Greece. Contrary to the Greeks, Turks assimilated into Muslims and forgot their non-Muslim and nationalistic intersubjective consciousness, albeit pre-modern. Even if the national consciousness had been pre-modern before the national awakening, it had been intersubjective and provided large-group awareness in the Greek case. The Turkish-ness was curbed and tamed over time, although it was a component of the main Ottoman constituent. In tandem with the conceptualisation of Bilgin and Ince (2015), those included in the Ottoman constituency, i.e., Turks, were distressed by their insubordination by the included/excluded, i.e., Greeks, who had never been a component of the main constituent but had the privileges of leading the non-Muslim communities in the Balkans and the Aegean Sea. Indeed, Turks have adapted to the new reality – change in continuity – as Greeks have preserved the integrity of their national narrative/intersubjective consciousness – the biographical continuity.

Moreover, the Greeks' past "delinquency" has been prolonged by their irredentism, such as the *Megali Idea* and *Enosis* in Cyprus, which have aroused anxiety in Turks. Turkey was the last nation among the Ottoman *millets* to realise and adopt the essence and traits of nationalism. Throughout the Ottoman territories, the advent of the national liberation movements was a bitter experience for Turks. Thus, the crux of Turkish nationalism lies in its reactionary character. It is a reaction to the anxiety of death (the possibility of non-existence), the anxiety of meaninglessness (psychological self-affirmation that religion could not provide during the rise of nationalism) and the anxiety of guilt/condemnation (remorse over being a latecomer in the nationalist moment and a sense of betrayal of old subjects).

The earlier Turkish entities were also Muslim in Anatolia. However, Turkish nationalism led to the banning of religion in the early years of the Republic of Turkey. Therefore, it was obliged to seek an answer to the Turkishness of Anatolia and their own Self as Being

in the spatio-temporal sense, in earlier periods. In a similar vein, Ankara became the capital of Turkey, replacing İstanbul. İstanbul had always been a cosmopolitan city. Instead of being Turkish, İstanbul had always been a multicultural city. Also, it had served as the seat of the Caliphs for hundreds of years. However, Republican Turkey was in search of a city embodying Turkism. Images play a pivotal role in the construction of the narrative. Therefore, religion must be downplayed, and nationalism should be venerated. The secular Turkish nationalism thus side-lined and disregarded İstanbul, whereas Greek Orthodox Hellenism yearned for Constantinople. The loss of the City inflicted a great deal of agony for the Greeks, so much so that Antonios Eparchos composed the "Lament for the Fall of Hellas" a century after the fall of Constantinople (Millas 2020, 47). The two entities took different paths and secured their Self in contradictory ways. Both nationalisms narrativised certain symbols (Hagia Sophia), events (the fall/conquest of Constantinople), and myths (the prophecy of the prophet and the Marble(d) King). Thus, a city that had been nothing more than a Sodom and Gomorrah[12] for Turks was the promised land for Greeks. The remembered and forgotten memories developed their thinking and emotions in specific ways to the extent that where Greeks aspired to ownership of The City to cope with their anxieties, Turks denounced it by the same token.

Contrary to the Greeks instilling Orthodoxy into their nationalism to erase the Ottoman past and to be regarded as Western rather than Oriental in Europe, Turks had to downgrade and disparage religion by the same token. These traits had been alien to Turks hitherto. People who defined themselves as Muslims were subject to religious authority for hundreds of years. Indeed, religion symbolised the ancient regime. It had to be abolished for the sake of the Republican future and the reforms, even though the subjects' commitment to the Caliph had been both firm and emotional. This situation created a fissure in the biographical continuity. In an attempt to find via media between religion and the state, Islam has been side-lined and subjugated to the state, instead of being eradicated altogether. However, the secular state could not fill the gap left by the lack of religious rituals. Whereas Hellenism was gradually instilled into the Greek people by virtue of religion, the Turkish Revolution never thoroughly permeated the remote villages

[12] İstanbul was labelled as a non-Turkish city with its multicultural past, as both the seat of the Caliph and the capital of a multinational empire in the early republican era.

of Anatolia. The duality/dichotomy of the society (the developed and civilised city-dwellers and the underdeveloped and conservative/zealot villagers) has brought about a constant struggle for a national narrative between the two, which led to "museumification" and the subsequent reconversion. The secular, western and national triangle created a moral vacuum that perturbed Turks, and the answer was sought in the pre-Islamic roots of Turks (Kızılyürek 2002, 195).

The side-lined and subjugated religion permeated and was integrated into Turkish nationalism immediately after WWII. The rise of the *Democrat Party* (DP) and threat from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) to the North led the *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (CHP/Republican People's Party) to instrumentalise religion. The nationalist sentiments were regarded as feeble in the face of the "communist threat". Buttressed with religion, Turkish nationalism would ward off the USSR's possible incursion into Anatolia.

The Islamist variant in Turkish nationalism that the thesis refers to in the next chapters has its roots in the *Milli Görüş*[13] (National Vision) movement which was in existence from in 1969 onwards. The *Milli Görüş* was against the Europeanisation of Turkey as it regarded Europeanisation as de-nationalisation through de-Islamisation of the country. The *Milli Görüş* movement could not consolidate political power due to its poor polling rate in elections and the closure of a few *Milli Görüş*-affiliated political parties by the Constitutional Court until the rise of the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (AKP/Justice and Development Party) to power, forming the first single party government after approximately a decade in 2002. The thesis discusses how the rise of the Islamist variant in Turkish nationalism dealt with the Hagia Sophia debate, and reacted to the lack of EU normativity, in the following chapters.

[13] A religious-political movement founded by Necmettin Erbakan and which gave birth to the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (AKP/Justice and Development Party).

3.3. Comparative Analysis

Özkırımlı and Sofos (2013, 2) define the nationalisms on both sides as "parallel monologues" which are aware of and simultaneously in denial of the similarities between each other. The two entities overemphasise their differences. Their characteristic similarities further antagonise them as well. They neither talk to each other nor discuss their disagreements. They dictate their will to each other but do not listen to the other side.

The Greek intelligentsia has been heavily influenced by the European Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Their ideas dramatically evolved with the advent of nationalism. That interruption altered the intellectual trajectory of the Greek elites. They fiercely supported and spread nationalism among the Greek Orthodox *millet*/subjects. On the other hand, the Turkish intelligentsia initially endeavoured to halt the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, to no avail. Their thinking was shaped by the constant national liberation movements in the Balkans and the imminent dissolution of the empire to a large extent.

Consequently, the Turkish intelligentsia steadily fostered and developed national awareness. In other words, the domain of the real has undergone a dramatic metamorphosis, the repercussions of which have had far-reaching effects in the domain of the actual and empirical. The domain of the real had not been fraught with enmity towards the existential threat in the Ottoman era. As societies transformed into nations, the course of events – rebellions and revolutions – exerted an enormous impact on these nascent nations' narratives and memories, e.g., *Tourkokratia* vs peaceful coexistence, and the Greek War of Independence vs rebellion, in the Ottoman Empire. Anxiety took over as their perception of events transformed and diverged.

The Greek intelligentsia denounced the Ottoman era, called it *Tourkokratia*, and venerated the Byzantine past, which was incorporated into the narrative, to restore the biographical continuity of the Greek nation. The Turkish intelligentsia denounced the Ottoman past as well, albeit in a different way. The Turkish narrative has systematically

downplayed Ottoman history, as if the Ottoman past had never happened, whereas the Greek narrative has reconceptualised and reconfigured *Tourkokratia*. For instance, Ziya Gökalp proposed forgetting the Ottoman Era altogether and substituting it with the Turkish language in folk literature (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013, 58). It is another rupture in the biographical continuity, which renders the Self ontologically insecure.

The Millet System vested the mandate to settle disagreements and regulate religious affairs and education etc. in the clergymen, in their confessional communities. The system also exempted non-Muslims from military service in exchange for the tax dubbed "cizye". Moreover, the system banned interfaith marriage, thereby averting the synthesis between *millets*. However, the Millet System allowed the *millets* to preserve and conserve their Self. Therefore, the Millet System resulted in (1) the *millets* never mixing together and constituting an Ottoman Self and (2) the reverberations of the French Revolution kindling the nationalist sentiments among the *millets* of the Ottoman state. Indeed, the Millet System kept the sub societies intact and consequently receptive to the repercussions of the French Revolution and the spirit of the age of revolutions.

The two societies were neither heterogeneous nor homogenous at the outset of the nation-states in Greece and Turkey. Both nationalisms strived for the homogenisation of their societies. Thus, Greeks and Turks were imagined and constructed, respectively. As anxious entities, both sides followed a nationalist path provoked by their anxieties. They imposed policies of population exchange, forced expulsions and assimilation of minorities on that account.

Greek nationalism was a polyphony of a number of conflicting groups. Its narrative consisted of three periods, namely the pagan Ancient Greece, the Greek Orthodox Byzantine and the secular – albeit Greek Orthodox in essence – modern Greece. This sequence has ensured religion's status in the Greek narrative, since the birth of Christianity happened after Ancient Greece, and *Tourkokratia* is the only period in which Christianity was subverted. These three periods complement each other, thereby ensuring biographical continuity. As Turks have become the "Turk" in the Greek narrative since

the early 19th century, Greek nationalism triggered by anxiety was accompanied by irredentism and expansionism, i.e., a longing for culturally and historically Greek cities.

The ulterior motive behind Turkish nationalism was the anxiety of death, i.e., the desire for the utmost existential/ontological security. Regarded as an extension of the Ottoman state's estrangement from the family of modern European nations, the Turkish intelligentsia has been haunted by the anxiety of death and the lack of a sense of belonging. The anxiety has resulted in "collective paranoia" such as "being surrounded by enemies" and "Turks don't have friends besides other Turks". The Turkish intelligentsia has dealt with this anxiety by emphasising unity and the alleged homogeneity of the society. Thus, the Turkish *millet* – a concept of the pre-nationalist era – became synonymous with the "nation".

First, the Greeks seceded from the Ottoman state to exist/be as in Being/becoming in the Heideggerian sense. Second, they constructed the *Megali Idea* to allay the anxiety of meaninglessness, as in Tillich's three forms of anxiety. The constructed intersubjective consciousness required oppression, forced conversion, expulsion, and annihilation strategies. The lack of empathy has been evident on either side since both entities have suffered from the "inability to identify with the anguish experienced by the members of a national group toward whom one bears hostile feelings […]" (Volkan and Itzkowitz 1994, 10). Similar strategies were pursued by the Ottomans afterwards as Pan-Turkism and Turanism surged in importance in the empire's last decades.

The landing of the Greek army in İzmir/ Smyrna engendered two ramifications. Turkish nationalism gained ground and public support was rallied as the Greek army advanced further into Anatolia. The Turks, who had not been defeated by the invading armies of the Allied Powers, promptly and forcefully responded to the Greek occupation (Lewis 1968, 241). It constituted an emotive response to the threat posed by one of the former *millets*. Turkish nationalism established itself as a reaction to Hellenism's incursion into Anatolia. The vanquishing of the Greek army also led to the demise of the *Megali Idea*. Thus, Greek nationalism had to find another response to their anxiety of meaninglessness and guilt/condemnation.

After the anxiety aroused by the failure of the Asia Minor campaign, the *Megali Idea* lost ground, and the perception of Greece as a Aegean country perception was constructed. The image of Greece as an Aegean country was institutionalised through literary works throughout Greece. The excavation of the icon of the Annunciation in Tinos, and the integration of several Aegean islands such as Lesbos, Halki and Amorgos into the national pilgrimage route sacralised the Aegean Sea and further incorporated it into the Greek narrative of the Self (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013, 108-9). The space became routinised as a mythical Greek destination in people's daily lives via the national pilgrimage and the concept of a "Greek" Aegean Sea.

The Aegean Sea was imagined as a space interwoven with the Self. Greece as an Aegean entity became an integral part of the biographical continuity. Accordingly, Athens included Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean in the routinisation and narrativisation, so as to ensure the safety of the heartland. However, the Aegean Sea is a borderline more than a motherland from the Turkish viewpoint. The Greek heartland being constructed on the edge of the Greek-Turkish border arouses anxiety on the other side of the Aegean Sea. Therefore, Ankara seems wary of the concept of a "Greek" Aegean Sea. In contrast, Athens considers the "Aegean Sea as a neutral zone" approach a deliberate and calculated affront to the Greek Self. Indeed, the anxieties experienced in the domain of the real have reverberations in the domain of the empirical.

Territorial claims are an integral part of modern nationalism. The nation-state is a by-product of centuries-long internal and interstate wars in Western Europe. The advent of the nation-state concept has led to national consciousness and emotional attachment to the frontiers (Volkan and Itzkowitz 1994, 177). The people are supposed to feel a deep and intuitive sense of belonging to the homeland. However, the term "homeland" itself has not carried any nationalist connotations in the intersubjective consciousness of these two modern nations. Territoriality underpinned the sense of belonging of the nascent nations of the 19th century. Accordingly, Greek and Turkish nationalisms have nationalised and monopolised their territories through renaming places, converting temples and destroying/neglecting non-national buildings and monuments. In other

words, the other is eradicated from the homeland. Correspondingly, almost identical policies have been imposed on the minorities as well. Their presence has been considered a threat to the ontological security of the nation. Consequently, the minorities have been exposed to symbolic and physical violence and persecution.

The borders between the two entities have been repeatedly breached since 1832. The Greeks have expanded their borders at the expanse of the Turks for decades. On the one hand, the Greeks had already been suffering from the anxiety stemming from *Tourkokratia* – the centuries-long "Turkish yoke" – ever since they have lived in the territories of the Ottoman state. On the other hand, the Turks who had not reacted to the invasion by the Allied Powers developed nationalist sentiments in the face of the Greek incursion into their territories. Volkan and Itzkowitz (1994, 121) have asserted that "under stress, the physical borders become more psychologised, as a tear in the physical border is perceived as a wound in the group's identity, […]". The violation of territorial borders leads to existential anxiety instead of the fear of somatic security. The territorial borders are divine, not only as a matter of sovereignty but also as a matter of ontological security.

The concept of homeland implies national boundaries and a homogeneous society. Greek and Turkish nationalisms refer to their homeland in this context. Being a transactive concept, the concept of homelandt has evolved over time in Greece and Turkey. The contemporary imagined homeland includes the Aegean Sea and Aegean islands in the minds of Greeks. It is a space that has remained Greek against all odds such as invasions, forced expulsions and immigrant inflows. The idea of Greece as an Aegean entity has been routinised by means of national pilgrimage, tourism and the narrative of an Aegean Greek civilisation. Indeed, it is the eternal Greek heartland.

On the other hand, Anatolia was the last remaining piece of land the Turks had to staunchly defend against the ferocious existential threat. It has been imagined as a divine Turkish motherland, where Turkism would flourish. Both nationalisms have ascribed meaning to their imagined homelands through symbols, myths, and memories. They have made references to pre-modern periods in order to uphold their mostly conflicting claims.

The contradictory narratives have provoked anxiety and ontological insecurity on both sides, eventually turning into a bitter clash caused by nationalism.

3.3.1. Religion and the existential threat in Greek and Turkish nationalisms

An Ottoman intellectual wrote that "we are Muslims concerning religion, Ottomans regarding social order, and Turks in the context of nationality" in 1896 (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013, 38). Similarly, Patriarch Gennadios II has said, "I am Hellene concerning ethnicity, Byzantine regarding birthplace, and Christian in faith" (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013, 38). The similarity between these two sentences is striking. Yet, the similarity brings about enmity instead of amity. The "same-ness" of both sides' philosophical foundations transforms them into culturally "similar" but politically "opposite/hostile" entities. Anxiety is provoked by the "same-ness".

A vestige of the ancient regime, religion was stigmatised and shunned by Greek and Turkish nationalisms alike in the early stages of both revolutionary movements (Grigoriadis 2013, 5). The Turkish nation-state cast out religion from the public space in its early years, while Greece subordinated religion to the state apparatus in the early years of its nation-state. Both nation-states came to terms with religion in time. It could not be unconditionally subverted and subjugated to the nation-state. Athens and Ankara had to instil religion into their nation-states instead. The nation-states aspired to realise their full potential by utilising the synthesis of Hellenes and Orthodox Christianity, and Turks and Sunni Islam (Grigoriadis 2013, 5). The integration of religion into nationalism has consolidated the Self as Being and ensured biographical continuity in Greece and Turkey. However, the integration of religion into nationalism also resulted in an upsurge in hostility between the two.

If the "Islamised" Turks had been conscious of their Turkish roots in the Ottoman era, they would have expected the other subjects of the Ottoman state to follow suit or make peace with their status in the Ottoman millet system. The "model citizens" who are fully integrated into society suffer from anxiety if the other citizens of the same country do not entirely fulfil society's expectations (Bilgin and İnce 2015). The "model citizens" who

have assimilated into the majority in compliance with the state's standards of citizenship presume that others will follow in their footsteps. The Greeks who had a privileged status among non-Muslims and had certain societal rights as a *millet*, rebelled against their "benevolent benefactor". The "betrayal" provoked anxiety and placed the "model citizens" in an ontologically insecure position. On the one hand, the Greeks had regarded the Millet System as the "Turkish yoke" and *Tourkokratia* and experienced anxiety as a result. On the other, the Turks had regarded the Millet System as a just and impartial system; thereby, the Greek War of Independence caused them anxiety.

The Self is a Heideggerian "Being/becoming" narrated by a mixture of historiography, symbols and myths. The symbols and myths such as Hagia Sophia and the Marble(d) King are fraught with references to religion in the case of the Greek and Turkish nationalisms. Historiography underlines myths and symbols and both forgets and remembers past events. Thus, the myths and symbols become the pillars of the official narrative for the sake of biographical continuity. Greek historiography has regarded the "Turk" as an existential threat to the extent that the Greek historiography has not only assigned the "Turk" with negative traits but also held them accountable for their own misdeeds. The Greek historiography asserts that Greeks have been corrupted by centuries of subjugation by the "Turk" (Millas 2020, 183).

Moreover, the "Turk" not only embodies the Turks but also any other entity at odds with the Greek Self (Millas 2005, 392). Thus, the Greek Self's fears and anxieties are entirely steered towards the "Turk". Regardless of ethnicity, religion and sense of belonging, there are enemies of Hellenism, defined as the "Turk", and there are either neutral or friendly entities deserving a non-derogatory name.

Turkish historiography has correspondingly been prejudiced against Greeks since the 1821 Greek War of Independence. The secession of Greece struck a severe blow to the Ottoman state since it ushered in the dissolution of the empire. Turkish national consciousness developed as a reaction to the landing of the Greek forces in İzmir/Smyrna, as it was considered the final and decisive blow to Turkishness. The following wars and atrocities traumatised the Turkish Self. The traumatised and anxious national

consciousness led to intolerance and jingoism (Cezar 1991, as cited in Millas 2020, 182-83). Their religious differences also added fuel to the fire, since religion was instilled in both nationalisms, albeit in different forms. All the wars and massacres since that time have been resorted to and carried out to ensure that the Self that has been alive since ancient times, is preserved in perpetuity. The continuity from time immemorial and in perpetuity are means to dispel the anxiety of death and meaninglessness. However, their imagined narrative requires a non-questioning of the past. Moreover, it compels the Self to believe that it has eternal enemies. Therefore, it again creates its own monster and arouses anxiety in the face of this menace.

Both societies' image of existential threat has totally deviated from its earlier form. The existential threat was depicted as from "wise people" and "decent opponents" in the accounts of the Phanariots and the participants of the Greek War of Independence before the founding of the Greek nation-state (Millas 2016, 90). The "Turk" had had a negative connotation among the Ottomans in the same pre-modern period. As the modern nation-states were founded in 1830 and 1923 on both sides, the existential threat was demeaned as the Self was vindicated and venerated. The reconceptualised and reconfigured myths, symbols and past traumas aroused anxiety and constructed anxious states. Anxious as they are, a sense of belonging to the nation was formed, further distinguishing the Self from the existential threat. The symbols, myths and past traumas that the nation had been founded upon have estranged the existential threat in the intersubjective consciousness of the Self. The hostile attitude towards the existential threat has been retold and passed down through historiography, and the national narrative was supported with references to religion. The instilling of religion into nationalism further widened the schisms between the two nations, because the references to religion further emotionalised the image of the existential threat, and contributed to the transformation of the existential threat into a perpetual fear object.

Generalisations about the existential threat have resulted in oversimplifications. Thus, the existential threat has been held accountable for any past trauma and turned into a fear object. The fear object must be morally inferior to us so as to maintain the positive image of the Self. Otherwise, the Self would suffer from existential angst. Indeed, anxiety has

marginalised the fear object, leading to generalisations, thereby oversimplifications about the fear object. Negativity and cynicism have taken hold as the nationalist sentiment germinated.

The "barbaric Turk" image still typifies Turks in Greece, as Greeks are still remembered as "treacherous" in Turkey (Millas 2018, 89). Turks are at the epicentre of the debates about a range of subjects from politics to lifestyle in Greece (Theodossopoulos 2006, 2). The image of the "Turk" is deep-rooted, to the extent that the SYRIZA government (the Coalition of the Radical Left and Progressive Alliance), which was in power between 2015 and 2019, omitted Greek-Turkish bilateral relations and the Cyprus dispute from their progressive foreign policy approach (Christofis and Logotheti 2018, 107). A progressive approach to bilateral relations with the fear object would have challenged the biographical continuity.

Greeks regard Turks as the "prisoners of a state apparatus", while Turks consider the Greek state "prisoner of the fanatic and obsessed public" (Millas 2016, 51). The "Turk" is the archenemy who subjugated the Self for centuries in the Greek narrative. Consequently, the "Turk" poses a dire and constant threat to the Self as Being. The image of the Greek existential threat is a reaction to this "unfair" treatment of the Turks in the Turkish narrative. Disgruntled by the defamed image of the "Turk" and *Tourkokratia*, the Turks have come to the conclusion that Greeks misrepresent them. A "fair" account of *Tourkokratia* and the image of the "Turk" would lead to de-securitised and depoliticised bilateral relations and an end to ontological insecurities.

Millas (2016, 98) argues that Turkish nationalism is an "imitation" of the Greek one as it follows in Greek nationalism's footsteps, in terms of ethnic cleansings, economic boycotts, the *Megali Idea* vs the National Pact, and Ancient Greece vs THT. The image of existential threat has been the same, although there have been thaws between Greece and Turkey at intervals. Indeed, the contemporary ontological insecurities are aroused by the past anxieties, since the image of the existential threat has been constructed by the national narratives of the past events on both sides.

3.3.2. Narrative in Greek and Turkish nationalisms

Historians have constructed a national narrative that accounts for the establishment of the Greek nation-state in Greece. The national narrative safeguards the biographical continuity between Ancient Greece, the Byzantine Empire and modern Greece. Reference to Ancient Greece ensures the European-ness of Greek nationalism and a sense of belonging to Europe. The Byzantine past instils religion into Greek nationalism and maintains biographical continuity. *Tourkokratia*, as the only disruption to the biographical continuity, has been transformed in the narrative into a period of bondage and captivity rather than a period of tolerance and cohabitation. Instilling religion into the national narrative, the Greek nation-state has become a divine artefact instead of a political entity. It is an emotive process laden with deep-seated and routinised beliefs. The religion-instilled nationalism has further otherised the "Turk" as both the national and Muslim existential threat. The biographical continuity is preserved by including the Byzantine Empire as Hellene in the national narrative. The exclusion of the Ottoman Era provides a motive for the eternal existential threat – a fear object so as to ignore anxiety about the period that is neither European nor Hellene nor Western in the national narrative.

Greeks have been compared with the "Turk" so as to give prominence to the Europeanness of the Hellenes. Since the Enlightenment was inspired by Ancient Greece, the Greeks considered themselves European because their forefathers were seen as having fired the imagination of their fellow Europeans. Culture and folklore have been fundamental to the contradistinction between the civilised, thereby European, Hellenes and the uncivilised and inferior "Turk" (Herzfeld 1986). The history textbooks heavily hinge on the meticulously constructed historiography in Greece. *Tourkokratia* is the subject that consistently recurs in primary school textbooks (Demirözü 2018, 43). The textbooks narrate forced conversions, the transformation of churches into mosques, unfair taxes, constant humiliations and "satanic, disgusting and pitiless kidnapping" (Millas 2016, 7). The textbooks downplay the privileges and autonomy the Phanariots, the Greek Orthodox Church, and the broader Greek community enjoyed (Millas 2016, 8) in order to forget the unpleasant memories and the existential threat's deeds and remember the

"image of the wicked Turk". Accordingly, terms such as tyranny, tyrant, despot, and freedom have been distorted and rendered ahistorical (Dragonas and Frangoudaki 2018, 23). The revolutionaries had to depict the Ottomans as barbaric and inferior, to convince the *Rhomaioi*/*Romioi* of their Greekness and Hellenism.

The image of the "Turk" in the minds of the Greeks plays a more pivotal role than the image of the "Greek" in Turkish minds. Greeks have lived in the territories of the Ottoman state for hundreds of years, and rebelled against them. Therefore, the "Turk" has become the eternal enemy in their minds. Meanwhile, in fact, the Ottoman state has had a number of rivals in the Greek imagination, now largely forgotten. The history textbooks demonstrate that Greeks are referred to a limited number of times in the Turkish history textbooks, whilst the image of the "Turk" is omnipresent in the Greek history textbooks (Millas 1991, 24); nevertheless, Turkish historiography and history textbooks are comparable to the Greek ones if not on a par with them. National Security course textbooks have pinned Greece down as an "external enemy" along with Armenia since 1926 (Kaya 2016, 126). Although the National Security course was never a continual course and was introduced after the military coups, the course and its materials indicate the hawkish stance against Greece in Turkish nationalism. Greece and Turkey conceal the Self's misdeeds and the "praiseworthy actions" of the existential threat (Millas 1991, 27). Although both sides officially relinquished expansionism, the history textbooks and historiography insinuate that the border between Greece and Turkey is controversial and somehow disputed. The official historiographies and textbooks substantiate the emotive approach to the issue in Greece and Turkey. Textbooks ascribe offensive and derogatory meanings to the fear object, which passes down from generation to generation, and prolongs animosity.

The narrativisation of the existential threat and the Self in literature has been congruent with the historiography and textbooks in Greece and Turkey. The existential threat has predominantly been portrayed as a stereotype in both Greek and Turkish literature. Millas (2016, 29-30) draws attention to a widespread tendency in the Greek and Turkish literature. On the one hand, ethnically defined characters are more an abstract symbol than an individual. They embody either the "Turkish yoke" or the "betrayal of the Greek

subjects". The Greek is the inferior existential threat who exploits, kills and rapes in Turkish literature (Millas 2005, 111). It is the opposite in the case of the Turkish Self. In Greek literature, the Turkish characters are immoral and abusers of their power status, as they are always in a position of power.

On the other hand, the existential threat is not depicted as a stereotype, i.e., an embodiment of the existential threat, but as a benign individual. Such characters do not symbolise the existential threat. These are ordinary characters with positive and negative traits (Millas 2006). The benign individuals who do not embody the existential threat have been portrayed in this way by the authors who have met/befriended/interacted with a Greek/Turk (Millas 2016, 29-30). For instance, there are two distinct Greek Selves in the memoirs and novels of Halide Edib. Greeks are ordinary people with positive characteristics and pitfalls in Halide Edib's memoirs, whereas they are an embodiment of the antagonistic West manifesting itself in her novels (Tsakiridou 2002). Edib's construction of the Greek is as the quintessence of both sides' perception and narration of the existential threat. Greek and Turkish nationalisms do not consider each other as an existential threat contextually. The "Turk" has always been the existential threat, is the existential threat, and is always going to remain the fear object in Greek narrative, and vice versa.

3.4. Conclusion

Greek and Turkish nationalisms are similar, albeit non-identical. They have had distinct trajectories. The Greeks rebelled against the "Turkish tyranny" whereas the Turks struggled to safeguard the empire against the "betrayal of the subjects". The Greeks had irredentist ambitions, whereas the Turks defended their last remaining territory and followed the maxim of "peace at home, peace in the world". The Greeks had to construct an Aegean Greek Self stemming from Ancient Greece, whereas the Turks have settled for Anatolia with its roots in Central Asia. The Greeks boast that European civilisation is founded upon Ancient Greece, whilst the Turks brag that Turkish and Asian civilisations have inspired European civilisation which has aspired to be a constituent of it. Both were exposed to European influence. The similarities, on the other hand, range from their

internal power struggles to the evolving nature of both nationalisms. Both constantly imagine and reconstruct themselves, i.e., becoming in the Heideggerian sense, as they react to and deal with their anxieties. Their anxieties render them ontologically insecure. These ontological insecurities incite nationalism.

Greece and Turkey committed themselves to the National Liberation War against each other with differing nuances. First, modern Turkey was at war against modern Greece, whereas the Greeks were rebelling against the Ottoman state. Second, this was no modern self-conscious Turkish nation during the Greek War of Independence against the Ottoman state. Turks, oblivious to the modern nation concept, were subjects of the Sultan like the rest of the *millets*. On the other hand, the nascent Turkish nation was waging war against the modern Greek nation. In search of biographical continuity, the Greeks narrate their War of Independence as a war against the "Turkish yoke", and the Turks consider their National Liberation War the last stance against the "betrayal of the former subject Greeks". This fact leads to anxiety for both parties. They both are existential in each other's national narrative. They both enjoy a constitutive place in each other's construction of Self as Being.

The past traumas predict a gloomy future. The Greek Self is distressed due to its lost and irrevocable past glories, for which Athens holds the "Turk" liable, whereas the Turkish Self is in anguish over the image of the "Turk" in the Greek national narrative, which could only be reversed by their opponents' re-narrativisation (Millas 2016, 100). However, both parties are totally occupied with the existential threat's violation of their sovereign rights because they are anxious states seeking answers in the domain of the empirical.

The "Turk" is the antithesis of the Self in the Greek national consciousness. It is assertive, impertinent and hostile. Turks are responsible for the debacles and misadventures Greece has undergone. Greece suffers from a "brotherless nation" delusion, and as the Turkish saying goes, "Turks have no friends but Turks". Therefore, the Self is obliged to be vigilant and astute. The fear object constantly conspires against the Self. It must be belittled and disparaged. Greece had different fear objects in various periods. However,

the one perpetual fear object has always been the “Turk”. The perpetual fear object the “Turk” is not a constructed image but a historical fact in Greece (Dragonas and Frangoudaki 2018, 22). The others have been downplayed and forgotten in time.

On the other hand, the “Turk” always returns to its “rightful” place as the primary fear object. The image of the Greeks in Turkish minds is similar to the Greeks’ image of the “Turk” in essence, albeit slightly differently. Greeks have been considered insolent and the “spoiled child of Europe”. Their Aegean, Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus policies are deemed an extension of the latent *Megali Idea*. The repetitive cycle of wars and contentions has fuelled mistrust between the two.

The latest critical juncture came with the 1974 Cyprus War, which reminded the Greeks of the 1922 Asia Minor Catastrophe/Turkish National Liberation War. Henceforth, Greek Foreign Policy has considered the “threat to the East” as a given – a self-evident and indisputable canon – and the conflict against the “Turk” as cultural and existential (Heraclides 2002, 38). It has caused a widespread complex that permeates society. Revisionist and threatening to Greeks, Turks considered the 1974 Cyprus War the last resort to which Ankara was obliged, because all attempts at diplomacy launched by the guarantor state Turkey had failed. Ankara had to take on the responsibility to protect its “kin” from “genocide”. Turks are of the opinion that Turkey has paid a heavy price for the 1974 Cyprus War, whereas Greeks believe that the international community let Ankara remain entirely unscathed after the 1974 Cyprus War. Wary of the fragile peace and apprehensive about “containment”, Ankara has assumed that “if it happened once, it could happen again”. On the other hand, Athens has believed it witnessed the rise of irredentist neo-Ottomanism in distress.

The 1974 Cyprus War has also reawakened the old anxieties of the Turkish national consciousness. The *Megali Idea*, lying dormant for many years, has re-emerged. It threatens the emotional frontiers of the Turkish Self. The duality of good and evil has been discernible since then. Both sides still underline/remember the adverse and unwelcome developments, whilst downgrading/forgetting the constructive events.

Ankara follows a hidden agenda, and any gesture of goodwill would seem rather suspicious in Athens, and vice versa.

The image of the existential threat plays a pivotal role in the contemporary national consciousness as well. Greece is regarded as the irredentist and expansionist "spoiled child of Europe" from Ankara's viewpoint. The very name of Turkey carries pejorative connotations, i.e., the bloodthirsty "Turk". The Greeks are audacious and deceitful, albeit proficient diplomats, in the minds of the Turks, whilst the Turks are vulgar bullies, albeit adept diplomats, according to the Greeks (Heraclides 2002, 46-47).

The Greeks are ontologically insecure because the Ottoman successes that happened later than the Greek ones would jeopardise the image of the Greek Self as Being. Greek ignorance of the Turks is not coincidental. It has been meticulously constructed by means of forgetting, remembering, denial and disinformation (Pesmazoglou 1991, as cited in Heraclides 2002, 70). The Turks are ontologically insecure, due to the fact that the Greeks inhabited Anatolia, their homeland, centuries earlier. Moreover, the European Enlightenment is regarded as an offspring of the Ancient Greek civilisation by the Europeans themselves. Therefore, the Greeks are European, whereas the Turks must constantly demonstrate and substantiate their European-ness.

The four hundred years' long bondage and captivity ended for Greeks with the 1821 Greek War of Independence, which is remembered as the first rebellion that initiated the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire by the Turks. The establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 embodies the advent of modern Turkey in the minds of Turks, but, for the Greeks, it symbolises the demise of the *Megali Idea*, which had been an official political target for almost a hundred years in Greece. A past trauma on one side is remembered as a "chosen glory" on the other side. The dichotomy between the narratives leads to anxious states.

The Greeks are in need of the "barbaric" "Turk" as the Turks are in need of the "spoiled child of Europe" to bolster their national narratives. The fear object and the civilised Self are two sides of the same coin (Heraclides 2002, 70). The hatred towards the "Turk" is

interwoven with the devotion to the nation. Correspondingly, the "spoiled child of Europe" narrative conceals the Turks' deficiencies and incompatibilities with Europe. The bilateral relations have been profoundly politicised on both sides. Thus, the issue becomes more and more emotionally charged for the Self on both sides. Both sides regard any matter and event as a national security issue in bilateral relations, under the circumstances. Anxiety in the domain of the real leads to distrust/hatred and impasse in the domain of the actual. Thus, conflicts such as the Aegean dispute and the Eastern Mediterranean dispute are experienced in the domain of the empirical. The Öcalan crisis is a case in point. Athens, which meant to side with the "peaceful" and "enslaved" Kurds, ended up supporting a terrorist leader. The Öcalan crisis created an arbitrary row with the Turks. Anxiety led to irrational and emotive policies. The predominance of ontological insecurity in bilateral relations is inevitable until both sides assume responsibility, turn over a new leaf and become transparent in their bilateral relations.

The Self is not a Leviathan constituted by the citizenry in the Hobbesian sense. The Self is Dasein, made up of every individual Dasein in the nation in the Heideggerian sense. Therefore, the Self refers to "Being/becoming" in actuality. Hence, this thesis sporadically makes use of the term Self as Being. "What am I?" is a question arousing anxiety in the Self as Being. The Self diverts attention to the fear object in order to cope with anxiety. Indeed, the Self as Being does not deal well with anxiety. In fact, the Self gives an emotive response to anxiety and focuses on the fear object; thereby, anxiety is not coped with, albeit it may be relieved.

Anxiety deprives the Self as Being of ontological security. The ontologically insecure Self as Being experiences a gamut of negative emotions. The Self, short of tolerance towards the existential threat, is bereft of self-criticism, and gripped by a constant terror.

There are a number of critical junctures in the domain of the empirical that have brought anxiety into the domain of the real over the bilateral relations in the history of these two entities. The contradictory meanings of the 1821 Greek War of Independence/Mora Uprising, and the 1922 Turkish National Liberation War/Asia Minor Catastrophe for Greeks and Turks have heralded the advent of nationalism in the Balkans and Anatolia,

respectively. Both sides have narrated the past in contradictory terms. They have ensured the biographical continuity of their nations. However, this continuity in biography has led to ascribing new and contradictory meanings to the past. Inhabiting adjacent territories, it has been inevitable for the Turkish and Greek entities to collide. Wars such as the 1071 Battle of Manzikert and the 1302 Battle of Bapheus/Koyunhisar have had little nationalistic significance for both sides in the pre-modern period. As the Greeks have integrated the Byzantine Empire into their national narrative, thereby strengthening their biographical continuity, the wars between pre-modern Turkish and Greek entities have taken on a new meaning in the context of nationalism. The new nationalistic perception of past events has transformed those events into traumas. These traumas have created an image of existential threat on both sides. Their bilateral relations with existential threat have led to a coping mechanism – as they have become a fear object for each other – with anxiety for both units. These anxieties are the anxiety of death, meaninglessness and guilt/condemnation. The anxiety of meaninglessness has been brought about by the fact that nationalism is a modern concept that has had to be constructed and strengthened by pre-modern history, myths and symbols. The distortion of the pre-modern past has led to the anxiety of guilt/condemnation. The truth lingering around – nation-states are constructed, and the nation is a modern and nascent concept – provokes the anxiety of death. The presence of the fear object alleviates anxieties and, thereby, renders the Self as Being ontologically secure. Anxiety resurfaces on any departure – negative or positive – from the norm in bilateral relations. As anxiety – exposed in symptoms such as the Cyprus dispute and the exclusive economic zones, both of which are seen in the domain of the empirical – arise, both entities become more nationalistic and hold the fear object liable for any issue.

The Greeks and Turks have not learned to cope with their anxieties yet. The image of the existential threat is, therefore, still negative. *Tourkokratia* is the primary determinant of the Greek Self. Besides, the Greek historiography does not differentiate between the Ottomans (the dynasty itself and the elites who follow the Ottoman modes) and the laymen/ordinary Turks (Athanassopoulou 2018, 198). The “Turk” that the Greek heroes fought against still occupies the eastern shores of the Aegean Sea. The “long battle of Hellenism against the ‘Turk’ in the East” is still ongoing (Athanassopoulou 2018, 198).

Accordingly, the Self is traumatised and anxious, leading to emotive reactions to the experiences in the domain of the empirical. The bilateral relations with the Turks are tense under the circumstances.

The Turks recognised the official demise of the *Megali Idea* after the Turkish War of Independence. However, the advent of *Enosis* in Cyprus was deemed an extension of the *Megali Idea* among Turks. Moreover, the Aegean Greek civilisation narrative has further distressed them. The Greeks have envisaged a heartland in the Aegean Sea, whereas the Turks have seen it as a borderland. These anxieties have been observed through a symptom, i.e., the Eastern Mediterranean dispute – an experience in the domain of the empirical. As anxious states, both sides produce emotive reactions to each other's actions. Therefore, the material disputes will remain unresolved until the ontological insecurities are addressed.

4. THE EU AS AN ONTOLOGICAL INSECURITY TRIGGER

In Chapter 4, the thesis elaborates on the contemporary Greece-Turkey bilateral relations on the EU's periphery and argues that the EU has transformed into an ontological insecurity trigger for Greece and Turkey, due to the respective weakness and total lack of EU normativity on the periphery in line with the thesis' multi-layered approach to ontological insecurity on Europe's periphery.

Memories trigger emotions which, in turn, arouse anxiety. Anxious political entities cannot rationally cope with deterioration under duress and, thereby, give in to ontological insecurity. An adverse event incites public emotion and results in a downward spiral under the circumstances. Therefore, it is not the events themselves that ought to be addressed but the emotions underlying them. For instance, the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque is a pivotal moment in the bilateral relations due to the emotions it triggered in Ankara and Athens rather than its mere religious function.

While not detached from reality, OSS conceptualises reality. A political entity is constantly anxious since the Self as Being is emotionalised through its socialisation with the other Selves as Being. A Self as Being is "becoming" in the Heideggerian sense. Therefore, it is always deficient and distressed by the "unknowability of future". The Self as Being is ontologically secure/insecure to the extent that it successfully/unsuccessfully deals with its anxiety. Therefore, a political entity is always anxious and in an emotional state of mind. Decisions are made under these circumstances in international affairs. These decisions are rational to the extent that the entities are coping with their anxiety. These decisions may further deteriorate the already fragile bilateral relations in an ontologically insecure state.

As Greeks call both the Ottoman state and Turkey the "Turk", they construct/impose a biographical continuity in their narrative of/on the major ontological insecurity trigger - the pre-nationalist Ottomans who were not aware of their Turkishness in the context of nationalism are constructed in a nationalist sense in the Greek discourse and seen as an integral part of the modern Turkish nationalism. Similarly, they also define and shape

Tourkokratia, a so-called pre-nationalist period in the context of modern nationalism. The pre-modern myths and the pre-modern events are comprehended in a modern way to buttress the modern nation. Accordingly, Orthodox people's myths and events were reconceptualised and reconfigured in an attempt to make sense of and account for what the people had fought for. Accordingly, the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque has led to a diplomatic spat between Ankara and Athens, and provoked a public backlash in Greece. Consequently, these constructions are transformed into myths and memories, leading to a perpetual anxious state of the Self as Being.

The pre-modern era is learned about with the bias of hindsight. There are references to non-European features such as arbitrary rule, despotism and backwardness in the European/Greek narrative of the "Turk". These anxious units regard the "Turk" as the perennial fear object. Therefore, the pre-modern myths and events are mis-conceptualised in the context of the modern era nowadays. Europe and Greece, thus, sustain the biographical continuity and, in the Greek case, the sense of belonging to Europe, while the concept of the "Turk" distinguishes Greeks from Turks and demonstrates their Europeanness. The revolutionaries conceptualised their fight against the "Turk" as getting rid of the "Turkish yoke" and the "inner Turk". To mobilise the laymen, they were in need of pre-modern myths and references to pre-modern wars. They ascribed new meanings to the pre-modern myths and events in the context of the modern concept of a nation, since they aimed to create a nation out of communities defined by religion. For this reason, the status of Hagia Sophia is still subject to heated debates in Greece.

The Turkish lands have shrunk from a vast empire to a middle-size nation-state. The trauma of territorial losses and the simultaneous eradication of the Ottoman footprint in these territories has had dire repercussions for the Self as Being in not only Anatolia but also the detached territories. Consequently, modern Turkey has always been sceptical of foreign powers, wary of minorities and infatuated with the need for international recognition. Modern Turkey has committed itself to westernisation with the definite aim of Europeanisation, ever since the Republic was established. Many reforms have been adopted, some of which are the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924, and the westernisation of the judiciary, legislative and executive. Furthermore, Turkey converted Hagia Sophia

into a museum to transform the holy site into the sacred symbol of secular modern Turkey. Ankara has evidently and irrevocably opted to be a part of the international community of civilised nations. To this end, modern Turkey has disparaged and denounced Easternness (a kind of Orientalism in Turkey at the expense of the mainly Ottoman past and the Arab nations) as vulgar and uncivilised.

Considered an outsider in Europe and the wider Western community, Turkey has been endeavouring to assume a stable place among the civilised nations and integrate itself into the international community. In this context, the national narrative has been reconstructed time and again. Ankara eyes an uninterrupted biographical continuity located in Europe in the spatio-temporal sense, and a stable sense of belonging to Europe so as to ensure an ontologically secure place in international affairs.

The thesis does not aim to demonstrate whether the EU has discriminated against Turkey concerning the enlargement process. First, I advance that there are two types of Europeanisation, namely value-based Europeanisation and culture-oriented Europeanisation. The value-based version includes institutionalised Europeanisation, which could be achieved by any political entity willing to adopt European values, norms and the EU acquis. The culture-oriented one, which requires emotive attachment, demands the historical and cultural links that the EU is supposed to possess with the candidate country. Second, I call the false promise of a normative European power concept 'Europelessness'. Third, I contend that Turkey's EU bid and the EU's involvement in Greece-Turkey bilateral relations reveal that the EU, a political entity capable of becoming an ontological security provider, has transformed the situation into an ontological insecurity trigger on its periphery. I argue that the rampant culture-oriented discourse has estranged and distressed Ankara, and bestowed on Turkey an ontologically insecure status.

4.1. Turks as a Cultural Threat to Europe

The cultural and religious incursion of Western Christendom into the adjacent lands lasted until it was opposed by "the unreciprocating will of the unspeakable Turk" towards the

east in Wight's terminology (Rich 1999, 438). The 1453 Ottoman conquest of Constantinople sparked off an adverse, hostile and negative emotional reaction instead of a reaction within the confines of reason in Europe. They disregarded the military prowess of the Ottoman state and disparaged the political and economic repercussions of the event for Europe. Instead, European observers condemned the internal divisions among the Christians and made use of the event to reinforce the "existing collective" view – the "Turk" as the wrath of God (Neumann 1998, 45).

The "Turk" has interacted with Europeans on a daily basis for centuries. They have warred against and traded with each other. This centuries-long interaction has not resulted in constructing shared values or interests. As the European entities have embarked upon a quest to eradicate war and conflict in Europe, the Turks have lagged behind in this respect.

For centuries, the dominant threat to Europe has explicitly been the Turks with their military prowess and proximity to the European states (Neumann and Welsh 1991, 330). The Europeans considered the "Turk" the main threat to Europe – the nascent form of the Muslim threat to Christianity to be precise – for centuries, and they meant to present a united front to the Turkish menace (freedom from) instead of looking for a better and united Europe (freedom to). As there is no Euro-Ottomanism in the eyes of the Greeks and Europeans, there is no Euro-Turkey-ism either, since what is Ottoman was regarded as belonging to the "Turk" by the Greeks and Europeans. As biographical continuity dictates, Turkey is an extension of the Ottomans who were the "Turk" before. Therefore, it is neither Ottoman nor Turkey but the "Turk" in their eyes. The "Turk" that wreaked havoc, the "Turk" that instilled fear in hearts, the "Turk" that incited hatred in hearts. Indeed, the "Turk" is the perennial existential threat integral to the European national myths.

European countries have not compromised and come to terms with each other in order to face down the Turkish threat but to end forever wars among themselves. On the one hand, the 19th century Concert of Europe was not established due to the Turkish threat, i.e., the Ottoman menace was not the main motive behind the accord between the Europeans. On

the other hand, the Europeans excluded the Ottoman state from their internal matters and considered the "Turk" an outsider. As the royal families of these political entities were related to each other, the Ottoman court was never open to them, nor were their courts open to the "Turk".

The Turkish presence has served as a litmus test of Europeanness in Europe – the opposite of the European Self as Being, with its violent nature and Islamic character. Turks have been seen as the opposite of Europeans, including Greeks – barbarian, savage, despotic and an existential threat to the European and Greek Self as Being, although Turks have been an integral part of European affairs since their arrival in Asia Minor in the 11th century. Turks have been incapable of assimilating into the European community, due to their insurmountable non-Europeanness, savagery, and despotism (Robins 1996). Remembering the "Turk" is a daily routine. It is a practice that nurtures the European sense of belonging, preserves their biographical continuity, and reassures the Self as Being. Forgetting this image would arouse tremendous anxiety.

The duality of Islam and Christianity has cast a long shadow over European states' relations with Turks, which still has reverberations in present day EU-Turkey relations. Mayer and Palmowski (2004, 574-75) have drawn attention to the common culture shared by Western Europeans and Eastern Europeans, which surpassed the contrasting ideologies and practical matters dividing Europe. The very same rationale – Europe defining itself in opposition to the Ottoman state for more than five centuries – casts doubt on Turkey's accession to the EU (Mayer and Palmowski, 2004, 575).

The politics of emotions takes a toll on EU-Turkey relations and the EU's clout on the periphery in general. Turks who have been remembered as the barbaric and heathen invaders of the past are still referred to likewise in the speeches of senior European figures (Mültüler-Baç and Taşkın 2007, 42; Sen 2020). Frits Bolkestein, then European Union Commissioner for the Internal Market, said that the "siege of Vienna in 1683 […] might turn out to 'have been in vain' if Turkey joined the EU" (*Politico* 2004). An analogy between Turkey's EU bid and the Siege of Vienna – the Turks, ready to overrun Europe, repelled at the gates of Vienna – has continually been drawn by Europeans (MacLennan

2009, 21). In the run-up to the 2006 general elections, H. C. Strache, the leader of Austria's Freedom Party (FPÖ), was presented as Prince Eugene, who led the combined European forces against and repelled the Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683, and the slogans of the party were "Home instead of Islam" and "No Turkish EU" in the Viennese dialectic (Günay 2010, 97-98). The FPÖ has resorted to speaking of the "terrible and violent Turk" as the main threat to Austria and as part of Europe's narrative in the Austrian and European intersubjective memory. The incongruity of Islam and Turkishness with Austria and Europeanness, resulting in the "siege mentality" and "fortress Europe" concept, adds fuel to anti-Turkish sentiments in Europe.

EU membership amounts to Europeanness nowadays. With its Judeo-Christian background, Europe is an amalgamation of certain values, customs and norms. On the one hand, the EU comprises a set of states which have undergone the European Enlightenment, the European Reformation, the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution. On the other hand, it is a group of political entities otherising non-Christians (Muslims and Jews) and non-Europeans (Turks and Arabs) inside and across their borders. The combination of these internal and external factors indicates a common history, culture and geography that define Europeanness.

The European historiography underlines the violent episodes of interaction with the Muslims, such as the Moorish landing in Spain and the Second Siege of Vienna by the Turks (Tziampiris 2009, 67). The Muslim incursions into Europe have haunted Europeans for centuries, and have been integral in arousing negative sentiments against Islam. The subsequent Crusades have amplified the already antagonistic image of Islam. The ascension of the Ottoman state has followed the downfall of the Arab menace in the "threat position" in Europe. The Muslim threat has practically passed into oblivion as the Ottoman clout has also waned. However, the Muslim threat perception has never diminished in Europe (Gottschalk and Greenberg 2008). The 9/11 and the ensuing terror attacks in European cities have both exacerbated the negative emotions against Islam. Muslims are non-European to the extent that they cannot assimilate into the European community or adopt European values. Levin (2019) argues that the historiography of Europe narrated as an antagonistic duality of Christianity and Islam takes its toll on

Turkey's EU bid. In this context, Turkey's EU bid becomes thorny and controversial. The antagonistic reading of European history coupled with the "siege mentality" and the concept of "fortress Europe" transforms every encounter of Europeans with Muslims into a traumatic experience.

The choice of language conditions the politics of emotions at play. The Greeks and Europeans who called the "Turk" infidel and heathen prior to the advent of the Westphalian order have dubbed the "Turk" barbarian and backward instead of pre-modern, which is a more unemotional term without such negative connotations in the nationalism era.

Europeans have thought they would make an emancipatory impact on the remainder of the world, as they dubbed themselves Normative Power Europe. The concept has failed so far, as the Western institutions have failed to deliver on their promises to the rest of the world. Instead, the false promise of Europe's normativity resulted in ontological insecurity, especially on its periphery. Disheartened by the dilapidation of the European idea, the other political entities willing to Europeanise found themselves teetering on the edge of a dark abyss.

4.2. Greece in Relation to Europe

The Europeanness of Greece has not always been undivided. It was Europe, not the East, that Ypsilantis (2007, 399-400) referred to when he said:

> *Europe, its eyes fixed upon us, wonders at our inertia. […]. Europe will admire our valor, while our tyrants, shaking and pale, will flee before us. The enlightened peoples of Europe are occupied with enjoying their prosperity and, filled with gratitude for the benefactions bestowed upon them by our forefathers, desire the liberation of Greece.*

Correspondingly, Renieris (2007, 313) argued that Greece does belong to the West; thereby, embracing its own culture through Westernisation and Europeanisation, since Ancient Greece is the ground zero of European culture. The Great Schism and the Sack of Constantinople in 1204 were to be forgotten in this context. On the other hand, In Kolettis' understanding, Greece was the epicentre of Europe, albeit not confined to

Europe, i.e., Greece enlightened the West and was also a beacon of hope for the East (Kolettis 2007, 247).

Greece had a fluctuating relationship with Europe in the past. In 1974, then Prime Minister Konstantinos Karamanlis said, "Greece belongs to the West", and Andreas Papandreou, the founder of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), who ascended to the prime ministerial position later on, argued, "Greece belongs to the Greeks" in 1981 (Nafpliotis 2018, 513; Gartzou-Katsouyanni 2020, 164). Indeed, Euroscepticism was alive notwithstanding as Greece joined the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1981. As the former President of Greece, Christos Sartzetakis, said, "the Greeks are a nation without brethren."

Discussing Greece's Western-ness/European-ness, Russia enters the frame. The possibility of ostracism from the Eurozone instigated Greeks to discuss a more national and less European agenda which positions Greece near Russia, to the East of Europe in international affairs in the 2010s. The threat to the East has always amounted to Turkey for Greece, even in the darkest hours of the Cold War. The USSR was the lesser evil for Greek threat perception. As a matter of fact, Athens has always enjoyed friendlier and more stable relations with Moscow, in contrast to their Western and European allies (Triantaphyllou 2015). The Orthodoxy of Greece downgrades it to a less-European status.

Orthodoxy serves as an area where Athens and Moscow find common ground. Orthodox Christianity binds the two nations together, since religion is an inextricable component of Greek and Russian nationalism. As the geography of Greece further estranges it from Europe and instils a flank state mentality, Greece holds onto its Asiatic memories, in voices ranging from those of Ioannis Kapodistrias, a former foreign minister to the Russian Tzar and a vehement supporter of Greek independence, and *Philikí Etaireía*[14] (Society of Friends) founded in Odessa in 1814 to overthrow centuries-long Ottoman hegemony; during this time, the Greeks missed out on the cultural breakthroughs that made Europe, e.g., the Enlightenment and the Renaissance. These forgotten details are an impediment to the biographical continuity manifesting the Europeanness of the Greeks.

[14] A secret organisation which aims to establish an independent Greek state in Ottoman Greece.

Triantaphyllou argues, “this is where the doubt comes [for Greeks]: do we belong to the West or are we alone?” (Patrikarakos 2015).

The latest example of the less-Europeanness of Greece is the Greek government’s debt crisis. Athens had to implement austerity measures that were imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the EU in 2010. Greeks lost confidence in the European community with a heavy heart, which resulted in an upsurge in far-right nationalism. This far-right nationalism lies dormant regardless of the Golden Dawn having taken a severe blow with the prison sentences passed on the leading figures of the far-right party in 2020 (Stamouli 2021). As Golden Dawn has lost its pre-eminence among the Greek public, another far-right party with ten seats in the Greek parliament and one MEP in the European parliament has taken its place, i.e., *Elliniki Lisi* (Ελληνική Λύση/Greek Solution) (Stamouli 2019). It is no coincidence that Athens had doubts about the European community and simultaneously sought better relations with the Kremlin, especially in the energy sphere (Patrikarakos 2015).

There are numerous indicators of Greek European-ness, such as the European support for the establishment of a Greek state, the presence of Philhellenes in Europe and the enthroning of the Bavarian, thereby European, Prince Otto as the first king of Greece in 1832, even though there is an extant debate on Greece’s Eastern-ness and Western-ness. People calling themselves Greek have constructed a biographical continuity in the meantime. They claim and embrace Ancient Greece having inspired the Enlightenment. They construct a self-narrative depending on a continuity from Ancient Greece, the Macedonians, the Greco-Romans, Byzantine and modern Greece. They assume European norms and community as their own. Accordingly, this thesis focuses on the mainstream historiography, because its aim is to delineate the national narrative, its evolution and its impact on the Greek Self as Being.

Subjugated by the Macedonians, Romans, Byzantines and Turks for centuries, Greeks have imagined themselves as a phoenix rising from the ashes. The interval, a rupture to the main story, had to be a relatively short period of subjugation contrasting with the glorious past that lasted for ages. Accordingly, Greeks have appropriated the Macedonian

and Roman periods to integrate Ancient Greece into their narrative, and amalgamated the Byzantine period with the remainder so as to Christianise Greek nationalism in an attempt to strengthen the national narrative. Integrating these European and Christian periods into their narrative, Greeks ensured the Europeanness of the nation and boosted the citizenry's self-esteem.

Europe has been of paramount importance to Greece since 1821. The Greeks have had close ties with the Europeans, as they carried on the Ottoman trade in the Aegean Sea and the Balkans. They established close economic, cultural and political ties with Europe over for decades. They enjoyed European support during the National Liberation War, and afterwards. Europe too regarded Greece as culturally European from the outset, since it was Ancient Greece which inspired the Enlightenment in Europe. Hence, Europe and Europeanness have appealed to the Greeks since the early years of the uprising. Accordingly, Greece has had a two century-long, albeit intermittent, Europeanisation, which reached its pinnacle in the 1990s.

Europeanisation does not inevitably infer assimilation. The Greek elites and population alike are committed to Europe. Greece joined the European Community in 1981. Meanwhile, Philhellenism was prevalent among the European elites, although ordinary Europeans were oblivious to Greece's social and economic conditions (Pettifer 1996, 18). Athens went through Europeanisation with relative ease because Ancient Greece was supposed to have inspired Western Civilisation. Indeed, Hellenism and Europeanisation are considered mutually inclusive, since Ancient Greece inspired the European Enlightenment. Europeanisation, therefore, meant Hellenisation for the Greeks– return to one's roots – in a sense. Thus, the biographical continuity – Ancient Greece symbolised by the Acropolis of Athens as its ontic space, Byzantium embodied by Hagia Sophia as its ontic space and modern Greece represented by the Aegean Sea as its ontic space – remains intact and is integral to the incorporation into the EU.

Nevertheless, the lack of normativity in EU policies has been distressing the countries located on the EU's periphery. Greece and Turkey are among those peripheral entities perplexed by the incompatibility between the EU's normative agenda and the policies on

the ground. Indeed, that incongruity leads to the "unknowability of future". Athens still is suffering from flank state psychology in practice.

The traces of Hellenic culture in European civilisation are of paramount importance to Greece to the extent that any contradictory statement on European culture is seen as inadmissible and obnoxious. For instance, discussions over starting a museum dedicated to Europe provoked a backlash in Greece in 1997. The science committee proposed the Charlemagne era as the dawn of European consciousness. Therefore, the museum must pay homage to this fact, since the starting point of everything European would be seen as the 9th century. The proposal had reverberations all over Greece and elicited an adverse response from Athens, since Ancient Greece must be considered the genesis of European civilisation. The mainstream media argued that the science committee was plotting to remove Greece from EU membership, Elie Barnavi, the head of the science committee, was declared *persona non grata* and Athens issued a diplomatic note (Özkırımlı 2008, 87). A simple derailment from the Greek narrative is detrimental to the sense of belonging to Europe, since Ancient Greece is the primary secure attachment that demonstrates Greeks' Europeanness. Any inconsistency in the biographical continuity arouses anxiety and results in ontological insecurity.

Religion, i.e., Greek Orthodoxy, has played a pivotal role in Greece's integration into Europe, together with its territory being located on the European landmass (Onar 2009, 47). In the Greek case, the congruity between Orthodoxy and nationalism eased the transition process, thereby alleviating the anxiety provoked by the uncertainty/unknowability of future from the pre-modern era to the modern set of circumstances. On the one hand, Orthodoxy has been in accord with pre-modern conventions, as religion played an integral role in life in the pre-modern era. On the other hand, the "Helleno-" character of Orthodoxy has laid the groundwork for the advent of Greek nationalism. Indeed, Helleno-Orthodoxy has served as a cultural background for Greeks and encapsulated the very essence of Hellenism. The distinction between Greeks and non-Greeks was drawn up from the very beginning. Helleno-Orthodoxy strengthens the Greek sense of belonging to Europe, and advances the Greek argument for Europeanness, as Helleno-Orthodox culture associates Greeks with the Judeo-Christian

and Greco-Roman culture of Europe. Although Orthodoxy renders Greeks less European in relation to the Catholic core European entities, it is also a litmus test of their somewhat European character. Greeks may be less European; nevertheless, they are not non-European.

Considering Turkey an existential threat, Athens relies on international law in an attempt to (1) ensure state sovereignty and agency, meaning Self as Being in the face of a potent contender – anxiety of death and ontic self-affirmation – and (2) secure a sense of belonging to the civilised world epitomised in the EU – anxiety of meaninglessness and psychological self-affirmation (Tzimitras 2008, 124). International law provides a protective cocoon for being in the world as in the Heideggerian sense – an entity interacting and engaging in international politics. Moreover, the EU serves as an "escape from the Ottoman past" (Aybet 2009). The sense of belonging to the EU ensures Athens of positive security, viz. being a part of the reassuring civilised world, and negative security, namely being free from "Turkish delinquency". Thus, Turkey has become a revisionist, a violator of international law, and an "uncivilised" entity – an outlier in international politics. Being an entity on the semi-periphery of Europe itself, Greece, on the one hand, reassures itself and reminds its fellow Europeans of its Europeanness – the champion of European values against an assertive Turkey and the descendant of Ancient Greece, i.e., the cradle of Enlightenment. On the other hand, Athens demonstrates its superiority over Ankara, which is excluded from the European community.

Greece has dealt with the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a museum in conformity with international law as well. It has referred to the reconversion as an affront to universal values and international obligations. Its reaction, albeit emotive and anxious, has been within the confines of Europeanness, and international conventions and law.

For Greece, Europe is the embodiment of (1) anxiety of death – presence/absence of the sense of belonging to Europe – (2) anxiety of meaninglessness – Europeanisation as the internalisation of the European code of conduct – (3) anxiety of condemnation – Europe must be reminded of Ancient Greece as the inspiration for the Enlightenment, and thereby implementing moral-self-affirmation, i.e., Greece is Europe and Europe is Greece.

Europe is a concept that permeates through Greek society. There is a deep-rooted cultural and historical bind to Europe in Greece. It is a cultural, political, and emotional anchor that firmly stabilises the Greek Self as Being and serves as an ontological security provider for the Greeks.

4.3. Turkey in Relation to Europe

Turkey's EU bid sheds light on the ambiguity in Europeanness. There are many faces of Europe, e.g., a common market, a post-national institution, a civilisation. Is it an institution based on universal values or religion and culture? Turkey has acted as a catalyst for the debates over Europe's definition related to the Self as Being, its boundaries in the spatio-temporal sense and its historiography/narrative in relation to biographical continuity.

Müftüler-Baç (2000, 26-27) argues:

> *Turks have been a part of Europe geographically since they arrived in Asia Minor in the 11th century, economically since the 16th century as trade routes expanded, and diplomatically since the 19th century when the Ottoman Empire was officially included in the Concert of Europe.*

Endeavouring to be a component of European community for centuries since the Concert of Europe, Turks have been "seeing themselves through the European (or Western) gaze" (Çapan and Zarakol 2019, 267). Turkey, distressed by and longing for the "European gaze", is trapped in between. In other words, Ankara hankers for admission to the European community and is anxious about unknowing its image in the "European gaze" (Ahıska 2010, 18). As a result of the dissolution of the Ottoman state and the Ottoman decline in the face of the rising Europe, the Ottoman elites initiated Europeanisation and went through a self-assessment via the prism of the "European gaze". Non-European traits were disregarded and disdained, whilst European values were revered thenceforth. In this framework, the Turks reached one of the pinnacles of their history of Europeanisation with the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, which abolished the decaying Ottoman system and adopted European institutions and values, and this was symbolised by the

museumification of Hagia Sophia and the secularisation of Turkey in the form of the de-Islamisation of public space, inter alia.

Turkey's tilt towards Europe has not dispelled its anxiety over the "European gaze". As a political entity suffering from the "Sevres Syndrome", Turkey is caught in an appalling dilemma between Europeanisation and the perceived risk of "losing full sovereignty" (Bilgin and Bilgiç 2012, 112). It is a dilemma in which the Turkish elites, aware of the perils of not adopting Western/European values, e.g., the disastrous consequences of colonisation for colonised people and territories, were anxious about the European attitude towards the "Turk". Ontologically insecure, the Turks established the Republic of Turkey – a political entity adopting European values and norms and eliminating the justification for foreign intervention. Ankara has remained ontologically insecure regardless due to forgetting/remembering practices. Remembering specific events such as the 1920 Treaty of Sevres and the 1919 Greek landing at İzmir/Smyrna, following the earlier Greek territorial expansion at the expense of the Turks, as the pinnacle of the *Megali Idea*, Ankara ascribes meaning to contemporary events contextually. Ankara also believes it has been a victim of European prejudice and hypocrisy, since the EU member states fall short of the same EU standards the candidates are obliged to maintain (Onar 2009, 69). In this setting, Ankara has had misgivings about the reliability of their recognition.

Aydın-Düzgit and Rumelili (2021a, 67) retrace the footsteps of Turkish nationalism and detect its divergence from Europeanisation and the representation of Europe as "morally inferior" due to (1) the radical left and right's anti-Western rhetoric and (2) the ambivalent Western/European attitude towards Turkey. Özbey et al. (2021) argue that Turkey's narratives, regardless of the growing anti-European rhetoric, aim towards EU membership, whilst EU narratives were increasingly emotionally drifting away from the idea of Turkish membership from 1958 to 2017. The expanding Eurosceptic attitude and the perennial aim of Europeanisation demonstrate that Turkey is in an ontologically insecure position. As Ankara cannot alleviate its anxiety, its emotionalised state leads to contradictory narratives. The incongruity between rising Euroscepticism and the longing

for European recognition distresses Turkey and gets it into an ontologically insecure position.

The anti-Turkey sentiment has been profound in Europe in the meantime. France and Austria otherise Turkey as the revival of conservatism opposes Ankara's prospects of EU membership. Discussions on "absorption capacity" have antagonised Ankara, which considers these discussions an existential aversion to Turkey's candidacy (Onar 2009, 71). The "EU hypocrisy" has belittled and devalued the "normative power Europe" notion in Turkey. The anti-EU sentiment has grown, as the EU calls on Ankara to come to terms with the recognition of the events of 1915 as genocide, a solution to the Greece-Turkey disputes, and the recognition of the Republic of Cyprus (RoC)' sovereignty over the whole island, which Turks deem a startling EU duplicity. Ankara deems the call for genocide recognition the politicisation of history, which hinders a non-political stance via the media. The EU's demand for a solution to the bilateral relations is considered the Europeanisation of Greece-Turkey relations. According to Ankara, Europeanisation amounts to the instrumentalisation of the EU in favour of Greece (*Duvar English* 2021). As the EU deviated from its earlier assurance of bipartisanship on the Cyprus issue, Turkey regards Cyprus' accession to the EU and EU conditionality on the issue as hypocrisy and deceit, as Mesut Yılmaz, the then Turkish Prime Minister, held the EU accountable for "deliberately misleading [Ankara] for years" (Buhari-Gülmez and Gülmez 2008, 21). Rendering Turkey's accession contingent on stable bilateral relations with Greece and the resolution of the Cyprus dispute, the EU takes up a political stance and notifies Ankara that the EU is not a club of standards and values but a club that enables its members to strongarm non-members in their bilateral relations according to Turkey. Therefore, the EU has transformed into an ontological insecurity trigger from an ontological security provider.

The liberal and "Western" tenets, also called European values, ought to be universal. A non-liberal and non-Western polity is hence able to adopt these tenets. However, the non-Western party is supposed to assent to the subordinate role it is obliged to play due to the construction of a superior European Self as Being during the lengthy, sporadically protracted negotiations towards becoming "European" (Rumelili 2007b, 53). The thesis

follows Rumelili (2007, 56), arguing that the "EU constructs firm boundaries between self and other" on occasion. As one of these partially estranged entities, Turkey is put in a liminal/uncertain position, and thereby the EU/Europe is considered a "source of inspiration and anxiety", arousing ontological insecurity (Bilgin and Bilgiç 2012, 111).

The liminal position of Turkey between non-Europe and European, and between non-Christian (Muslim) and Christian in the cultural sense, places Ankara in a precarious situation (Rumelili 2012). Left in limbo, a decision has been imposed on Turkey, i.e., a choice between two Selves – the Eastern, orthodox and underdeveloped Self as Being and the Western, modern and developed Self as Being (Çapan and Zarakol 2019, 269). It is the "in-betweenness" that leads to growing anxiety. Constantly being in the process of "becoming" and never being considered as "belonging" to the European community, Turkey is susceptible to ontological insecurity in a continual and distressing state of "becoming" European.

In the case of Turkey, Europeanisation implies, on the one hand, the acknowledgement of Turkey's cultural inferiority, rhetorical if not actual, to Europe. There have always been fluctuations in Turkey's relations with Europe. Turkey is the first EU candidate with a vast majority Muslim population, and the largest Muslim population among EU members and candidates. For hundreds of years, the "Turk" had been equivalent to the "Muslim" in Europe. Otherised by speech acts, Turkey has, albeit at intervals, gone to great lengths to achieve Europeanness, in vain. Islam and Turkishness do not conform to Christianity and Europeanness, as the long-held traumatic memories remain intact.

Europeanisation refers to the perils of the "unknowability of future". Ankara has occasionally undertaken ventures for EU membership, and attempted compliance with EU norms throughout Turkey's decades-long EU bid. It has sporadically endeavoured to construct a sense of belonging to Europe. Nevertheless, Europe invariably considers Turkey an outsider (Nugent 2007). A Muslim outsider who had once been expelled from Europe, Ankara's Muslim and Turkish Selves as Being appear incompatible with the European Self as Being from the European standpoint.

Ankara's ambivalence towards Europeanisation and the EU's dilemma over Turkey's Europeanness complicate their relations. Moreover, the EU's dilemma over its Self as Being – what defines Europe and what becomes of Europe in the sense of Heideggerian "becoming" – diminishes its clout on the periphery, including in bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey. Accordingly, the erratic character of Ankara's initiatives has further exacerbated the EU's volatile approach to Turkey, and vice versa. Ankara's reluctant and tentative implementation of the EU acquis and the EU member states' culturalism in their relations with Turkey, raise doubts about the compatibility of Europeanness and Turkishness. A Turkish and widely Muslim society otherised by the official historiographies throughout Europe, has seen a National Liberation War waged against it by a contemporary EU member backed by other European entities, and yet it strives to be recognised as European by the European community. As emotions impel the actors to desperate measures, OSS explains how anxiety shapes foreign policy and bears on bilateral relations (Steele 2008b). The conflicting narratives of the common history add fuel to the fire, i.e., the "unknowability of the future". Indeed, the uncertainty derives from the interference with biographical continuity. Thus, the Self as Being, distressed by this incompatibility, suffers from anxiety and becomes ontologically insecure.

The EU, public and elites alike, dispensed with the Europeanisation narrative regarding Turkey, and realigned the discourse with the "strategic partnership" concept in the 2010s. Euroscepticism accordingly soared high in Turkey as an emotional reaction, as the senior politicians rebuked the EU for discriminatory treatment against Turkey. It should be noted that the current Erdoğanist era is not distinguishable from the Kemalist period, because the root causes of ontological insecurity in Turkey have remained somewhat the same. In contrast, the means to cope with the ontological insecurity have changed (Çapan and Zarakol 2019, 265). Correspondingly, since the AKP's reference to the Ottoman past resonates with the "EU as a morally inferior political entity" argument (Aydın-Düzgit and Şenyuva 2021, 160), the AKP's policy change regarding the EU is a change with continuity. Mistrust of Europe is not a nascent phenomenon in Turkey. It rests on the "Sevres Syndrome", the EU's ambivalence towards Turkey and the subsequent Euroscepticism in Turkey.

4.4. Turkey's EU Bid

EU membership is a long-awaited goal for Ankara. Having applied to the EEC for membership in 1987, Turkey has been waiting on the doorstep of Europe longer than any other political entity.

Turkey's EU bid was at its zenith from 1999 to 2006. The prospects of Turkey's accession, seen on the horizon, led to a dramatic increase in the culture-oriented discussions over Turkey's Europeanness, which also included debates on Turkey's Muslimness, raised by prominent EU leaders such as the former German Chancellor Angela Merkel (2005-2021) and the French PM Nicolas Sarkozy (2007-2012) (Aydın-Düzgit and Rumelili 2021b, 63). Sarkozy's argument, similar to Merkel's, was based on the fact that the "EU should be proud of its Christian heritage, thus closing any possible enlargement to Turkey" and the "EU should reject Turkey both for identity reasons but more importantly […] because Turkey cannot be reconciled with the EU's common project and vision of the world" (Garcia 2011, 59).

Keridis (2009, 147) draws attention to the fact that a state ought to be "European" to join the EU according to the 1957 Treaty of Rome, although the definition of "European" is still ambiguous. Accordingly, Turkish politicians have repeatedly underscored Turkey's Europeanness. In order to alleviate anxiety and maintain the ontological security of Turkey, Turhan Feyzioğlu, then Deputy Minister for Relations with the EEC, said, "with this agreement [the 1963 Ankara Agreement], it is proven in the most precise way that Europe's borders end where our southern and eastern borders lie" (Bilgin and Bilgiç 2012, 114). The reference to territoriality and Turkey's southern borders as Europe's external borders has remained relevant to Turkey's narrative of its Self as a European/modern Self as Being and its sense of belonging to Europe. Accordingly, Turkey has endorsed its Christian heritage via the restoration of Christian temples, constructing new ones and reopening these temples for prayers, to underline Turkey as a culturally Christian ontic space. This territory-focused narrativisation has, inter alia, kept Turkey's anxiety over the question of its Europeanness – being in Europe, albeit not of Europe – at bay. Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and

Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, aggravated the very same anxiety of Turkey, implying that Europe's external borders to the East overlapped with Greece's external borders, as he said, "The EU is 'determined' to protect external borders" (*KNEWS* 2020).

The advent of the Cold War has cast Ankara in a novel role against the encroaching Soviet menace to Europe on its southeast border. Turkey has played the role of Europe's gatekeeper in its south-eastern periphery in this context. Indeed, Europe had another imminent threat that was more hazardous than the "Turk" during the Cold War. Until the end of the Cold War, the USSR substituted for Turkey and concretised the non-European menace. Europe's narrative of Turkey is analogous to the Greek narrative – the image of the "Turk" overshadowing temporary threats to Europe. In a similar vein, Europe's approval of Turkey's accession to the Customs Union Agreement in 1995 was not instigated by the positive image of Turkey in the "European gaze" but by their fear of Ankara's further alienation (Rumelili 2007b, 86). For instance, then Turkish PM Tansu Çiller warned the EU of the possible integration of Northern Cyprus into Turkey in 1996 during a row between the EU and Turkey (Rumelili 2008, 103).

Europe continued to be a source of ontological security (through the sense of belonging) and insecurity (through nonexistence in the European community) for Turkey in the 90s.

Then PM Mesut Yılmaz said (Bilgin and Bilgiç 2012, 117):

> *so we come to the conclusion that even if we meet all the conditions being put to us, the real argument against our membership will still be there. The most important decision in Luxembourg, I believe, is the construction of a new Berlin Wall, a cultural Berlin Wall.*

In 1997, Helmut Kohl said, "the European Union [EU] is a civilisation project and within this civilisation project, Turkey has no place" at a meeting of the European People's Party in Brussels (Müftüler-Baç 2000, 21). Against the backdrop of anti-Turkish emotions, Turkey has underlined its *sui generis* character by merging Muslimness with Europeanness, confronting the predominant axiom that Europe and Islam are mutually exclusive, after the debacle – not granting Turkey candidacy status – of the 1997 Luxembourg European Council meeting (Rumelili 2007b, 92-93).

The main impediment to Turkey's EU bid is not its poor human rights records, underdeveloped economy or lack of Western democracy, but its non-European culture. In February 2000, the Allensbach Institute carried out a survey on Turkey's EU candidacy, which revealed that the majority of Germans, regardless of their political tendencies, were against Turkey's EU membership because "Turkey does not belong to the culture sphere that the contemporary EU member states are a part of, and it is a part of a totally different cultural area" (Tozan 2000). In April of that year, 47 per cent of the citizens of EU member states were against Turkey's membership, according to the public survey "Eurobarometer" (*Cumhuriyet* 2000a). Greece took the lead, with 69 per cent of the Greek citizens opposing Turkish membership (*Cumhuriyet* 2000a). That November, then President of Turkey Ahmet Necdet Sezer said that "we hope that the European Parliament will not continue to pass judgement about our country's past and culture", regarding the European Parliament's resolution about the Armenian Genocide allegations (*Cumhuriyet* 2000b). Müftüler-Baç (2000) shines the spotlight on the fact that the 1997 accession of negotiations with 11 countries "calls into question the EU's objectivity", since Turkey's economy was in a better condition than all of these 11 states, and since the political issues Turkey was dealing with were no worse than those of the states in question. Turkey was nevertheless the only candidate state which was not eligible for accession negotiations in 2000.

In November 2002, former President Ahmet Necdet Sezer said (Demirtaş 2002):

> *I asked several EU leaders 'do you urge us to solve the Cyprus issue for the accession of Turkey to the EU or the accession of Cyprus to the EU?' nobody could answer my question"* and *"in my conversations with several EU leaders, a leader of one country told me that they have not any reservations against Turkey's membership to the EU. However, another country is against it. When I talk with the leader of that country, the leader tells me that they are not against Turkey's accession, but there is another country in opposition to Turkey's accession. I do not believe the sincerity of the EU leaders*.

Granted the status of applicant for EU membership in 1999, Turkey was disconcerted by the EU's decision not to grant Ankara an exact date for the completion of negotiations, for the first time in EU history (Alioğlu-Çakmak 2019, 168). The decision indicates the emotionalised and anxious relationship – provoking ontological insecurity in Turkey –

between the European states and Turkey. Furthermore, Ankara's unpredicted and rapid introduction of reform packages, instead of launching a charm offensive, unsettled the EU member states (Schimmelfennig 2011, 136; Müftüler-Baç and Taşkın 2007, 34-35). Then President of the European Convention, Valéry Giscard D'Estaing, argued, "Turkey's entry into the EU would be "the end of Europe" because it was 'not a European country'" in 2002 (Aydın 2009, 172). Correspondingly, Jan Tadeusz Masiel, an independent member of the European Parliament (MEP), argued, "a country that was not previously Christian can never become European" in 2005 (Rumelili and Cakmakli 2011, 101-2). Sarkozy and Merkel, infamous for their Turcosceptic remarks, rose to power in France and Germany respectively in 2007 and 2005. Consequentially, Ankara was further alienated and anxious.

Turkey was not involved in the 2004 enlargement of the EU towards the Central and Eastern European states. It was the most comprehensive enlargement the EU has ever conducted. Contrary to the admission of the post-Soviet states, Turkey's path towards EU accession has been bumpy. It is evident that Turkey is more capable of adopting the EU acquis and has a more developed economy and more stable democracy than many of the latest members of the EU, regarding the EU's latest enlargements (Müftüler-Baç 2000; Ryoo 2008). Then President of the EU Commission Romano Prodi said that the *vox populi* in the EU is against Turkey's accession to the union even though there is a broad consensus on EU membership in Turkey and "[…]. There are people who are concerned about the religious dimension of the issue. We are obliged to alleviate their anxieties" (*Cumhuriyet* 2004). Accordingly, Hans-Gert Poettering, an MEP of the European People's Party (EPP-DE) group, argued "[…] Turkey is distant and Muslim, but that Croatia is acceptable on the grounds of being Catholic, conservative and close at hand" in 2005 (Rumelili and Cakmakli 2011, 102). As the politics- and economy-related explanations are ruled out, emotion-focused explanations emerge as another independent variable.

The vetoes by several EU member states on a number of chapters (France vetoed four chapters in 2007, the RoC vetoed six chapters in 2009, Germany vetoed one chapter in 2013) have resulted in Turkey's distrust of EU's normativity, since Ankara had already

been in the process of aligning with the EU *acquis* in the meantime and, thereby, had anticipated the "carrot" instead of the "stick", i.e., the "opening of negotiation talks in those [aforementioned] chapters" (Turhan and Wessels 2021, 196-97). Turkey regards the EU's attitude towards itself as unfair. A NATO ally, Turkey has witnessed the inclusion of former Warsaw Pact states in the EU with bitter indignation. It should be noted that the confirmation of Turkey's candidacy status at the 1999 Helsinki Summit was preceded by Ankara's suspension of dialogue with the EU in 1997 (Müftüler-Baç 2000, 23).

The culture-oriented rhetoric on the differences between Turkey and Europe has resulted in Turkish distrust in Europe and disbelief in Turkey's EU bid. Support for Turkey's EU candidacy plummeted to 33 per cent in 2015 from 75 per cent in 2001 among Turkish citizenry, as the EU was preponderantly discussing Turkey's EU bid in the context of the Judeo-Christian culture of Europe and the non-Europeanness of Turkey at that time (Aydın-Düzgit and Kaliber 2016, 3). Turkey's relations with the EU have deteriorated in parallel with the worsening of the debate over Hagia Sophia. The debate has worsened relations, while the EU has increasingly considered Turkey non-European and Turkey de-Europeanised. Similarly, as Turkey's sense of belonging to Europe weakened, anxiety was aroused among Turks. Ontologically insecure, Ankara appealed to harsher measures in its dealings with Greece. As Athens' method of Europeanising Turkey and the bilateral relations failed, Greece also suffered ontological insecurity. The sequence of events resulted in a domino effect leading to further deterioration in bilateral relations, and the resurgence of high politics and the zero-sum game.

As Turkey's relations with Greece and the EU deteriorated, Ankara advanced counterarguments demonstrating its Europeanness and cherishing European values in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Turkey constructed different narratives to cope with the EU's unwillingness to recognise Turkey as European. The historical narrative underlines Turks' centuries-long presence in Europe, the Turkish involvement in European politics and the Ottoman state's official entry into the European community prior to the Crimean War of 1853-56. Disagreeing with Ankara's narrative, the former MEP Frank Vanhecke said, "Turkey is not a European country, not in a geographical, historical, religious [sense]

or in any other way" in the debate on European Neighbourhood Policy in 2006 (Türkeş-Kılıç 2020, 41). The religion-oriented narrative endorses Turkey as a bridge between Islam and Christianity and the East and the West, although then MEP Albert Deß remarked, "Turkey is not part of Europe nor does it perform a bridging function to the Islamic countries" in 2008 (Türkeş-Kılıç 2020, 41). Both Turkish narratives have apparently failed to dispel the European doubts over Turkey's Europeanness.

Morozov and Rumelili (2012, 38) argue that the almost compulsive insistence of Turkey upon Europeanness – sufficiently evident in the Republican Europeanisation performances subsequent to the futile Ottoman attempts – has disclosed the "exclusivity of the West/Europe". The only Western/European institution not granting Turkey membership, the EU provokes Turkey's ontological insecurities and challenges its own self-narrative. Turkey's in-betweenness – a Europeanising, albeit innately non-European, political entity – instigates Europe's self-construction as a territorial, cultural and historical entity. Ankara has contributed to the construction by "accusing Europe of Christian exclusivism" since the mid-1990s (Morozov and Rumelili 2012, 41). Turkey's EU bid as a Muslim political entity poses an existential threat to the Europeanness of the EU itself.

Europe constructs Turkey as non-European and lays out the conditions for access to the European community in this context. Turkey, on the other hand, disputes the EU's argument and constructs an alternative narrative, where Ankara rebukes the alienation by Europe. Thus, the EU and Turkey are transformed into an ontological insecurity trigger for each other.

Europe has strengthened its ontological security through the "construction of a European territoriality" (Sala 2017). This is still weak ontological security so long as the narrative defining Europeanness is non-existent. Accordingly, Europe has been increasingly discussing the ethos of the European community in the context of Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman culture. Europe, therefore, is defined by the territorial myths in connection with culture. In 2013, then President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso initiated the "New Narrative for Europe" – an incentive to remember the history of Europe

and speculate on where Europe is headed (Sala 2016, 524). It is a culture-oriented approach to understanding what Europe is. The EU also takes its ontological concerns into account in relations with non-EU political entities (Manners 2013). Rumelili (2018) draws attention to two variables (1) resorting to conflict for problem-solving is defined as non-European, and (2) authoritarian, totalitarian, fascist and irredentist regimes are considered non-European. Europeans hold them in high esteem, and these divine achievements provide ontological security to Europeans. As the EU seeks ontological security via the remembering acts and these sacred accomplishments, Turkey's sense of belonging to the EU is weakening. Therefore, the EU providing ontological security to itself constitutes an ontological insecurity trigger for Turkey.

4.5. Europe's Narrative of Turkey

Turks and Europeans have constantly been constructing one another as somewhat alien for centuries. They are in fact dissimilar, regardless of whether they are different or else are Europeanising/being considered an example to follow. These differing representations – irrespective of the positive or negative image of the other – of the common past have been prone to "major geopolitical changes" (Aydın-Düzgit and Rumelili 2021a, 64). Negative representations have followed belligerency, and positive images, regardless of the fact that they are non-European, have emerged after a thaw in relations. Indeed, the crux of the issue lies in the two parties being non-identical rather than what could become of the two. Irrespective of the positive/negative essence of the special relationship between the two, Turks have never been considered European.

As Gilbert Lazard advanced in Le Monde in 2004 (Koenig et. al. 2006, 160):

> [a supranational Europe] *is possible if it unites peoples who in their diversity share the same past, the same culture, the same way of life, of feeling and thinking. Turkey is not evidently at home here with its old Oriental culture, masses of Muslim peasants imbued with blind faith and a galloping demography*.

The EU has embarked upon a quest for narrative construction as Europe is facing existential challenges in the 21st century (Sala 2018). Accordingly, Europeans have appealed to their past to make sense of the present and in order to foresee a common

future. In this context, the "European trauma" has narrated the contrast between their Europeanness and the non-Europeanness of Islam. Accordingly, Europe is imagined as the "symbolic space" where "shared stories" – similar to the "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas" of Volkan and Itzkowitz (1994) – endorse a specific definition of European nations and Europeanness, and the geographical borders are defined in this context (Kinnvall 2012, 267).

These culture- and value-oriented narratives bolster biographical continuity among the political entities as they define themselves in terms of the culture-focused national narrative. In line with this reasoning, the EU aims to be an ontological security provider for Europeans. Also, the EU, in a similar vein, aims to be the centre of attraction in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) area by strengthening the political entities' sense of belonging to Europe – through the means of the Eastern Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) – in the EaP area (Browning 2018). The thesis argues that, as a political entity seeking emotional attachment to Europe among its members, the EU is supposed to provide ontological security by consolidating the sense of belonging to Europe on the periphery. The EU has been contextualising the European Self as Being and concretising; thereby, defining the emotional boundaries of Europe in a world in turmoil. The EU narrativises the Europeans' common past and offers "continuity in change" to its fellow Europeans.

Although Nicolaidis (2003, 147-48) argues that Turkey's Europeanness has been unequivocal since the 1999 Helsinki Summit, there is plenty of evidence to suggest otherwise. Turkey is the country least endorsed by Europeans, together with Albania, for general enlargement (Ruiz-Jiménez and Torreblanca 2007, 2). The 2004 enlargement has increased the union-wide support for enlargement in general, omitting Turkey's accession – the public support for which is shrinking (Ruiz-Jiménez and Torreblanca 2007, 2). The Christian Social Union (CSU) leader Edmund Stoiber correspondingly said, "Turkey's EU entry would be the end of Europe's political union." (Ryoo 2008, 40-41). According to the French right, "'Europe' is a culturally and historically bounded entity exclusive of Turkey" (Aydin-Duzgit 2009, 79). The discussions over Turkey's candidacy have taken place irrespective of Turkey's ability to adopt the EU acquis (Türkeş-Kılıç 2020, 30).

In 2007, Lydia Schenardi, an independent French MEP, overtly remarked (Rumelili and Cakmakli 2011, 103):

> *Even when it turns out that all the economic, legal, and social criteria laid down at the Copenhagen summit have been met, Turkey, 99% of whose population is made up of Muslims and 94% of whose territory is located in Asia, will still not share our values, which bear the stamp of Christianity and humanism*.

Ankara cannot "become" European even if it has fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria and accomplished the accession negotiations, since Turks do not "belong" to Europe. Turkey is a means to define "what Europe is" (Kastoryano 2006). Indeed, according to Andreas Mölzer, a former Austrian MEP, "Turkey is not part of Europe, either geographically or from a spiritual and cultural point of view" (Türkeş-Kılıç 2020, 42). Turkey serves as a fear object delimiting Europe, thereby strengthening Europeans' sense of belonging to Europe, and simultaneously this is the major impediment to Turkey becoming European.

In 1999, then European Parliament President Nicole Fontaine argued at the Helsinki Summit (Müftüler-Baç 2000, 24-25):

> *its – Turkey's – accession would of course be to the Union's advantage economically and politically, but it would not be possible to evade the problem of cultural integration. It will arise, and so will the issue of what criteria to adopt to determine the limits of Europe's new borders in the face of the new applications from countries to the east or south of the Union which would inevitably be encouraged by Turkey's accession. To tell the truth, Parliament is divided on this burning issue at present*.

Turks have strived for admission to the European community so as to substitute the status of "sick man of Europe". They have established a nation-state on a quest for modernisation and Europeanisation, constructing a sense of belonging to Europe among Turks. The Turks, anyhow, have remained the outlier of Europe in the "European gaze". As an alien Self as Being, Turkey is located in Europe, and simultaneously not of Europe.

Turkey carved a niche for itself in the European and the wider Western community as the Cold War crept into global politics. Ankara has proved its value by means of military prowess and geopolitical location during the Cold War and the ensuing years. Its position hinges heavily on its value in the security sphere in Europe. Turkey's emotive response to the events above has been an anxious sense of belonging to Europe, and mounting

ontological insecurity. Turkey's EU bid is an attempt to alleviate its anxiety and cope with its ontological insecurity in this context. As Turks struggle to demonstrate their Europeanness and to Europeanise, Europeans – uncertain of this Europeanisation process – deny Turkey's Europeanness. Thus, Ankara finds itself in a liminal/in-between position.

Two viewpoints dominate the EU debates over Turkey: the value-oriented approach and the heritage-laden approach (Levin 2018, 156). The value-oriented approach favours a norm-based and inclusivist European image and endorses EU enlargement. The heritage-laden approach historicises EU enlargement and subscribes to the grand historical European narrative through which the siege mentality permeates. The grand narrative underlines the common Christian past and marks out the cultural outsiders (non-members) and the aberrant (members).

Turkey's membership application has not been immediately rejected by the Europeans on account of its being a non-European entity and out-of-Europe, as in the case of Morocco, and not been promptly welcomed as in the case of Central and Eastern European entities (Rumelili 2003, 221; Müftüler-Baç and Taşkın 2007, 43). Ankara has been a member of NATO and the Council of Europe since the early 1950s. However, it has still been considered a threat to European values and norms with its majority Muslim population in the context of religio-cultural differences (Levin 2018). In 2010, Peter van Dalen, a Dutch MEP, said, "[…] if Turkey joined the EU. We would have to deal with millions of people who, unfortunately, are not familiar with the Judeo-Christian fundaments of Europe and who would want to change them" (Türkeş-Kılıç 2020, 44).

It has not only been the heritage-laden approach derived from geography, Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian culture which questions Turkey's Europeanness. The value-oriented Europeans have also been unfavourably disposed to Ankara's accession due to the un-Europeanness of Turkey, i.e., the democratic backsliding and the underdeveloped economy, since European identity is based on the free market and western-style democracy (Tekin 2021, 157-58; Rumelili 2004, 44; Müftüler-Baç and Taşkın 2007, 45-46). Accordingly, the Social Democrats have shifted their stance towards Turkey's EU bid, and resorted to Turcosceptic rhetoric in 2004 (Günay 2010, 98).

The liminality of Turkey has been a distressing subject in Europe. Involved in European politics for centuries, the presence of Turkey is incontestable on the periphery of Europe. However, occasionally deviating from European norms, Turkey poses a challenge to European standards. Therefore, the liminality renders Turkey and Europe ontologically insecure. It is simultaneously "in Europe" and "not of Europe" (Neumann and Welsh 1991, 331) – recognised and unrecognised.

Underlining Turkey's in-betweenness, then MEP Mara Bizzotto remarked (Türkeş-Kılıç 2020, 44):

> [Turkey] *represents a potential Trojan horse of radical Islamism in our continent. Now more than ever, we are convinced that the EU should finally put a halt to accession negotiations. The endless threats that Turkey has made against Europe must receive an immediate response*.

Europe is a cultural and historical project. It has geographically tangible boundaries. The discursive construction of Europe, with Turkey as non-European is evident. Indeed, Turkey is located on the borders of Europe, albeit on the wrong side of them. The "Turk" symbolises backwardness and illiteracy. Unenlightened and unsophisticated, the "Turk" is inferior to Europeans and renders Europe ontologically insecure by "being-there" in the Heideggerian sense.

In 2004, a former member of the French National Assembly and currently an MEP, Jérôme Rivière, said (Aydın-Düzgit 2012, 140):

> *Our European culture is not only Christian; she has received a Judeo- Christian heritage which has also led to the invention of our concept of laïcité, guaranteeing the strict separation between the church and the state. This is not the case with Turkey, which remains as a land of Islam. Yes, like all countries, she has been subject to the influences of her neighbours. Laïcité is one of these, but how many times will it be necessary to resort to force to protect it? Tomorrow like yesterday, democratisation or not, this country will remain Asian and Muslim...Will one say that once Turkey is integrated, one also has to integrate Iran, Iraq or Syria which have common borders with her?*

The 9/11 attacks heralded a new era in international affairs. The interactions between cultures, states and nations are not exempt from its reverberations. As xenophobia has permeated through western societies in the form of Islamophobia, Muslims have come to

be considered a menace to their societies and the Christian heritage. Religion has become the great fault line of European politics. The far-right political parties, taking advantage of the rising siege mentality, have steadily been appealing to the electorate in Europe (Levin 2018, 157). Turkey, predominantly populated by Muslims, falls victim to the culturally Christian Europe mentality (Rumelili 2004, 40). Indeed, those enlargement proposals involving Turkey have always drawn a public backlash more than any enlargements excluding Turkey. As Turkey remains the perennial and utmost existential threat alongside the temporary and relatively small-scale threats posed by Greece, the EU-wide public opposition to Turkey's candidacy has been far and away at the top of the heap, and it grew exponentially from 1993 to 2006, apart from a brief moment in 2001 (Levin 2018, 158).

The popular opposition to Turkey's accession had already been far-reaching and deep-seated before Ankara took an authoritarian turn in the opinion of the EU member states. The citizenry were already against Turkey's accession prospects, in conformity with the heritage-laden approach fomenting the aversion to and animus towards Muslims. The EU citizenry's contempt for Turkey's accession rapidly accelerated, although Turkey adopted comprehensive and pro-EU reform packages in the early 2000s. Therefore, the religio-cultural differences between the EU member states and Turkey are apparently the kernel of the European disliking for Turkey (Canan-Sokullu 2011).

Turkey's candidacy has instigated a heated discussion about the significance of those religio-cultural differences in Europe and on the boundaries of Europe, indicating the insiders and outsiders of Europe. The EU citizenry ought to have cherished the rapid implementation of EU-oriented reform programmes in Turkey in the early 2000s. Conversely, this precipitated harsher opposition to Turkey's candidacy (Levin 2018, 160). The possibility of Turkey's accession to the EU has threatened the Self as Being in Europe. Turkey has unwillingly and unconsciously reclaimed the perennial religio-cultural threat role.

Herman Van Rompuy, prior to his appointment to the post of Presidency of the European Council, said in 2009 (Kyris 2014, 20):

> *Turkey is not […] and will never be part of Europe […] The universal values which are in force in Europe, and which are fundamental values of Christianity, will lose vigour with the entry of a large Islamic country.*

As Islamophobia skyrocketed in Europe due to rising nationalism across the continent, Turcoscepticism has also soared high. Turkey has reached a crossroads in its "century-old negotiation with its own European belonging" (Kotzias 2009). Simultaneously, the support for EU membership has plummeted, on account of the growing discontent with the EU's normativity in Turkey (Gülmez 2014). Indeed, the EU's criticism of Turkey for not fulfilling the Copenhagen Criteria has been waived by Ankara as a pretext. On the other hand, Ankara draws attention to the EU's reluctance to open the accession negotiations with Turkey, the heritage-laden/religio-cultural criticisms of Turkey, and the open-ended accession process, contrary to the comprehensible membership roadmaps the other candidate countries were granted. Ankara has consequently been distrustful of the EU's normativity.

The "opponents of Turkey's accession" argue that, although it is possible to adopt European values, the values are intertwined with the European culture (Aydın-Düzgit 2012). Turkey's failure to adopt these values is a repercussion of its non-Europeanness (Rumelili and Cakmakli 2011, 106). The adoption of European values is inadequate in attempts to Europeanise, since Europeanisation demands a deeper level of "social and cultural change because Turkey does not possess the 'roots' of European values" (Levin 2019, 25). The Islamic roots of Turkish culture have alienated Turks from Europe and impeded its Europeanisation. Accordingly, the EU has underlined the fact that Turkey's accession process is open-ended in the 2005 EU-Turkey Negotiation Framework – peculiar accession negotiations unparalleled in the EU's history. As Turkey considered the open-ended essence of the process hypocrisy, Ankara's commitment to the membership process and Turkish public support for EU membership significantly dropped thenceforth.

The EU not only negatively differentiates Turkey but also positively distinguishes Europe from Turkey through the "Turkey as a role model narrative". Aydın-Düzgit et al. (2020) deconstruct the "'Turkey as a model country' for the Muslim world" discourse – a

colonial and neo-orientalist narrative of the events and political entities on the periphery – at the advent of the Arab uprisings in Europe. The EU constructs Turkey as a Muslim and Europeanising political entity, i.e., a role model for the other Muslim Selves as Being. However, the discourse insinuates and perpetuates – through constant reconstruction – the non-Europeanness, and consequently inferiority, of Turkey. Also, Sen (2020, 765) argues that the EU constructs Erdoğan as the "'bad' Turkish leader" in an attempt to depict and distinguish Europe as the "bastion of 'good-ness'". Indeed, the EU promotes itself as a favourable centre of attraction, in contrast to the inferior and barbaric periphery, by underlining the conditions Turkey must abide by to become European. The EU, conversely, ostracises Ankara as non-European concurrently.

The main argument against Turkey's EU bid is that "the country is too big, too poor and too different" in the EU (MacLennan 2009, 21). Aydın-Düzgit and Suvarierol (2011) argue that the EU elites criticise Turkey for nationalism and simultaneously are wary of losing their own sovereignty with reference to the strategic repercussions of Turkey's accession. Pre-nationalist-era sentiments against particular threats have been instrumental in prolonging, without a dreadful intervention, their biographical continuity, national narrative (intersubjective consciousness) and Self as Being in the nationalist era.

4.6. Turkey-Greece-EU

The Liberal International Order has permeated through the world since the dissolution of the USSR. Accordingly, the EU has emerged as a soft power on the European continent with reverberations across its neighbourhood. A global centre of attention since the late 19th century, the materialisation of the EU has prompted Greece and Turkey to further engage with European norms. Both longed for the approval of the "European gaze" for over a century. Greece, welcomed by its fellow Europeans during the Greek National Liberation War, found itself on the margins of Europe later on. Turkey, located "in Europe" for centuries, has never been "of Europe".

Iokimidis (2000, 74) conceptualises two forms of Europeanisation, namely responsive Europeanisation and intended Europeanisation. Responsive Europeanisation implies a

sporadic mode of Europeanisation, as in the case of Turkey. The EU's exertion of influence on the Europeanising entity is of paramount importance in this case. It must permeate through the political entity and convince the Self as Being of Europeanisation, which refers to modernisation in Turkey. Also, the internal political actors are not committed to Europeanisation in these cases. Their support for Europeanisation rises and falls depending on their overtly emotionalised relations with Europe. The false promise of the "Normative Power Europe" concept has diminished the EU's clout on the periphery. As Ankara became aware of the non-existence of EU normativity on the periphery, and the minimal prospects of EU membership, Turkey could not cope with its anxiety and was exposed to ontological insecurity.

In the case of intended Europeanisation, Europeanisation is synonymous with modernisation. The Self as Being is highly dedicated to Europeanisation. The political entity internalises European norms and values. Thus, the Self as Being modernises through Europeanisation. Intended Europeanisation is the kind of process Greece has been subjected to. In the 1990s, an overwhelming majority of the political parties were pro-EU and pro-Europeanisation in Greece (Tsardanidis and Stavridis 2005, 217).

It should be noted that Greece is still not thoroughly Europeanised, although Greece has been implementing intended Europeanisation since the late 1990s. Therefore, Greece does not fully confide in its ontologically secure status, as its sense of belonging to Europe is still incomplete. On the other hand, Athens is further distressed by Ankara's estrangement from the EU and its non-reliance on European norms and values under duress. Anxious Greece suffers from ontological insecurity under the circumstances. Both ontologically insecure, their bilateral relations are further emotionalised in the absence of European normativity on the EU's periphery.

Europe has exercised considerable clout in its neighbourhood since the 19th century. Located on the periphery of Europe, Greece and Turkey have not been exempt from this fact. As in turn a decades-long member of the EU and an incessant candidate, they suffer from flank state psychology, regardless. As Europe has always considered its norms universal, the EU's permeating influence has put Greece and Turkey in a precarious

position on the periphery. The Selves as Being have been anxious in the face of the intrusive EU norms which would redefine the Self.

The EU was nothing more than one of the battlefields for the Greece-Turkey rivalry until Greece lifted its veto against Turkey's candidacy in 1999. Until the 2010s, the EU provided a fruitful avenue for rapprochement between Greece and Turkey. However, the EU has failed to offer a solution and entice Ankara and Athens into a pacific settlement of disputes so far. The EU's involvement in Greece-Turkey bilateral relations has transformed the EU into a party to the contentions rather than an impartial third party.

Europe has played an integral role in Greece-Turkey bilateral relations from the outset. Both sides have been interested in integrating into the European community since the outset of the institutionalisation of the European community. When Greece applied for membership of the European Community (EC) in 1975, the EC assured Ankara of its impartial stance towards Greece-Turkey bilateral relations (Rumelili 2008, 102).

Athens' bid for EEC membership provoked anxiety in Turkey in the 1980s. Semih Günver, then head of the Foreign Ministry's Office of International Economic Affairs, said, "we cannot let Greece enter and settle in Europe on its own. This is not only an economic but also political affair" (Bilgin and Bilgiç 2012, 114). The 1981 accession of Greece to the EC gave rise to popular disbelief in Europe's impartiality in Turkey. According to Ankara, Athens transformed EU membership into a significant deterrent to Turkey, safeguarding its own interests. The possibility of exclusion from Europe triggered ontological insecurity in Turkey. Such exclusion reminded Ankara of the break-up of the Ottoman Empire. An outdated pre-nationalism-era political entity, the Ottoman state had been fair game. Turkey had to make sure that it was regarded as a fellow European political entity for the sake of its sovereignty. Accordingly, Cemal Erkin, addressing the Grand National Assembly in 1962, said, "it is not difficult to understand what remaining outside such a process [economic integration in Europe] would mean" (Bilgin and Bilgiç 2012, 114).

When Greece joined the EEC in 1981, the strained bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey were transformed into a troubling interaction between a member and a non-member with "institutional asymmetry", which resulted in the rise of a hawkish stance in Greece and Turkey alike (Rumelili 2008, 95). Ankara and Athens used the EU as a medium for competition rather than peaceful resolution until 1999.

Greece hampered the EU's aim to cultivate closer relations with Turkey until the end of the 90s. Greece refrained from its right of veto over the 1995 Customs Union Agreement between the EU and Turkey in exchange for initiating its accession negotiations with the RoC. Moreover, the bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey were further destabilised by the 1996 Imia/Kardak crisis, and Turkey was further alienated by the EU's support for Greece in the crisis (Rumelili 2008, 103-4).

The will to Europeanise in Greece and Turkey has lent the EU third-party status in the bilateral relations. The EU was to become a trigger for either ontological security or ontological insecurity on the periphery. Tzimitras (2009, 242) underlines the fact that the Imia/Kardak crisis was defused during a row between Turkey and the EU in the second half of the 90s, and the "dramatic incidents in Aegean airspace occurred in the wake of" EU's failure to guarantee a date for Ankara's accession negotiations. The EU's failure has led to a downward spiral more than once. The EU's normative absence has triggered off emotive reactions, e.g., gunboat diplomacy, in the ontologically insecure Ankara. In turn, Turkey's emotive reactions have provoked ontological insecurity in Athens – further exacerbating the bilateral relations.

At the 1997 Luxembourg European Council meeting, the Council stressed that Turkey's relations with the EU were also subject, inter alia, to the "establishment of satisfactory and stable relations" and the "settlement of disputes" between Greece and Turkey. The EU aimed to use the prospect of membership as a carrot that has since been changed to a stick. The conditionality of improving bilateral relations on Turkey's EU bid has resulted in Ankara freezing its relations with the EU.

Even though Costas Simitis, ascending to the presidency of the ruling PASOK in 1996, was in favour of a thaw between the two countries, he could not face the conservative backlash from within, and followed the policy of veto against Turkey's reconciliation with the EU (Rumelili 2007b, 114). In the meantime, Ankara implemented a policy of military deterrence and pushing for the representation of Turkey in any international organisation Greece was going to be a part of (Birand 2000).

The EU has exerted its positive influence on Greece, which has been politically and culturally Europeanising as an EU member state. The Europeanisation of Greece has led to a substantial shift in the foreign policy of Greece towards Turkey (Keridis and Triantaphyllou 2001). Athens, which had vetoed Ankara's candidacy as leverage thus far, reframed its policy at the 1999 Helsinki Summit. Greece endorsed the Europeanisation of Turkey and supported its EU candidacy (Ifantis 2009). This shift in Greek attitude towards Ankara provided the EU with a major incentive to entice Turkey into further Europeanisation and compliance with the EU acquis.

The EU's impact on Greece-Turkey bilateral relations was nominal until the 1999 Helsinki Summit. In 1999, Greece aimed to enter the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the EU's will to have better relations with Ankara ushered in a new era in Greece-Turkey-EU relations. The summit ushered in an era of opportunities in the bilateral relations, as Greece lifted its veto and Turkey secured candidacy status. Both sides narrativised Turkey's candidacy as instrumental. On the one hand, Athens involved the EU in the bilateral relations and contextualised the problems in accordance with the EU *acquis*. On the other hand, Ankara became eligible for candidacy. The EU formed a solid basis for a stable channel of communication at first. Accordingly, Athens endorsed Turkey's accession to the EU at the 2002 Copenhagen Summit.

The EU could not capitalise on this window of opportunity. Cyprus' admission to the EU in 2004 struck a severe blow against the EU's normative power and constructive impact. The RoC accession as the sole representative of the whole island – which was, in fact, guaranteed in 2003 – happened a week after the overwhelming majority of Greek Cypriots had dismissed the Annan Plan whilst the majority of Turkish Cypriots said yes. The RoC's

accession had drastic reverberations in Turkey, resulting in a volte-face in Ankara's policies regarding the Cyprus dispute. It was considered an affront to Turkish Cypriots' presence on the island and to Turkey as a sovereign political entity.

The EU has associated itself with the RoC in defiance of the EU norms and acquis from the standpoint of Ankara. It has become an anxiety catalyst/ontological insecurity trigger for Ankara, remembering the Greek veto of Turkey's accession to the EU from the time of Greece's ascension to EU membership in 1981 to the 1999 Helsinki Summit. Ankara was also perturbed by the fact that the EU did not open eight chapters during Turkey's accession negotiations in 2006, due to Ankara's non-fulfilment of the obligation to incorporate the RoC in the Customs Union.

The EU's calls for a peaceful solution to the Cyprus dispute and the Greece-Turkey rivalry were counterproductive at best. Regardless of the milestone in the EU-Turkey relations in 1999, the EU's constant references to the Cyprus dispute and the normalisation of the Greece-Turkey bilateral relations, have convinced Turks that the EU is partial, unreliable and discredited.

Greece has instrumentalised the EU with regard to the Cyprus dispute and Greece-Turkey bilateral relations (Tsakonas 2009, 110). The Turks became sure of the EU's hypocrisy over Turkey's admission to the European community. Moreover, it has been freed from any doubts that Greek influence on the EU has become indisputable. The EU was still an avenue for competition, where the Greeks held the high ground.

The loss of the EU's influence on the periphery has further alienated Turkey. Ankara has not only been estranged from the European community but also restored its non-European status, while Greece's Europeanness has been underlined. Recollecting the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and accompanying past traumas, the re-emergence of the "Sevres Syndrome" has provoked ontological insecurity. Thus, the EU has lost its credibility in Turkey, and its capacity for mediation between Greece and Turkey.

The Greek vote at the 1999 Helsinki Summit ushered in a major shift in Greece's policy towards Turkey and the EU. As the descendants of the Ancient Greeks igniting the European Enlightenment, the Greeks have always prided themselves on their centrality in European culture and simultaneously, due to the very same reason, agonised over their relative backwardness in Europe prior to 1999. This liminal position has distressed Athens, arousing anxiety in the Self as Being. Enduring ontological insecurity, any rapprochement between the EU and Turkey has sparked off an emotional reaction in Greece. Former Greek Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos deplored the European permission to the Turks "to drag their bloodstained boots across the carpet" in European capitals calling them "bandits, murderers, and rapists" (Müftüler-Baç 2000, 25). The Turks have felt stigmatised and discriminated against, which has aroused anxiety and rendered them ontologically insecure. Süleyman Demirel once said, "when the defence of European civilisation [against communism] was at stake, they didn't say we were Turks and Muslims" Müftüler-Baç 2000, 23). In an attempt to cope with its ontologically insecure position the Self as Being has found itself in, Athens has dedicated itself to Europeanisation accompanied by a change of veto policy against Turkey.

The Greek economy collapsed in the 2008 Eurozone crisis, resulting in an ailing economy contingent on external debt and the EU's financial backing. The Greek government debt crisis of 2009, while inciting nationalism and anti-EU rhetoric, also undermined bilateral relations and the EU's positive clout. That financial support was subject to a strict conditionality (drastic reforms and austerity measures), supervised by the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund, dubbed the Troika. The establishment of the Troika and the ensuing harsh economic conditions antagonised Greeks against Europe. The feeling of betrayal by their fellow European peers rendered Athens ontologically insecure – de-Europeanising Greeks and leading to a tide of nationalism.

Turkey is haunted by complicated relations with Greece, a NATO ally and yet a rival, apart from the sporadic and brief thaws between the two. Ankara is convinced of the existence of a Greek grand strategy to debilitate Turkey. According to the Turkish narrative, Athens uses the EU as a medium for undermining Turkey's clout in

international affairs. Accordingly, Ankara has dubbed Greece the "spoiled child of Europe". Ineligible as a candidate for Europeanness, since it is deprived of European norms and resorts to high politics, Greece is "fake-European" as a matter of fact (Rumelili 2003, 225). The EU is not free from liability as well. Ontologically insecure Turkey remembers the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire through the actions of the European powers and simultaneously aspires to Europeanness by exemplifying modernity. Therefore, the EU is simultaneously a threat to the Self as Being (an ontological insecurity trigger) and a raison d'être (an ontological security provider). Turkey is in dire need of a sense of belonging to Europe to cope with its anxiety and, thereby, enjoy an ontologically secure status in international affairs. The triangle of Greece-Turkey-EU has thus experienced an exacerbation of existing problems and the onset of others and, thereby, anxiety has been further provoked, which imprisoned all the parties in an ontologically insecure status until 1999.

The status of the Europeanisation of Turkey is of paramount importance to Greece, since Greece is (1) the centre of European culture, seeing as Ancient Greece was the inspiration to the European Enlightenment and (2) Greece has been Europeanising in the form of adopting European values itself. Europeanisation draws parallels between Ankara and Athens. Therefore, Turkey should not be dissociated from the EU or be incentivised to conform to European values. In this context, the Öcalan crisis of 1999 was a harbinger of a novel thaw between Athens and Ankara. Abdullah Öcalan, who was under the aegis of Athens by the time, the founder and leader of Partîya Karkerên Kurdistanê (PKK) – designated as a terrorist organisation by the US, and the EU – was caught in Nairobi while exiting Greek embassy and handed over to the Turkish authorities in February 1999. Then Greek PM Costas Simitis sacked three hawkish ministers and installed dovish George Papandreou as the Minister of Foreign Affairs afterwards.

Furthermore, the devastating earthquakes in Izmit and Athens led to earthquake diplomacy, and the close relationship cultivated between then Turkish FM Ismail Cem and then Greek FM Papandreou resulted in a thaw in bilateral relations. The Simitis government implemented a *volte-face* in Greece's policy of veto against Turkey's EU candidacy in these circumstances – a ground-breaking deviation from nationalist policies

and further adherence to Europeanisation. For hawks and doves alike, the policy of détente with and the Europeanisation of Ankara was convenient for both since (1) the hardliners regarded the EU candidacy of Turkey as a means to obtain more concessions from Turkey and (2) the moderates had already been in favour of the integration of Turkey into the European community and values (Rumelili 2007b, 120). In the early 2000s, the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (AKP/Justice and Development Party) government pursued a policy of "zero problems with neighbours", which also contributed to the rapprochement.

The prospect of Turkey's EU candidacy strengthened the sense of possibility of belonging to the EU in Ankara. Their ontologically secure state induced Turkey to reach a compromise with Greece. The de-escalation provided a forum for understanding each other. The Greeks realised there were Turks willing to Europeanise who were not antithetical to the Greeks in favour of Europeanisation. The presence of pro-European echelons in Turkey encouraged the Greeks to support further Europeanisation of Turkey, and the revamping of bilateral relations with Turkey. Correspondingly, Ankara tilted towards Europeanisation to replace the construction of the EU as a fear object. In the context of Turkey's EU vision, Greece was elevated to the status of a fellow European from having been the "spoiled child of Europe" in Turkey.

Athens initiated the process of Europeanisation, albeit not fully materialised, by entering the EU in 1981, whereas Ankara was still faltering. Europeanisation was supposed to lead to a détente between Ankara and Athens. However, the threat perception already entrapped the Greek and Turkish national narratives alike. Both Greece and Turkey defining themselves through their relations with each other, they were emotionalised by the remembered memories of "chosen trauma" and "chosen glories" for the sake of biographical continuity. Both Selves as Being suffered from a feeble sense of belonging to Europe. The lack of normative European clout further emotionalised bilateral relations on the periphery. Therefore, the bilateral relations remained unstable and subject to change. In Chapter 5, it is indicated that there is an interrelation between the intensification of the Hagia Sophia debate and the deterioration in Greece-Turkey-EU relations.

Rumelili (2003, 217) argues:

> *Had EU's community-building discourse constituted both Greece and Turkey as fully and unequivocally 'European', it would have created discursive conditions conducive to (but not necessarily sufficient for) the emergence of a collective European identity between the two states, delegitimizing their perceptions of threat.*

A sense of Europeanisation and joining the EU serve as an ontological security provider – a protective cocoon against the threat to the East – to Greece. According to Ankara, the EU has apparently transformed into a leverage against Turkey and a third-party favouring Athens – an ontological insecurity trigger. Philhellenism, still prevalent among the Europeans (Pettifer 1996, 18), reminds the Turks of the past traumas arousing anxiety. Branded as the eternal Muslim threat to Europe, and the antithesis of European Greece as the Oriental Turk, the Greeks enjoy a sense of belonging to Europe that the Turks suffer from the lack of.

Both sides have denounced each other as non-European/un-European. They underscore their Europeanness by labelling the other as non- and un-European. It is a means to deal with their ontological insecurities aroused by, inter alia, the Europe-lessness on the periphery. In a liminal position provoking anxiety and rendering Turkey ontologically insecure, Ankara has assigned the liability to Greece for its in-between position – neither entirely European nor fully non-European. Greece is depicted as un-European in essence, degrading European values and the source of anti-Turkish rhetoric in Europe (Guvenç 1998/1999). The peripheral position of Greece in Europe has enabled Ankara's construction of a less European Greece (Rumelili 2003, 224). Greece is categorised as less European and a spoiled child in Turkey, inferior to European standards. Ankara imagines Greece as under-European, thereby reinforcing and upholding its own Europeanness. Correspondingly, Greece makes use of similar measures to underline that Greece's borders are the EU's external borders, i.e., Europe's borderline, which simultaneously assigns Greece to Europe's gatekeeper position. Josep Borrell's statement that "we are determined to protect our external borders", referring to the Greece-Turkey border, was of paramount importance in this regard (*DW* 2020).

On the one hand, it demonstrates Greece's Europeanness, by manifesting Turkey's non-Europeanness. Athens classifies Turkey as neo-Ottoman, revisionist and disrespectful to European norms and values. Thus, Greece reaffirms its own Europeanness. On the other hand, it downgrades Athens' Europeanness by insinuating that Greece is less European due to the gatekeeper status leading to a flank state mentality.

Europe-lessness – the absence of "Normative Power Europe" on the periphery and the ensuing "unknowability of the future" – is partly responsible for Turkey's liminality provoking ontological insecurity, and plays a part in the "second tier and inferior Greece" perception in Europe. Concepts such as "Normative Power Europe" and "civilian power Europe" provide the EU with the justification to look down on Greece (Cebeci 2012, 577). The EU's narrative has been rendered constructive and "ideal", employing the aforementioned concepts. Europeanness, therefore, is a noble "ideal" to be devoted to by inferior non-European and "fake-European" political entities alike.

On the periphery of Europe and both with a proclivity towards Europe, Europe-lessness has aggravated the already contentious bilateral relations. Turkey has been constructed as the alien and threatening "Turk" in Europe. The image of Turkey in the "European gaze" has further underlined the differences between Greece and Turkey. As both have embarked upon a quest to demonstrate their Europeanness by creating and promoting a negative image of each other, they have further estranged each other.

The imagined other in their national narratives (intersubjective consciousness) is manifest to each other. As the "European gaze" is a factor in their anxiety and ontological insecurity, the image of the Self as Being in the national narrative of the other also arouses anxiety and leads to ontological insecurity. The image of Turkey, involved in a long-standing rivalry with an EU member state, in the "European gaze" does tarnish Turks' Europeanness, and conjures up a fear object out of the Turks, namely the "Turk".

The strained bilateral relations between the two led Greece to a slippery slope as well. Greece is regarded as a politically, economically and geographically peripheral European state (Rumelili 2003, 223). Indeed, Greeks are European, albeit on the periphery of it.

Therefore, Athens' Europeanness is an ontologically insecure position though Greece has distinguished itself from liminal Turkey in a quest for manifesting and substantiating its Europeanness (Rumelili 2003, 223).

Being anxious entities in an ontologically insecure state and entangled in drastically emotionalised bilateral relations, both sides' foreign policy decisions and expectations hinge on misjudgement. Therefore, according to Greece, Turkey is a revisionist entity with neo-Ottoman dreams, and dabbles in hard power politics. Correspondingly, Ankara considers Greece's misuse of Europe as a leverage against Turkey by the spoiled child of Europe. The heated disagreements and ferocious diplomatic rows have been the routine state of affairs since the 19th century. The thesis' argument is that Europe as a third party further provokes ontological insecurity instead of increasing ontological security.

The European community is a utopia that appeals to both countries seeking the approval of their European peers. In the presence of the land of plenty, Greece and Turkey do not incline toward the bilateral resolution of their rivalry (Rumelili 2003, 226). On the one hand, the omnipresent appeal of Europe eliminates the prospects of any other possible rapprochement. On the other hand, these other possible areas of reconciliation are stillborn such as their common past – a deplorable reference for Greeks – and geographical proximity – the Aegean Sea, which is considered an innately Greek heartland by the Greeks and the Balkans which is seen as a backward piece of non-European land; thereby, inferior to the Greeks who inspired the European Enlightenment.

4.7. Conclusion

The European states' interaction with the Turks dates back hundreds of years. Those European states have been warring, trading and communicating with the Turks ad nauseam. The relations between the EU and Turkey are profoundly historicised in this context. Both sides narrativise their relations with the other, in light of their mutual history. Ankara's EU bid is not exempt from historical drawbacks. Europe ascribes meaning to Turkey in accordance with its biographical continuity dating back to the Ottoman state. Turks, on the other hand, make sense of the EU in the light of European

states' "prejudices" against themselves and their mutual history that is narrativised incongruously by both. It is not reason but emotions taking hold, and navigating the Self as Being in international affairs within the confines of manipulated memories. Indeed, emotions are the ground zero of the deterioration in bilateral relations. As an embodiment of the argument, the thesis analyses the Hagia Sophia debate between 1999 and 2020 in Chapter 5.

The Greek Self as Being hinges on the necessity for revolution/uprising against the "Turkish yoke", which kept the Greeks as backward as the Ottomans themselves and estranged the Greeks from the Europeans. The kernel of the Turkish Self as Being is the National Liberation War fought against the Greeks supported by the Europeans, accompanied by the Turks' proclivity for being a component of the European community. Both seeking the appreciation of their European peers and Europeanising themselves to differing degrees, the interests of Greece and Turkey are, in fact, not incompatible. They are each other's trigger for ontological insecurity, nevertheless. Therefore, every détente is ephemeral, and the conflict is long-lasting. The determinant is the anxiety aroused by their self-narrative, based on the perennial hostilities and incompatibilities between the two, and the ensuing ontological insecurities. As a teleological explanation, both entities are inclined to brinksmanship in every political crisis to erupt. Concerning the conflicts between Greece and Turkey, such as the Imia/Kardak crisis and the Cyprus dispute, escalation has been inevitable. Both sides, being anxious about the image of the existential threat in their minds, have provoked the crisis rather than defusing it (Suzuki and Loizides 2011). Both Ankara and Athens have preferred the continuation of the fear object instead of facing up to and overcoming their perennial ontological insecurities.

Bedevilled by the nightmare near-dissection of the Ottoman Empire at the hands of the European powers, the Turks are still distressed by the "external forces" conspiring to dismember Turkey. In line with the "Eurosceptic narrative", Turks are convinced of the devaluation of Turkey in the view of the Europeans following the end of the Cold War and the revival of Europe's "historical demands on Turkey", including the "articles of the 1920 Treaty of Sevres", the European pressure on Turkey to recognise the Armenian genocide, Kurdish autonomy and "Greek authority over Cyprus" "without being offered

any timetable for membership" (Yılmaz 2009, 53). Accordingly, the Turks consider the EU the enabler of Greek revisionism and intransigence. They believe that the EU conforms to its own established norms in relations with its own members, and deviates from normativity in dealings with the non-EU and non-Western states. As Kramer (1991, 65) remarks, "[…] Turkey is well aware of the fact that Greece, unlike itself, is regarded as a 'natural part' of the West and of Europe […]".

Greek and Turkish nationalisms both have been constructed on the periphery of Europe. The Greek claim to Europeanness derives from Ancient Greece as the stimulus to the Enlightenment. Greece entered the European Community thanks to its small population and size, cultural similarity (Christianity and the Hellenic culture) and location, in 1981. Being a member of the EU, Athens has Europeanised itself with relative ease. Ankara, on the other hand, had a bumpy road ahead as Turkish nationalism has failed to come to terms with Europe. The "Muslim Turk" has been an existential threat to Europeanness for centuries, as the country is located in Europe, albeit not of Europe. Therefore, Turks aim to be considered the future of Europe instead of referring to the common past. Turkey's EU bid is the principal means to this end. Ankara underlines that Turkey's candidacy is the catalyst for a post-nationalist EU in line with this argument.

The EU has continuously reminded Ankara that Turkey's accession is contingent on a solution to the Cyprus dispute and the disagreements between Greece and Turkey. The EU's attitude has provoked alarm in Ankara. Turkey has interpreted the EU's references to the Cyprus dispute and Greece-Turkey bilateral relations as the EU's reluctance to grant Ankara membership.

A member and a non-member, Greece is disinclined to offer incentives, whereas Turkey suffers from a sense of "discriminatory treatment" by Greece and the EU, together with the accession of the RoC without a solution to the Cyprus dispute. Athens has further Europeanised (with an increased sense of belonging) and alleviated its ontological insecurity during its EU journey, although Turkey remains a major ontological insecurity trigger for the Greeks regardless. On the other hand, Ankara has vacillated between

ontological security and insecurity as its Europeanisation (a fluctuating sense of belonging) has continued to jolt along a bumpy road.

There are several discourses, such as the security-laden and culture-oriented discourses related to Turkey's EU bid in Europe. However, the culture-related discourse maintains its pre-eminence, among the others. Therefore, culture predominates over all other discussions about Turkey in Europe.

Despite cohabiting in the Balkans and Anatolia for centuries and being inspired by the prevalent nationalist sentiments in Europe, the trajectory of Greece and Turkey in terms of Europeanness is at variance. The early exposure to the ideas of the "Enlightenment, French Revolution, romantic nationalism and European imperialism" has culminated in an "ethno-religious" interpretation of nationalism and sense of belonging in Greece and Turkey (Onar 2009, 62). Both are located at the periphery of Europe, albeit of geopolitical significance to it. They are in a precarious condition in their relations with Europe. Depending on the viewpoint of the spectator, Turkey is either the perennial existential threat or the litmus test for the veracity of the "Normative Power Europe" concept, whilst Greece is either the "wrong" kind of Christian (Eastern Orthodox) and included/excluded according to the Bilgin and Ince's (2015) terminology, or a European state with its Hellenic culture (Onar 2009 62). Greece stands closer to the included extreme, whereas Turkey is closer to the excluded extreme on the included/excluded spectrum.

Europeanisation has acted as a catalyst for "advancing economic, social and political modernisation" in Greece (Iokimidis 2000, 74). It is, in this regard, reminiscent of Turkey's partial and vacillating Europeanisation process. In both cases, Europeanisation connotes adopting a system of norms, values and culture, which amounts to the European modernisation process.

Europeanisation also represents the multilateralisation of Greek foreign policy, together with modernisation (Economides 2005, 472). The multilateralisation of foreign policy has an impact on Greece's bilateral relations with Turkey. These bilateral relations are also Europeanised in parallel with both sides' Europeanisation process. As Greek and Turkish

nationalisms have evolved in correlation with each other, their bilateral relations are emotionalised as a consequence. Both nationalisms remember and forget their mutual memories and, thereby, underline the conflicting narratives of the same past. Traumatised by past atrocities and preserving their negative memories about each other through acts of remembrance, the turn of events further arouses anxiety and renders them emotionalised and ontologically insecure in their bilateral relations.

Europe is unable to play a constructive part on its periphery, since pan-European subjectivity is still omnipresent, albeit dwindling. This subjectivity is the root cause of the EU's inability to impact its periphery positively. Apparently, there is a preferential and unfair centre-periphery correlation in Europe. Europe demands Europeanisation of the periphery to the furthest extent, and, once this is realised, still does not consider the newcomer an equal. Robins (1996, 66) argues that the "cultural arrogance" of Europe transforms into "cultural hatred" in the case of the "Turk". The "Turk" is in Europe, albeit not of Europe. It is the eternal threat to Europeanness lurking on the periphery. Establishing their Republic, Turks have embarked upon a quest for the modernisation and Europeanisation of the nation so as to be admitted to the civilised Western community. The prompt hiatus from the past has resulted in a change in biographical continuity in exchange for a stable sense of belonging to the European community. However, their encounters with Europeans, e.g., Turkish workers being dubbed Gastarbeiter in Germany, have demonstrated the European disregard for the "Turk". The Europeans are not convinced of the Turks' Europeanness, regardless of to what extent the Turks have been Europeanised. The Turks, content with their own narrative, feel mortified, ostracised and distressed.

Although the EU has used its clout to influence bilateral relations in a constructive manner on occasions, it has also been used as a forum for longstanding and continuous rivalry. Also, the EU's ambivalence towards Turkey's membership has undermined the EU's clout in bilateral relations. Therefore, the EU's non-normative involvement in these bilateral relations further emotionalises them. The EU's impact leads to further ontological insecurity on both sides simultaneously or breaks the balance in favour of one side and against the other. The EU considers Greece an insider and culturally European,

albeit it has not fully realised the Europeanisation process, and simultaneously regards Turkey as an outsider and non-European and currently de-Europeanising political entity. Greece, never wholly satisfying the core Europeans' high standards, is confused by a weak sense of belonging to Europe and is concomitantly ontologically insecure due to (1) the flank state mentality and (2) Turkey's emotive reaction to the "European gaze". Turkey, on the other hand, is distressed by its weak attachment to the EU and, suffering from the lack of a sense of belonging to Europe, undergoes ontological insecurity. The bilateral relations have further deteriorated on the EU's periphery, where the two political entities are suffering from overtly emotionalised and negatively attached nationalisms and Europe-lessness.

5. HAGIA SOPHIA DEBATE: AN EMBODIMENT OF ONTOLOGICAL INSECURITY

In Chapter 5, the reconversion of Hagia Sophia is ruminated on, to demonstrate that an ontic space irrelevant to either high politics or low politics has the capacity to agitate two nations, in compliance with the thesis' multi-layered understanding of ontological insecurity on Europe's periphery. The escalation of events surrounding Hagia Sophia which is an ontic space for Greece and Turkey indicates that the official status of an ontic space may (1) further emotionalise bilateral relations and trigger ontological insecurity and (2) demonstrate the subjective rationality taking hold of Greece and Turkey.

The past is attached to the present, which is being constantly reproduced now. Acts of remembering and forgetting are perpetually at play. Means such as reference to monuments, artwork and folklore enable the acts of remembering and forgetting. These visual and oral symbols vaunt and brandish "chosen glory" and "chosen trauma", as dubbed by Volkan and Itzkowitz (1994). The historiography of a nation is an amalgamation of these chosen memories. Nations narrate these memories, and this narrativisation becomes their reality. The process ensures biographical continuity, as the narrative constantly reassures the integrity of biographical continuity and, thereby, a stable Self as Being is perpetually constructed, since it is based on the biographical continuity and a secure sense of belonging.

Monuments, e.g., statues and buildings, are erected to commemorate memories. Nations erect monuments to recall and pass down memories of battles, triumphs and the subjugation of others. Such monuments, artwork, and folklore contribute to developing the national narrative. The experiences of nations are transformed and integrated into the nation's routines by a variety of means such as commemoration days, the erection of monuments and construction of national symbols. The experiences are "remembered", and an act of remembering insinuates re-conceptualisation and re-contextualisation.

A past event from time immemorial, the fall/conquest of Constantinople is a "chosen glory" for Turks and a "chosen trauma" for Greeks. The fear object's glory is the Self's

defeat. The symbol from that time that provides constant reminders of the event is Hagia Sophia. Historians of Byzantine and Islamic art maintain that Ankara has unwittingly followed Orthodox Christian routines through the practice of covering and uncovering the icons of the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ, which the Ottoman rulers did not veil for long periods of time (Gruber and Chatterjee 2020). It is not only a manifestation of myth-making's indifference to historical facts but also narrativisation's subjectivity. The practise/ritual of veiling/unveiling the icons indicates that the reconversion is not a rational preference but an emotional act.

The act of remembering is of pivotal importance nowadays. Tillich (2000, 57) argues;

> *at the end of ancient civilization ontic anxiety is predominant, at the end of the Middle Ages moral anxiety, and at the end of the modern period spiritual anxiety. But in spite of the predominance of one type the others are also present and effective*.

The anxiety of meaninglessness, inter alia, is omnipresent throughout the world in this day and age. "Remembering" is the means to alleviate these anxieties, since it gives meaning to existence and Self as Being in the existentialist sense. Hagia Sophia embodies the anxieties of these ontologically insecure entities.

There is extant literature underlining the nationalism in Greece and Turkey as a determinant of the tension in bilateral relations (Aydin and Ifantis 2004; Özkırımlı and Sofos 2013; Heraclides 2010). Also, Abulof (2015) draws attention to nationalism as a concept, providing a venue for ontic, psychological and moral self-affirmation in society, in the context of ontological security. Ontic, psychological and moral self-affirmation are of paramount importance for Greece and Turkey alike, since they both suffer from a variety of ontological insecurities exacerbated by their in-between position on Europe's periphery and their respectively less European and non-European image in the "European gaze". Nationalism has been at the core of both Selves as Being since the genesis of Greece and Turkey. They have followed emotive and controversial policies such as population exchange and re-narrativisation of the official historiography in an attempt to set the boundaries of Greekness and Turkishness, which resulted in constructing an existential threat as an unintended consequence in Ankara and Athens. Remembering/forgetting memories such as "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas" are

means to construct the national narrative while alleviating ontological insecurity. These narratives about the same historical events are at odds with each other. The contrast between Greek and Turkish narratives leads to ontological insecurity, since the two narratives are inclined to tarnish one another. Indeed, the conflict between Greece and Turkey is an "ontological conflict" in the domain of the real, displaying symptoms such as the Eastern Mediterranean maritime dispute, which is a material/rational dispute, and the debate about Hagia Sophia as an "ontic space" which is an emotional dispute in the domain of the empirical. The Hagia Sophia debate has been analysed as a reference point because of (1) its paramount importance in both national narratives and (2) the emotional impact the debate on its status has made on both nations' Selves as Being.

The thesis divides the sequence of events from 1999 to 2020 up to the recent reconversion into four periods, namely 1999-2006, 2006-2010, 2010-2016 and 2016-2020. These periods represent the course of events in the Hagia Sophia debate and the critical junctures in Turkey's EU bid. First, the discussions over Hagia Sophia's status prior to 1999 are summarised. Subsequently, the doctoral thesis dwells on data collected from a number of newspapers' online editions *Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, the BBC, *AA*, *EKathimerini*, DW News, The National Herald, *Takvim*, *Karar*, the EUObserver, Reuters, the Conversation and Euronews; a Turkish magazine *Fedai*; the online archive of *Cumhuriyet*; the websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Republic of Türkiye; Turkey reports published by the Commission of the European Communities; and EU Parliament discussions and resolutions.

5.1. The Early Debates over Hagia Sophia's Status prior to 1999

Hagia Sophia, once a mighty and heavenly symbol of the Christian world, was converted into a mosque after the annexation of Constantinople by the Ottoman state. The conversion of the most significant temple in the city into a mosque after the conquest is an ancient practice of Islamic statehood. The practice is a manifestation of Islam's triumph. Hagia Sophia, in this regard, is a divine temple and symbol for Greeks and Turks alike. Once the home to the coronation of the Byzantine Emperors, and a token of the Ottoman Sultans' sovereignty, it is where sermons were preached in 1928 and the adhan

was recited in Turkish for the first time in 1932, after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey (Özekmekçi 2016, 285-86). Hagia Sophia was a sacred monument for the Byzantine Empire and the Ottoman Empire in the pre-modern era. It has also been an embodiment of secular Turkey (museumification) in the early periods of the Republican era and a divine manifestation of the Islamist turn (reconversion) in Turkey in the 21st century. Correspondingly, it has been remembered as the Mother Church of Orthodox Christianity and a divine symbol of Hellenism in Greece. Therefore, it is an "ontic space" for Greeks and Turks alike.

Hagia Sophia, which had been kept as a mosque for a decade after the foundation of the Republic, was converted into a museum in 1934. Museumification, which had not been promulgated in the official gazette, has embodied the secularisation and re-sacralisation of not only the temple but also the public space in Turkey (Özekmekçi 2016, 283-86). Indeed, it has been an attempt to promulgate and vindicate the secular ontology of the nascent Republic. A museum dedicated to the Byzantium and Ottoman cultural heritage – a masterpiece of engineering together with the mosaics and the artworks inside – concomitantly, Hagia Sophia has served as a manifestation of the secular turn in modern Turkey.

The museumification distressed the Islamist echelon of society. Threatened by interference with their memory, they faced an existential crisis. The emotive reaction aroused by this existential crisis was not only diverted against secularists but also Greece and the West embodied by Europe. As the secularists were held liable for the appeasement of Greece and Europe, they were deemed renegade. These renegades were seen as enabling the plans of Greece and Europe for the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a church, as the final blow to Turkey's national narrative/intersubjective consciousness (Özekmekçi 2016, 294).

The conversion of Hagia Sophia into a museum was met with a massive chorus of disapproval in various echelons of society (Aykaç 2018). Winning the elections in 1950, the DP opened up space for public discussion on the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque among Islamists and conservatives (Uzer 2020). The museumification of Hagia

Sophia was publicised as the "appeasement of Greece" in the conservative and Islamist magazines in the 50s (Ayvazoğlu 2017, 570). Indeed, the museumification was a religion-related concession that not only Europeanised and secularised modern Turkey, in an attempt to establish a secure sense of belonging to Europe, but also erased the remnants of the ancient regime, leading to a change in continuity – though not disrupting the biographical continuity – and further to secularise Turkish nationalism.

An illustration showing a black bat with allegedly anti-Turkish and anti-Islamic references on its wings above the blackened Hagia Sophia.
Fedai. Illustration. January, 1966. İslamcı Dergiler Projesi. https://katalog.idp.org.tr/pdf/1446/2842

In the 60s, Hagia Sophia became the primary reference point in the conservative – as the "red apple" – and Islamist (mukaddesatçı) – as the promised conquest – strata of Turkish society (Özekmekçi 2016). The advent of *Enosis* threw Cyprus into turmoil in the 50s and 60s, the reverberations of which arrived in Turkey in the late 60s, and Hagia Sophia lay at the epicentre of the Cyprus-related tumult in Turkey (Arıboğan 2020, 31). In *Fedai* magazine's January 1966 issue, the front cover was reserved for an illustration of a bat above Hagia Sophia. Certain words – the *Megali Idea* and Islamophobia – and symbols – the Star of David and the hammer and sickle – were inscribed on the bat's wings (*Fedai* 1966b). This front cover was an embodiment of past Turkish traumas and anxieties through every single drawing and word on it. *Fedai* published a piece of unaccredited news reporting a confidential meeting where a decision to collaborate on a "national cause" was reached among approximately 80 conservative members of parliament from various political parties in 1966 (*Fedai* 1966a, 19). At this meeting, the conservative members of parliament (MPs) apparently decided to pray and thus open Hagia Sophia up to Muslim prayers on the commemoration day of the Conquest of İstanbul. The level of delusion about Hagia Sophia had soared so high that the blanket amnesty of 1966 was severely criticised for being discriminatory against Muslims and simultaneously keeping Hagia Sophia locked down, even though criminals were set free (Özekmekçi 2016, 302-3). The second half of the 60s also witnessed the *Milli Türk Talebe Birliği*[15] (MTTB/National Turkish Students Union) launching a campaign for the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque for the first time (Dündar 2017, 917). The campaign led to the succeeding civil society initiatives, e.g., the *Anadolu Gençlik Derneği*[16] (AGD/Anatolian Youth Association), following suit in the 2000s. Hagia Sophia has been a politicised national symbol for decades. The discussions around Hagia Sophia manifest the anxiety level of the emotionalised Self as Being in Greece and Turkey alike.

[15] In the early years of the republic, the MTTB had secular nationalist proclivity. From the 60s on, it followed the political islamist ideology.
[16] The AGD is a civil society organisation affiliated with the Milli Görüş (National Vision) which is a religious political movement giving birth to a series of Islamist political parties.

In 1952, Katsigeras (2002) pointed out that a report favouring the bequeathing of Hagia Sophia "church" to the Orthodox Church as a symbol of friendly bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey had been printed in the Axam (*Akşam* newspaper) newspaper. Katsigeras (2002) stated that the editorial teams of *Vatan* and Hismet (*Hizmet*) newspapers criticised the report as merely "provocative stories" and "harmful to Greek-Turkish friendship" (Katsigeras 2002). The status of Hagia Sophia has been a bone of contention at intervals on both sides of the Aegean Sea. As the conversion of the monument into a mosque implied the triumph of Islam, the museumification insinuated the exclusion and alienation of Islam in Turkey. It is not only considered appeasement of Greece but also an attempt at Westernisation/Europeanisation – both provoking an Islamist backlash. It was an attempt to re-narrativise Turkishness – less religious and Eastern and more secular and European – and construct a secure sense of belonging to secular and "non-Muslim" Europe.

The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was a rupture in the biographical continuity of the Turks. Although the Ottoman Empire was a pre-nationalist political entity, it is remembered as an integral part of the Turks' biographical continuity and narrativised accordingly. The founding of modern Turkey was an attempt to restore biographical continuity in accordance with the Europeanisation of Turkishness. However, acts of remembering and forgetting do not yield results if they do not appeal to society as a whole. A stratum of society has never forgotten and always remembered the fall of the Ottoman state in Turkey. As the Islamist turn in Turkish nationalism reached its zenith in the 21st century, the national symbols have been re-contextualised and re-configured accordingly. Indeed, the reconversion is not about the longing for a new temple but about restoring a "national symbol's rightful status". Nationalists also referred to the recent reconversion as the restoration of a symbol of Turkishness in the 21st century. The nationalist reference to the reconversion as a return to Turkish roots indicates that the nationalists consider Muslimness and non-Christianness integral to their Self as Being and the national narrative. It is a litmus test of the ontological security of the re-narrativised Self as Being.

In 1967, heated discussions were undertaken with the first papal visit to İstanbul, Turkey. Pope Paul VI prayed in Hagia Sophia, which provoked a conservative and Islamist

backlash (Özekmekçi 2016). As an example of biographical continuity among the Islamist and conservative echelons of the society, a similar chain of events unfolded in 2006 as then Pope Benedict XVI visited Hagia Sophia, which produced a backlash in the form of a protest against the Papal visit by a group of *Alperen Ocakları*[17] members (*Cumhuriyet* 2006a). The head of Alperen Ocakları mentioned the "ill-intentions" of the Pope's visit and said, "Hagia Sophia is not only a museum but also a symbol of Turks and Islam […]" (*Cumhuriyet* 2006a). Another demonstration was organised by the *Saadet Partisi* (SP/Felicity Party) against the Pope's visit (*Cumhuriyet* 2006b). The second half of the 60s had also witnessed the MTTB launching a campaign for the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque (Dündar, 2017, p. 917). The campaign was an earlier example of many demonstrations and campaigns organised by the AGD, with the same ideological roots as the MTTB in the 2000s.

5.2. Hagia Sophia Debate from 1999 to the Reconversion

The Hagia Sophia debate was revived in the 2000s. The anxiety suffered by one echelon of society the anxiety of the ruling elites with the rise of Islamists to power in Turkey. The meaning-making set in motion over Hagia Sophia has had a revanchist essence. The longing for reconversion has transformed into the ultimate goal as an embodiment of Islamist nationalist narratives' pre-eminence over the Kemalist/secular nationalist narrative. The reconversion has been regarded as a national endeavour against external (Greece and Europe) and internal (secular and Kemalist narrative) threats. The reconversion is an existential prerequisite for the Islamist nationalists in this context.

The status of Hagia Sophia manifests anxieties on both sides. In the period from 1999 to 2006, Ankara regarded any debate about Hagia Sophia's status as "playing with fire". In 2002, a group of European parliamentarians, led by Corneliu Vadim Tudor made a plea called "İstanbul Constantinople" for the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a church to the European Parliament (Payiatakis 2002). The plea was immediately rejected and defined as an "attempt to open Pandora's box" by the chairman of the Turkish delegation,

[17] The youth organisation of the far-right and Sunni-Islamist *Büyük Birlik Partisi* (BBP/Great Unity Party).

Uluç Gürkan (Payiatakis 2002). Ankara, having pacific relations with Athens, regarded Hagia Sophia's museum status as a manifestation of its secular and European self.

The only demonstration related to Hagia Sophia's status was against a forthcoming concert – a part of the 31st İstanbul International Music Festival – held in Hagia Sophia museum in the period (*Cumhuriyet* 2003). The group chanted "Hagia Sophia cannot be Byzantine" and "Hagia Sophia is Turkish, will stay Turkish", which did not in fact involve a demand for reconversion (*Cumhuriyet* 2003). These demonstrations were of paramount importance, due to the number of people, which gradually increased from hundreds to thousands, participating in the demonstrations for the reconversion every year, together with their motto and slogans substantiating the public will.

While maintaining pacific relations with Ankara, Athens remembers Hagia Sophia and İstanbul as ontic spaces of Hellenism. Accordingly, in his comments published in the Ekathimerini newspaper, Payiatakis (2002) wrote, "for some 500 years, the idyllic capital on the Bosporus has been called İstanbul. Still, to some Greeks, it is always Constantinoupolis." Correspondingly, Helicke (2002) wrote, "Istanbul was so central to Greek life for more than a millennium that many Greeks still affectionately refer to it simply as 'the city'" in the same newspaper. Also, in 2003, a concert was held as a "tribute to Asia Minor" in Athens, and all the proceeds of the event were going to be donated to the restoration of the "church of Hagia Sophia" (*EKathimerini* 2003).

The pacific relations with Ankara and the significance of Hagia Sophia and İstanbul for Greece were mutually inclusive and in harmony in this period. In September 2002, the Minister of Defence Yiannos Papantoniou was in İstanbul for a "regional meeting" (*EKathimerini* 2002). During his visit, he met with the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew I at the patriarchate, and paid a visit to the "Hagia Sophia Church" in İstanbul (*EKathimerini* 2002). The visit was significant because (1) the defence minister met with the Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, and (2) he spared time to visit Hagia Sophia, both a religious and national symbol for Greece. Hagia Sophia is the mother church of Greeks, regardless of its official status. It is remembered as the crown jewel of the City and Greekness. Therefore, the defence minister's visit to the

highest Greek Orthodox religious representative and to Hagia Sophia in the City are of high value, emotionally. In the meantime, Athens had been in favour of Turkey's EU candidacy, as a means of achieving the Europeanisation of Turkey since the 1990s.

In 1999, Turkey received candidacy status at the Helsinki Summit. The Greek newspapers reported that the EU member states and the US, while in favour of granting Turkey candidacy status, warned Athens that "yes" was the only option they coveted for the Cyprus issue on December 10 (*Cumhuriyet* 1999d). Turkey received candidacy status at the Helsinki Summit, on condition that Ankara attempted to solve the Cyprus and Aegean issues after 40 years of waiting in the queue, on December 11 (Demirtaş, 1999). Then Greek PM Kostas Simitis said, "this is a watershed moment for peace, cooperation and development in the region" (*Cumhuriyet* 1999c). The reservations voiced by Ankara regarding the Cyprus and the Aegean issues abated due to a letter from the EU term president and then PM of Finland Paavo Lipponen, and the subsequent visit by then General Secretary of the EU Commission Javier Solana (*Cumhuriyet* 1999b).

Then Greek PM Kostas Simitis said (*Cumhuriyet* 1999e):

> […] *We are on a new path as two countries. We may run into difficulties. However, the presumption about the two societies being rivals is history now. The Greek nation must believe in the fact that they are safe*.

On the one hand, the secularised and re-sacralised status of Hagia Sophia was irrelevant to Greeks. The emotional attachment to Hagia Sophia emanated from ethnoreligious sentiments in Greece. Accordingly, it was still called a religious temple of Greek Orthodoxy. A national symbol of Greekness and Hellenistic culture, Hagia Sophia symbolised centuries-old biographical continuity. On the other hand, Athens pursued a policy of Europeanising Ankara, to align Turkey with the European values and norms built on the legacy of Ancient Greece. The Europeanisation of Turkey amounted to strengthening Ankara's sense of belonging to Europe and redefining the Turkish Self as Being. The Turkish transition implied stability in the Greek Self as Being.

Then President of Turkey Süleyman Demirel articulated the fact that the reforms – some of which had already been introduced in the political, economic, administrative and legal

spheres – must be concluded, and they must become the starting point not only in Turkey's schedule but also in its history (*Cumhuriyet* 1999a). He said that Turkey's aim of becoming an EU member state was the "outcome of the 200 years-long modernisation process in Turkey" (*Cumhuriyet* 1999a). During that period, Turkey was still on a quest to Europeanise itself in accordance with the modernisation initiative dating back to the pre-nationalist era and the Republic's decision to re-sacralise and secularise Hagia Sophia, as the embodiment of the will to Europeanise in Turkey.

From 2006 to 2010, there was public discontent over the museum status of Hagia Sophia within a minor part of the society in Turkey. As mentioned earlier, members of *Alperen Ocakları* took to the streets to protest against the visit of then Pope Benedict XVI to Hagia Sophia, and they emphasised that Hagia Sophia was a "symbol of Turks and Islam" (*Cumhuriyet* 2006a). Similarly, the head of the SP, Recai Kutan, said, "Hagia Sophia must be opened to worship as a mosque", in a demonstration against the Papal visit (*Cumhuriyet* 2006b). Neither *Alperen Ocakları* nor the SP represented a considerable amount of the citizenry in Turkey, although Hagia Sophia was regarded as a religious and national symbol for the Islamists in Turkey.

Identity politics also found an audience in Greece during the period. The leader of the Popular Orthodox Rally or People's Orthodox Alarm (LAOS), Georgios Karatzaferis, publicly supported the *Megali Idea* and declared that the 1821 Greek War of Independence had not been concluded yet, as South Albania, Northern Cyprus, the Aegean Sea and Thrace were waiting for their liberation day, and Hagia Sophia had still not been reconverted into a church before the elections in 2009 (*Sabah* 2009). The act of remembering – the *Megali Idea* – and narrativisation – the 1821 Greek War of Independence – were at play in Greece. However, this chauvinist chimaera only appealed to a nationalist minority.

There was no alteration in Ankara's attitude about Hagia Sophia's museum status in this period, even though it was evident that EU-Turkey relations had come to a standstill, without a downward spiral. In November 2006, the EU Commission published the 2006 Turkey Progress Report and the 2006-2007 Enlargement Report. The EU Commission

drew attention to the fact that Ankara did not let Cyprus use its ports and airports despite the additional protocol signed by Turkey and it granted an extension of time until the EU summit on December 14-15. Although the EU General Affairs Council ratified the EU Commission's advice about blocking eight chapters and not closing any chapters until Ankara confirmed that Turkey was delivering on its commitments – opening the ports and airports to RoC, Turkey pledged to fully conform to the EU *acquis* by 2013 in March 2007 (Kubosova 2007). During this period, France vetoed the opening of five chapters, due to the fact that the chapters were directly related to the membership, and the RoC unilaterally blocked the continuation of six chapters, whilst the German term presidency of the EU opened two chapters to negotiations in 2006, and the Swedish term presidency of the EU opened one more chapter to negotiations in 2009. Turkey's EU bid became more and more controversial in this period. Turcosceptic discourse and policies appealed to the EU, and anti-Turkey rhetoric drew an audience, although the culture-oriented discourse was not outperforming the value-laden discourse yet.

There were still relatively pacific bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey. Turkey, on the path to EU membership, was undergoing Europeanisation according to Athens, as the EU noted that "in December 2008, the Minister of Culture participated in the opening of the first Alevi Institute and apologised to the Alevis for past sufferings caused by the State" (*Commission of the European Communities* 2009). Ankara's adherence to European norms was appreciated in Athens and Brussels alike.

In the period from 2010 to 2016, once anxious about the debates around reconversion, Ankara partook in the Hagia Sophia debate in favour of reconversion. Statements were made by several senior politicians in favour as much as against reconversion in this period. Then Turkish Deputy Prime Minister, Bülent Arınç, said that he was in favour of the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque (*EKathimerini* 2013). The statement was significant because it was the first time a cabinet minister had said he favoured the reconversion in Turkey. Then AKP MP, Bülent Turan also said that Hagia Sophia could be reopened to worship the same way as Hagia Sophia mosques (formerly churches) in Trabzon and İznik in May 2014 (Yılmaz 2014). However, in June, PM Erdogan said, "there is Sultanahmet [mosque] right next to [Hagia Sophia]. First, we should fill it with

people. Then, the rest will unfold" as an answer to people chanting "open Hagia Sophia" (*Hürriyet* 2014b). Therefore, there were two conflicting narratives at play in Ankara, although the undertone of Erdogan's statement implied his proclivity for a probable status update of Hagia Sophia at some time in the future. As a national symbol and an ontic space, Hagia Sophia held the attention of society and the ruling elite alike. As a matter of fact, there was an upward trend in favour of reconversion throughout the period.

In this period, commemorations of the conquest of İstanbul became an act of remembering Hagia Sophia as an "ontic space" for a wider part of Turkish society. The commemoration days of the Conquest of İstanbul and their festivities were deemed spiritually deficient, as Hagia Sophia remained a museum. Celebrating the 559th anniversary of the Conquest of İstanbul in 2012, former leader of the SP, Mustafa Kamalak, said, "Hagia Sophia will be unchained, inshallah" (Atalay 2012). "Hagia Sophia will be unchained" was used as the motto of the later demonstrations held by the AGD.

The reconversion was now considered the second conquest of İstanbul by the Islamists. The sacred symbol of Ottoman/Muslim predominance had been lost with museumification (Eldem 2015). As Mehmed II had converted Hagia Sophia into a mosque as the symbol of the conquest, and transformed Hagia Sophia into an ontic space for Turks, the second conquest was awaited, which would materialise with the reconversion. The AGD thus organised demonstrations in commemoration of the conquest of İstanbul, to call for the opening of Hagia Sophia to Muslim worship every year until the reconversion. In a particular stratum of Turkish society, the desire for "Hagia Sophia as the symbol of Turkey's sovereignty" was again underlined as part of the backlash against the Greek Diaspora's initiatives. The expression "Hagia Sophia as the symbol of Turkey's sovereignty" was highlighted over and over later on without a reference to a specific event. In this period, the number of demonstrations dramatically increased. The demonstrations found a larger audience in society. However, the protests were still not supported by the vast majority of society.

Religious authorities also made statements about the status of Hagia Sophia for the first time since 1999. In March 2014, referring to hearsay about the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque, Bartholomew I, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, said, "if Hagia Sophia is going to be reopened to worship, it must be reopened to the worship of the Christian faith because the founding purpose of it is to serve as a church. We lay claim to/take care of [*sahip çıkmak*] Hagia Sophia. It is one of our most sacred values [*değerlerimizdendir*] as the Orthodox and Helenistic world" (*Takvim* 2014). This is evidence of the fact that anxiety over the reconversion issue belonged not only to Muslim Turks but also Orthodox Greeks. Hagia Sophia was remembered as an "ontic space" by Greeks as well. A few months later, the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, Mehmet Görmez, said "the waqfs founded for religious education […] must be managed by the Directorate of Religious Affairs. […] People demand the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque" (Gürcanlı and Özgenç 2014). The statements of these clergymen addressed the anxiety of meaninglessness that the conservative echelons of both societies tend to suffer from.

There was also catharsis in the form of a diplomatic spat between Athens and Ankara. The statements of politicians in favour of the reconversion instigated a diplomatic spat between Greece and Turkey. Triggered by then Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç saying he was in favour of the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque (*EKathimerini* 2013), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic issued a statement rebuking the Turkish official's statement (2013a). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Republic of Türkiye released a counterstatement criticising the statement put out by Athens in November (*Sabah* 2013). Also, Quran recitals in Hagia Sophia took place for the first time in this period, arousing anxiety in the form of a backlash in Greece. Greece lambasted the event as "offending the religious feeling of millions of Christians" (*EKathimerini* 2015). However, even though there was a diplomatic exchange of discontent between the two parties, there was no downward spiral in bilateral relations. Therefore, anxieties were not aggravated to the extent that ontological insecurities could not be restricted anymore.

Identity politics found an audience in Greece. Hagia Sophia was referred to in the election campaign of a nationalist party in 2012. The New Democracy Party (ND) placed an election advertisement with an image of Hagia Sophia with a cross on top of the dome and without its minarets in May (Berberakis 2012). According to Hürriyet newspaper, the advertisement was the quintessence of Antonis Samaras' inclination toward the *Megali Idea* and his hankering for the independence of Greeks abroad (*Hürriyet* 2012). Also, in August, *Hürriyet* released video footage of Greek soldiers chanting, "[…] Hagia Sophia will be ours once again […]", "[…] we will drink the blood of Turks, Albanians and Kosovars […]" and "[…] Cyprus and Macedonia are ours […]" (*Hürriyet* 2014a). Their marching was an act of narrating and retelling the past traumas and anxieties, which stirred up ontological insecurities. The anxieties about Hagia Sophia were still only felt by a small minority of Greek society and found a small audience in Greek politics. However, the diplomatic spat between Athens and Ankara, and Athens' reactions to the Hagia Sophia debate in Turkey, substantiate the fact that the ontological insecurities were worsening in Athens.

EU-Turkey relations became steadily worse in this period. The 2010 Turkey Progress Report[18] and the 2010-2011 Enlargement Report[19] were non-controversial and admissible for Ankara. In 2011, being concerned about Turkey's trajectory, the Commission drew attention to gender inequality, freedom of speech and freedom of the press in the 2011 Turkey Progress Report[20] and the 2011-2012 Enlargement Report[21] (*Cumhuriyet* 2011). In October 2012, the EU Commission published the 2012 Turkey Progress Report[22] and the 2012-2013 Enlargement Report.[23] Turkey was criticised for political repression of the judiciary, freedom of speech and the press, the discontinuation of the peace process (the Kurdish issue) and the discontinuation of reforms regarding Alawites in the progress report (*Cumhuriyet* 2012). In October 2013, the EU Commission published the 2013

[18] For more information see https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/AB_Iliskileri/Tur_En_Realitons/Progress/turkey_progress_report_2010.pdf
[19] For more information see https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-strategy-2010-2011_en
[20] For more information https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/2011-progress-report-turkey_en
[21] For more informaiton see https://eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/EN/el0031
[22] For more information see https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/turkey-progress-report-2012_en
[23] For more information see https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/2012_genisleme_stratejisi.pdf

Turkey Progress Report[24] and the 2013-2014 Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges.[25] The EU harshly criticised Turkey for the disproportionate use of force against the Gezi protesters, the ban on internet websites, the restrictions on conscientious objectors, the challenges against LGBTI+ rights and gender inequality (Güvenç 2013).

In addition to the EU's criticisms of Turkey concerning Ankara's harsh response to the public unrest, the EU called on Turkey to "stop blocking the accession of Member States [i.e., Cyprus] to international organisations and mechanisms" and to remove "all restrictions on vessels and aircraft registered in Cyprus or whose last port of call was in Cyprus" (*Commission of the European Communities* 2013). Nonetheless, Turkey signed the Readmission Agreement[26] on the subject of refugees moving from Turkey to the EU and launched a dialogue on visa liberalisation with the EU. EU-Turkey relations unequivocally deteriorated throughout the period. However, it had not taken a toll on Greece-Turkey bilateral relations yet.

From 2016 to 2020, one of the conflicting narratives – in favour of reconversion – prevailed over the other – against reconversion – which led to a more nationalistic and less European narrativisation in Turkey.

In August 2017, Numan Kurtulmuş, the former Deputy Prime Minister, said (Alas 2017):

> *It is not on our agenda. Yet, Hagia Sophia was converted into a temple as a result of Mehmed II's, the Conqueror, conquest. It is not on our agenda right now; nevertheless, I would like to articulate that it is the "right of conquest" of Mehmed the Conqueror.*

Later on, in 2020, as the General Vice President of the AKP, Numan Kurtulmuş said, "we are waiting for Hagia Sophia to be reopened to worship" (*Hürriyet* 2020a). In this period, Turkey was further estranged from the EU, which led to precarious and anxious bilateral relations between Greece, favouring the Europeanisation of Ankara, and Turkey, which

[24] For more information see https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/ardb/evt/turkey_2013_progress_report.pdf
[25] For more information see http://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/f559df60-e93a-424d-bedc-1fdd4e4dc90b.0006.02/DOC_1
[26] For more information see https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22014A0507(01)&from=EN

had been alienated from Europe. Ontological insecurities took hold of both sides and widened the schism between the two.

The conviction of "Hagia Sophia as the symbol of Turkey's sovereignty" was further underlined by several politicians in Turkey. President Erdoğan called the conquest of İstanbul and the immediate conversion of Hagia Sophia –the symbol of the conquest – one of the most significant moments in Turkish history and said that Hagia Sophia was a symbol of the nation and the state (*TRT World* 2020). Additionally, the head of the *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (MHP/Nationalist Movement Party) Devlet Bahçeli said "[…] I remind […] the Greek government that Hagia Sophia is the epitome of the conquest [of İstanbul] […]" (*Hürriyet* 2020e).

Supporting Bahçeli's arguments, the Vice President of the MHP, Semih Yalçın, said "[…] Hagia Sophia is of paramount importance compared to any other temple and mosque in İstanbul. […] Hagia Sophia is the material and sacred symbol of Turkish sovereignty […]" (*Hürriyet* 2020f).

Hagia Sophia was being conceptualised as the crown jewel of Turkishness and the quintessential ontic space for Turks. Hagia Sophia must certainly be reconverted into a mosque so that the perpetuity of Turkish sovereignty was assured and restored; thereby, the worsening anxieties of the nation were addressed and alleviated.

As the top brass in Turkish politics were becoming pro-reconversion, the citizenry also favoured reconversion in this period. Thousands attended the demonstrations and events in favour of the reconversion from 2016 onward. In 2016, marking the 563rd anniversary of the conquest of İstanbul, thousands attended an event organised by the AGD for the reopening of Hagia Sophia as a mosque.

The İstanbul branch chairperson of the foundation, Ali Uğur Bulut, said (Hasırcıoğlu 2016):

> […] *keeping Hagia Sophia closed is nothing more than saying that I cannot do it* [reconvert Hagia Sophia into a mosque], [thereby] *you do it* [reconvert Hagia Sophia into a church] *on*

> *your own account to Greeks. Keeping Hagia Sophia closed means you say, 'I do not have the right to life' to the Westerners*.

In 2017, marking the 564th anniversary of the conquest of İstanbul, the AGD organised events such as performing morning prayers, and thousands of participants prayed for the reopening of Hagia Sophia to Muslim worship (Kaya and Hasırcıoğlu 2017). In the first two time periods, the demonstrations had been in the form of a backlash against a particular event, such as the Pope's visit to Hagia Sophia and a concert held inside Hagia Sophia. In the last two periods, the demonstrations were held not against an event but in favour of reconversion. The commemorations of the conquest of İstanbul as a means to the continuum of biographical continuity appealed to conservatives and Islamists more and more, and transformed the event into an act of remembering Hagia Sophia as an ontic space for Turks in Turkey.

During this period, Athens severely condemned any change in the status of Hagia Sophia. In October 2016, an imam was permanently appointed to Hagia Sophia (*EKathimerini* 2016). Panagiotis Kammenos, then Minister of Defence of the Hellenic Republic, decided not to attend the religious ritual marking the 25th anniversary of Bartholomew I becoming the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople due to the appointment of a permanent imam to Hagia Sophia (Kırbaki 2016b). A month later, then Deputy Foreign Minister Ioannis Amanatidis said the "monuments on the World Cultural Heritage list must be more actively protected from any alteration of their nature and identity. And the Church of Hagia Sophia is among these monuments" in a statement (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2016b).

In a similar vein, referring to the status of Hagia Sophia, the Prime Minister of Greece, Alexis Tsipras, said in December 2017 (*Hürriyet* 2017):

> *Greece has renovated* […] *a number of temples. We have not considered performing Orthodox prayers in those temples. However,* […] *such a situation has come into question concerning Hagia Sophia*.

Athens coped with its anxieties by supporting Turkey's Europeanisation thus far. During this period however, Greece submitted to its anxieties, as Athens harshly rebuked every development impairing the status of the monument, and got involved in bitter diplomatic

spats over the issue with Turkey. The ontological insecurities of both sides were manifested in the debates surrounding Hagia Sophia's status.

EU-Turkey relations, which had been in a downward spiral since 2010, reached a new low, as the European Parliament recommended suspending the accession negotiations with Turkey in 2019 (*European Parliament* 2019). The EU's tendency to support its member state, Greece, had repercussions on the strained bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey. As Turkey's hopes for EU membership waned, Ankara implemented more and more non-European policies, manifested primarily in the Hagia Sophia squabble.

The debate around the status of Hagia Sophia was regarded as a "challenge posed by the Turks" and "against Hellenism" in Greece (*Hürriyet* 2020b). The period witnessed several diplomatic spats between the two. In June 2016, the airing of a television programme for Ramadan was criticised by Athens for the daily Quran reading in Hagia Sophia during the holy month of Ramadan (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2016a). The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement blaming Athens for the lack of a mosque in the capital and Athens' interference with the freedom of religion of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace (2016). Additionally, the ND submitted a parliamentary question about the reading of the Quran in Hagia Sophia (Kırbaki 2016a). In June 2017, the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the "Koran reading and holding of prayers in Hagia Sophia, which was broadcast by Turkey's state television channel" (2017). The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2017) criticised the statement by the Foreign Ministry of Greece in return. In March 2019, President Erdoğan said Hagia Sophia would be reconverted into a mosque shortly before the local elections of 2019, to be held on Sunday 31 March 2019 (*Hürriyet* 2019). In reply, then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece G. Katrougalos said, "as regards Hagia Sophia, it is not just a great church of Christendom, the largest church for many centuries, but it is a world heritage site. […] doubting [endangering] this status in any way is not just an insult to Christians, it is an insult to the international community and International Law" in an interview (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2019). In 2020, President Erdoğan declared that there was going to be a recital of the Quran, and prayers

would be said in commemoration of the conquest of İstanbul in Hagia Sophia in May (*Hürriyet* 2020c). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic issued a statement calling the recital of the Quran inside Hagia Sophia "an insult to the international community" (2020a). The spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Republic of Türkiye equally criticised the statement issued by their Greek counterparts in return (*Hürriyet* 2020d). Indeed, regardless of the legal status of Hagia Sophia, it was occasionally called a "church" in Greece and a "mosque" in Turkey. The representations of the same monument by these two units were at odds, which fomented ontological insecurity. This recognition/misrecognition of the same monument is a manifestation of anxiety on both sides.

President Erdoğan announced the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque, after the Council of State annulled its status as a museum in July 2020 (Guerin 2020). The opposition drew a veil over the Council of State's ruling in Turkey. The muted backing the opposition offered was regarded as the leading political figures' approval of the verdict. Also, the court ruling was mostly criticised throughout the world, whilst several states welcomed it. The states, in fact, paid lip service to the reconversion, except for Greece. Athens regarded reconversion as a "provocation to the civilised world" (*France 24 English* 2020).

The already-strained bilateral relations between Ankara and Athens hit a new low with the actual reconversion, as the spokesperson of the Greek government, Stelios Petsas, said (McKernan 2020):

> *today is a difficult day… a shadow hangs over us with the transformation of Hagia Sophia into a mosque, something that genuinely shocks Christians all over the world and not only Greeks*.

The official statements and news about the reconversion endured beyond the reopening of the museum to Muslim worship. The President of Greece, Katerina Sakellaropoulou, called the reconversion an act that (*The National Herald* 2020b)

> *disputes our historical memory, […] and poses a serious blow to the country's relations with Greece, the European Union and the international community. […] Hagia Sophia, an ecumenical monument […] is a symbol of Orthodoxy and the entire Christian world.*

President Sakellaropoulou continued (Congar 2020):

> *We are not going to forget the Turkish invasion* [of] *and barbarism* [in Cyprus] … *they reconverted Hagia Sophia into a mosque. This is an affront to not only Hellenism but also Christianity and world cultural heritage*…

Sakellaropoulou was calling into question Turkey's cultural outlier status vis-à-vis Greece and Europe. The Greek President was hinting at Turkey's non-Europeanness and, thereby, simultaneously connoting Greece's Europeanness, by referring to Turkey's non-Christian status and, at the same time, by offering a dichotomy between Greece and Turkey. The Prime Minister of Greece, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, joined the Greek President saying, "Hagia Sophia belongs to the Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants around the world" (*The National Herald* 2020a). Mitsotakis, asserted that "Turkey prefers, with this outmoded act, to sever all ties with the Western world and its values" (*Sputniknews* 2020). PM Mitsotakis argued that the reconversion demonstrated Turkey's non-Europeanness. He underlined Turkey's nonconformity to the European way of life and norms with a Judeo-Christian culture-oriented discourse.

The comments of the Greek President caused a backlash from the spokesperson of the AKP, Ömer Çelik, as he called the President's comments "fanaticism" (*Sabah* 2020). In the meantime, the head of the MHP, Devlet Bahçeli, called the reconversion the "most important declaration of intention in our recent history" (Çelikbaş 2020), while the National Herald – a Greek diaspora newspaper in the US – published a template for readers to send to the politicians of their region and the political leadership of the country, including the president and the presidential candidate of the Democratic Party in the US (Diamataris 2020). Berberakis (2020) wrote an article about the trauma the reconversion of Hagia Sophia triggered in Greece for BBC News Türkçe in 2020. He said the trauma that some echelons of Greek society were going through was equivalent to the joy some echelons of Turkish society found in the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque (Berberakis 2020). The underlying cause of the trauma was that Hagia Sophia had been the mother church of the Orthodox world, with Greek as its official language for 1,500 years until the fall of Constantinople (Berberakis 2020). Indeed, Greeks had an emotional attachment to the monument. Thus, religious ceremonies were held, and flags were flown

at half-mast in churches across Greece during the first Friday prayers performed in Hagia Sophia after the reconversion (Hatipoğlu 2020).

In September, the Greek Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs, Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, held Ankara responsible for "fostering a nationalist, populist and Islamist front", as he referred to the reopening of Hagia Sophia to Muslim worship as a precedent (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2020b). Also, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Konstantinos Vlasis, said it was Ankara's obligation "not [to] alter the ecumenical nature of Hagia Sophia and the Monastery of Chora" (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2020c).

In July, the Secretary-General of Public Diplomacy, Religious and Consular Affairs, Constantinos Alexandris (2020), wrote an article titled "Hagia Sophia: The violation of a symbol" about the reconversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque, as he denounced it thus: "Hagia Sophia is not just any church, it is a symbol. It is an emblem of a long historical period, of an entire civilization".

The narrative that the FM Nikos Dendias used in a statement released by the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs speaks volumes about both sides' narrativisation of each other. He described one image of the reconversion as "[…] a religious functionary with a neo-Ottoman sword in hand recapturing the Hagia Sophia, a museum […]" (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2020d).

In July, the Alternate Minister for Foreign Affairs, Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, said (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2020e):

> […] *if it continues on the path of provocations and moves away from Western values and Western culture, as is the case with the Hagia Sophia, becoming fully integrated into the European family will prove difficult* […].

The reference to the reconversion is a manifestation of Athens' anxiety over Ankara's estrangement from the EU. Calling the reconversion a trap that Ankara laid for Greece to transform the reopening of Hagia Sophia to worship into a "Greek-Turkish dispute", the

Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikos Dendias said (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2020f):

> […] *Of course, Hagia Sophia is a part of every Greek's heart* […]", "*Greece must address Turkey on this issue as an agent of global values* […] *not just its enormous sentimental value in the heart of Hellenism*" and "[…] *I will refer to Hagia Sophia [in the meeting in Brussels], because it's an indication of how Turkey sees things anyways* […].

In an interview on Alpha TV, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nikos Dendias, also said he was going to convene a meeting with the Greek ambassador to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Minister of Culture and several other senior figures so as to discuss the reconversion (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2020g). The meeting itself verified the symbolic significance of Hagia Sophia to Athens.

In the same interview, the interviewee reiterated the importance of Hagia Sophia as he said (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2020g):

> *Minister, you said we are defending a monument. A global monument. A cultural monument. That's what you said. But Hagia Sophia ... isn't just that. It has a special significance for Greeks* […]" and "[…] *Are we forfeiting the value Hagia Sophia has for us? That İstanbul has for us? I'm not saying we should take up arms and go to the City. I'm not saying that, but we can't just ...*

Moreover, these sentimental questions found an honest answer, as the FM Nikos Dendias said "I am certain that you are asking me this question on behalf of the understandable sentiments of all Greeks, myself included. I understand it completely. […]" (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2020g).

The dialogue between FM Dendias and the interviewer is compelling due to the references to Hagia Sophia as a national symbol and İstanbul as the City. The dialogue displays the depth of the overwhelming emotions the reconversion of Hagia Sophia stirred up in Greece. The profound surge of emotions, i.e., anxiety, at the thought of Hagia Sophia's reconversion into a mosque, reveals Greeks' ontologically insecure status.

The incumbent Prime Minister of Greece, Mitsotakis, issued a statement following his meeting with the current Prime Minister of the RoC in 2020, reading (*Prime Minister's Office* 2020):

> *I would say that they* [the Republic of Turkey] *turn against Europe as a whole, not just our two countries… Europe must now prepare a specific list of actions and sanctions against a country that seeks to play the role of a regional trouble-maker* […].

The statement also reads (*Prime Minister's Office* 2020):

> *We also discussed President Erdoğan's unprecedented decision on Hagia Sophia. A decision that, undoubtedly, hurts us deeply as Greek Orthodox Christians but also as citizens of the world. This is not a Greek-Turkish matter, it is not even a Euro-Turkish matter, it is a global, a universal matter*.

Moreover, Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs Miltiadis Varvitsiotis said in 2020, "Turkey does not respect multiculturalism and is not a country firmly oriented towards Europe" in an interview on SKAI TV (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hellenic Republic* 2020h).

Furthermore, the Deputy Minister of Education and Religions, Angelos Syrigos, railed against the statement insisting on the "Treaty of Lausanne as a precondition for exploratory talks" of the Minister of Energy in Turkey, Fatih Dönmez, and said, comparing Turkey to Nazi Germany (*Greekcitytimes.com* 2020):

> *Nazi Germany followed 'lebensraum'* [living space] *and Turkey, respectively, follow the idea of the 'Blue Homeland',* […] *So, Nazi Germany wanted to get rid of the Treaty of Versailles, Turkey wants to get rid of the Treaty of Lausanne*.

Additionally, Özkan (2015, 207-08) mentions the Hellene-Turk dichotomy, together with Cyprus, as one of the latest hotspots of the conflict between the two and its deep-rooted implications on the image of the other on both sides. He also draws attention to the Turkish elite's discourse on the Hellene-Turk dichotomy through the elite's discourse on Cyprus, e.g. then Turkish diplomat Selim Sarper drawing an analogy between *Enosis* and Anschluss, and considering Greece's policies as irredentist as Nazi Germany's.

On the one hand, such statements are an embodiment of the antagonism towards Turkey and the Europeanisation of bilateral relations, in the opinion of Ankara. On the other hand, Greece aligns itself with European norms; thereby, these norms and values are highlighted in Athens' discourse. The same event and issue possess more than one meaning, due to the differing narrativization of the two different units. The incongruity leads to disagreements where anxiety arises, and the units become ontologically insecure. In turn, their decision-making processes become non-rational and emotive. It is a downward spiral where subjectivity and reflexivity are simultaneously at play.

The statements about Hagia Sophia and what it represents are relevant to the character of the bilateral relations due to the fact that the policies of both sides favour genealogy and history at the expense of good neighbourly relations, from which both units would benefit. Hellenic culture refers to their Ancient Greek roots, disengaging the Hellene from the Balkan people. The Balkans is the geographical East of Europe, which is socially and culturally inferior to Europe. Hellenic culture, therefore, is exceptional in the spatio-temporal sense. Accordingly, the five centuries of Ottoman rule provided a long yearned for existential threat. The "Turk" – the symbol of uncivilised and primitive existential threat – is the opposite of the descendants of Ancient Greece – the cradle of democracy and civilisation (Özsüer 2019, 246).

5.3. Hagia Sophia as a Reference Point

The Kingdom of Greece, founded in 1833, did not contain any big cities with a substantial Greek population. The City that Greeks longed for most was lost to the "Turk" centuries ago. The fall of the City was rationalised as a "divine intervention" and a "punishment for the Greeks of Constantinople […] for their lapses from the true Orthodox faith" (Flemming 2000, 2). In an endeavour to restore the lost territories, Greek nationalism was concretised in the *Megali Idea*, seeking the reestablishment of the City as the capital of the Greeks. The City has been of paramount importance not only for having been the capital of the Byzantine Empire for centuries, but also as the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. The City under "Turkish occupation" for centuries, the nation/nation-state as in the Self as Being had not been whole hitherto. The absence of

the City was unsettling for Greeks. Irredentism and religion are integral to the Greek Self as Being, and the City lies at the epicentre of Greek existence.

The “chosen glories” and “chosen traumas” become and remain valid for the cohesion of biographical continuity instead of for historical accuracy. Dragonas and Frangoudaki (2018, 23) call the fall of Constantinople in 1453 the “chosen trauma” and Ancient Greece, together with the Greek War of Independence in 1821, the “chosen glory”. Correspondingly, the conquest of Constantinople is the “chosen glory”, and the Sevres Syndrome is the “chosen trauma” for Turks. “Chosen traumas” and “chosen glories” are acts of remembering passed down from generation to generation. Minor revisions may be made to the narrative; nevertheless, their reverberations are always evident in the national narrative.

The Greeks have dubbed Constantinople the “queen of the cities”, and Hagia Sophia has been considered the pinnacle of Byzantine civilisation. The longing for Hagia Sophia has surpassed the agony inflicted by the demise of the Byzantine Empire. The emotional attachment to Hagia Sophia was deeper and more robust than the emotional attachment to the Parthenon for many Greeks (Özsüer 2019, 180). The Greeks have established and perpetuated, as an act of remembering, powerful and enduring myths, namely “to Thelima tou Theou” (the will of God), “To Diskopotiro tis Agia Sofias” (the golden cup of Hagia Sophia), “Parthen i Poli, Parthen i Romania” (the City is taken, the land of Rum is taken), “O Papas tis Agia Sofias” (the padre of Hagia Sophia), “İ Agia Trapeza” (the holy table), “To potami pou stamatise na kylaei” (the river that stopped flowing), “Ta Psarıa tou Kalogerou” (fish of the monk), “Oı Kritikoi Polemistes” (the Cretan warriors), “O Marmaromenos Vasilias” (the marbled king) (Özsüer 2019, 183-87) concerning the City and Hagia Sophia. The myths built around İstanbul and Hagia Sophia have ascribed additional meaning to the conquest for the Turks and the fall for the Greeks in the nationalist period. These myths have ensured biographical continuity, contributing to and strengthening the national narrative.

Biographical continuity is imperative to a stable Self as Being. An interruption to biographical continuity arouses anxiety. Constantinople had been the capital of the

Byzantine Empire for centuries until the fall of the City. Additionally, Hagia Sophia had served as the epicentre of Greek Orthodox Christianity for centuries. However, the Ottoman Empire, which had not symbolised the Turkish nation, had vanquished the Byzantine Empire, which had not been Greek in the modern sense of the word. The Turks had not struck a blow on the Greek Self as Being. The Modern Greeks suffer from anxiety anyway, because they appropriated the Byzantine Empire as a component of their biographical continuity and Self as Being/becoming. The fall of Constantinople devastated the Christians to the extent that Mehmed II/ Conqueror has been dubbed "the beast of the Apocalypse" and "Satan". Volkan (1999, 147) argues that the emotional outset of the *Megali Idea* dates back to the fall of Constantinople, although the *Megali Idea* only actually became the official ideology in the 19th century. Therefore, the loss of Constantinople (the City/η Πόλη/i Poli) and Hagia Sophia, which had been the contemporary Mother Church, ought to be analysed in this context.

On the other hand, Kemalist Turkey initiated the Westernisation/Europeanisation process in modern Turkey as a re-civilising attempt and simultaneously cast off the "East", i.e., religion and the Ottoman heritage. The nascent national narrative ostracised the ancient regime and religion (Kızılyürek 2002, 175). Thus, a decades-long period of anxiety was initiated for Islamists. The museumification of Hagia Sophia embodied the outset of this anxiety, and the reconversion into a mosque was the means to alleviate it.

Hagia Sophia, which means "Divine Wisdom", was constructed as a church in 537. Recast into a Catholic Church for a brief period between 1204 and 1261; it was converted into a mosque immediately after the annexation of Constantinople by the Ottoman state in 1453. It was the ultimate metaphor for the Ottoman subjugation of Orthodox Christian Constantinople. In the early years of the Republic of Turkey, the mosque of Hagia Sophia was converted into a museum – the symbol of secularisation and the widening schism with the monarchy and caliphate past – with a decree signed by then President Atatürk in 1934. It took almost two decades of religious conservatism at the helm of Turkey to reconvert the museum into a mosque in 2020.

Politicising a world heritage site is an old practice. Historical sites have been exploited for a variety of reasons, such as domestic politics and nation branding. By nationalising a historical site, a unit alienates another entity (Causevic 2020). It is an exclusionary act in quest of a stable Self as Being and a secure sense of belonging. In a similar vein, Hagia Sophia was reconverted into a mosque in the AKP era. As an attempt to re-narrate Self as Being, the new predominant trend in Turkey is narrated through the reconversion, where religion and the unit come together. It is the implementation of anxiety-driven policies at play. In a nutshell, ontological insecurity impels a unit to take precautions against and alleviate anxieties.

Rahimov (2021) elaborates on the Hagia Sophia decision through the prism of sacralisation. Hagia Sophia is not only a sacred temple for Orthodox Greeks and Muslim Turks but also a sacred museum for secular Turks, since museumification symbolises secularisation, modernisation and the Westernisation/Europeanisation of Turkey. Regardless of its status, it is an ontic space for Greeks and Turks alike. Therefore, Hagia Sophia is the quintessential reference point for making sense of the emotionalised bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey, and the ontologically insecure status of both.

Hagia Sophia is the ultimate symbol of the Ottoman conquest of Christian Constantinople. It was the quintessential secular symbol of modern Turkey for 86 years until it was de-secularised as the ultimate re-sacralised symbol of the Islamist variant of Turkish nationalism yet again. The conversion into a museum had meant not only to modernise – the Ottoman past – but also secularise – the caliphate past – the country. The reconversion into a mosque did amount to a hiatus from attempts at secularisation in this regard. Indeed, President Erdoğan said Turkey was reclaiming its national Self (*DW News* 2020). Turkey was redefining its Self as Being, and the reconversion was the embodiment of it. It is a manifestation of ontological insecurity, impelling a unit to take precautions against and alleviate its anxiety.

Data demonstrates that the discussion on Hagia Sophia's status gradually took centre stage in Turkey and Greece from 1999 to 2020. As the Islamist variant in Turkish

nationalism took hold of Turkish politics, the discussion about Hagia Sophia's status permeated through Turkish society and Turkish politics over time. A similar pattern was witnessed in Greece. Religious sentiments pervaded Turkish nationalism in time, whereas Christianity had already been an integral component of Greek nationalism. Accordingly, Turks and Greeks have regarded Hagia Sophia as an ontic space on their own terms. The narrativisation of Hagia Sophia as an ontic space appealed to and gradually spread through both nations. The narrative became more prevalent in Greece and Turkey, alike as Turkey's Europeanisation followed a downward trend subsequent to the upsurge of discussions about Turkey's Europeanness/non-Europeanness in Europe, which led to existential anxiety in Turkey. In an ontologically insecure position, Turkey witnessed the rise of nationalist sentiments as a coping mechanism for existential anxiety. As relations with Greece became strained as a result of Turkey's growing anxiety, Hagia Sophia's status became a bone of contention between the two.

Greece heightened its sense of belonging to Europe by not vetoing Ankara's candidacy status in 1999. In turn, the EU further sharpened Athens' sense of belonging by fully admitting it to the Eurozone in 2001. Greece, which had been considered half-detached from Europeanness by fellow Europeans, Europeanised its Self as Being by means of EU-isation. Greece's willingness for Europeanisation and endorsement of Ankara's Europeanisation of its Self as Being did not remain unnoticed in Europe. The ontologically secure status not only allowed Greece to Europeanise but also enabled it to support Ankara's Europeanisation.

From 1999 to 2010, the EU provided a relatively pacific environment, with its normativity, where existential anxiety was alleviated, and Ankara and Athens peacefully engaged with each other. The EU's normativity alleviated the ontological insecurity in Greece and Turkey alike. There were two earthquakes that developed a feeling of empathy towards one another, together with the friendly relations between the foreign ministers of Greece and Turkey. The EU granted Turkey candidacy status in this emotionally positive climate in 1999. In other words, the EU provided an ontologically secure milieu for both sides to meet each other halfway.

Ankara was not derailed from Europeanisation, and reiterated its willingness to observe the EU *acquis* by 2013 to the fullest extent in 2007, although the EU "partially suspended" the accession negotiations with Turkey, by freezing the opening of eight chapters due to the Cyprus dispute in the previous year (Kubosova 2007).

From 2016 onwards, Turkey discussed Hagia Sophia's status from an Islamist-nationalist vantage point. Greece was not trespassing over the boundaries of European norms and values. Although nationalist sentiments were aroused in Greece, Athens dealt with its ontological insecurity provoked by the debate over status of one of the most vital Greek ontic spaces within the confines of European norms and values. Greece considered and categorised the reconversion as un-European and against civilisation. Correspondingly, Athens aimed to Europeanise the reconversion issue. In this context, Greece was more ontologically secure than Turkey. Indeed, the Greek Self as Being is not non-European but less European.

Candidacy status strengthened Ankara's sense of belonging to Europe. The recognition of Turkey's Europeanness in the "European gaze" provided the Turkish Self as Being with an ontologically more secure status. A more European and less nationalistic Turkey heralded a Turkish Self as Being finding the middle ground with Greek Self as Being in Europe. Accordingly, Ankara renovated a number of non-Muslim monuments and reopened several non-Muslim temples to worship for special occasions in this period, in an attempt to downgrade its Muslimness and endorse its non-Muslim heritage.

Greece-Turkey bilateral relations were peaceful in the early 2000s, contributing to restrictions on the debate about Hagia Sophia's status to a relatively small nationalistic cluster. As the EU's normativity gradually vanished, the sense of belonging to Europe diminished in Greece – seen in the Greek government debt crisis and the rising far-right nationalism – and Turkey – which saw the debacle of Turkey's EU bid and the advent of the Islamist variant in Turkish nationalism, albeit to differing degrees. The insecure attachment to Europe provoked existential anxiety on both sides.

The 2008 debt crisis weighed down on the Europeanness of Greece and downgraded Athens' achievements in Europeanisation. Greece had been portrayed as a nonconformist and a wilful free rider in Europe (Wodak and Angouri 2014). The Greeks were resentful of the European Troika. The Greek government's compliance with the Troika resulted in the rise of the radical left and populist SYRIZA to power. Dissatisfied with SYRIZA's negotiations with Europe, the far-right and nationalist political parties enjoyed considerable grassroots-level support in Greece. The 2018 Prespa Agreement – a compromise arrived at over another ontological insecurity trigger for Greece, i.e., the Macedonia name dispute – was the tipping point that led to the change of government in favour of the centre-right New Democracy in Greece in 2019 (Skoulariki 2020). The SYRIZA government focused on the symptoms, i.e., the Macedonia name issue, in the domain of the empirical without addressing the ontological insecurity stemming from the claims to the same cultural symbols and the past by the two political entities in the domain of the real. The attempts at conflict resolution backfired, as this has sparked off an adverse reaction provoked by the Greeks' existential anxiety. Ontological insecurity entrapped the less European and disgraced Greece, as a nationalist upsurge was witnessed in Greece, in the absence of European normativity.

As the sense of belonging to Europe gradually vanished, the idea of Turkey as an "emerging regional power" appealed to the public and Ankara. The rising Turcosceptic discourse and culture-oriented rhetoric in Europe distressed Turkey and rendered Ankara increasingly anxious. With an ontologically insecure status, the dormant Islamic variant of Turkish nationalism embodied in the coalition between the AKP and the MHP gradually permeated Turkish politics and public space.

The coming to power of Islamist nationalists ushered in a change in the biographical continuity of Turkey in 2002. Ankara has become more Islamist in character, although its foreign policy still has nationalistic tendencies provoked by its ontological insecurities emanating from an absence of a sense of belonging to Europe and its non-European status in the "European gaze". The anxious party holds on to its biographical continuity despite the fact that Ankara has been going through a change in the narrativisation of its past. Self as Being, therefore, recalibrates its national narrative in the form of overemphasising

particular symbols – Hagia Sophia as a mosque – and underemphasising others – Hagia Sophia as a museum.

The EU has gradually increased its criticism of Turkey's resoluteness in internal and external affairs. EU criticism reached its zenith with the 2013 Gezi protests. Turkey was criticised for restrictions on civil liberties and basic rights and freedoms in this period (*Cumhuriyet* 2012; Güvenç 2013). In the meantime, the Hagia Sophia debate became more heated and intense. The commemoration events of the conquest of İstanbul steadily drew more attention in the wider public and Ankara in the same period. The debate and the commemoration were emotionally associated with each other. The commemoration events were transformed into an Islamist-nationalist appeal for reconversion.

Religious rituals play a significant role in both societies' daily routines. According to a survey by Pew Research Centre, a majority of Turks (89%) and Greeks (82%) said "God is important in their lives", and 73% of Greeks, outnumbered only by Turkey with 89%, said "prayer plays an important role" in their lives (Papadopoulos, 2020). In a similar vein, the head of the directorate of religious affairs ascribed symbolic and ritualistic meaning to Hagia Sophia as the embodiment of the Muslim-Turkish heritage, and the revival of the society's profound and ingrained culture and self (*Euronews* 2020).

Greece and Turkey arrive at two different conclusions when assessing the same subject matter. Greece has been disquieted by Turkish "expansionism" and increasing power projection capabilities. Turkey has been unsettled by the Greek "incursions" in the Eastern Mediterranean and its growing diplomatic prowess in the region, together with the Europeanisation of bilateral relations in favour of Greece and at the expanse of Turkey. These conflicting perceptions are, in fact, symptoms of profound and deep-seated anxieties. The crux of the issue lies in ontological insecurity. The strained bilateral relations between these two anxious states stem from psychological issues instead of practical conflicts of interests.

The "Normative Power Europe" concept lost ground on the EU's periphery, including in Turkey in the late 20th and the early 21st century. The rise of culture-oriented rhetoric in

the EU has resulted in EU normativity losing its appeal for the less Europeans and non-Europeans. The lack of normativity and the downfall of values and norms have given way to lurking and dormant anxiety on the periphery. The existential anxiety that the political entities suffer from entraps the Self as Being in an ontologically insecure status where biographical continuity is disrupted, and the sense of belonging is challenged.

In the absence of European normativity, the rising nationalisms in Greece and Turkey have taken a toll on bilateral relations in the 2010s. Existential anxiety has permeated both Greek and Turkish Selves as Being, leading to the reverberations in the form of material conflicts such as the maritime crisis and the militarisation of the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea. While EU sanctions have convinced Ankara that Greece has been using the EU as a leverage in bilateral relations once again, Athens has been distressed by the EU's failure to rally united European support for its Self as Being against Turkey. Under the circumstances, Hagia Sophia's status as a bone of contention is the epitome of the growing ontological insecurity in Greece and Turkey alike.

5.4. Conclusion

The advent of Greek and Turkish nationalisms has ensued from the age of revolutions, especially the French Revolution, which has continued to reverberate throughout Europe. Moreover, European states' involvement in both nationalism projects is self-evident. The Ottoman Empire disintegrated, as European states extended their sphere of influence at the expense of the former. On the one hand, the European states and romanticists such as Lord Byron honed in upon the Greek War of Independence. Their support for the secession of the Morea Peninsula from the Ottoman state served as a reminder of past belonging. Greeks do belong to Europe, whereas Ottomans do not. Europe surmises that its civilisation emanated from Ancient Greek civilisation. If Europeans regard themselves as the descendants of Hellenic civilisation, Greeks are supposed to be innately European (Heraclides 2002, 51). Therefore, the Europeanisation of Turkey must mean the Hellenisation of Turkey, which would alleviate Athens' anxiety in perpetuity.

Moreover, the "barbaric Turk" image has eclipsed the negative Latin/Catholic image among the Greeks. The eternal existential threat had been neither the German invaders of WWII, nor the Italian aggressors in the early 1940s, nor the Bulgarians against whom the Greeks have occasionally taken up arms. The Greeks have downgraded and "not otherised" Europe, albeit they have made concessions in this respect. Therefore, the Greeks, longing for the acknowledgement of Europeanness, have otherised the "Turk" and, thereby, forgotten their persecution at the hands of Europeans. Constructing a sense of belonging to Europe and strengthening its biographical continuity, Athens has put its bilateral relations with Ankara in a precarious position.

On the other hand, nationalist sentiment has grown among the Turkish intelligentsia, as they have been discussing how to alleviate their anxieties symbolised by the Sevres Syndrome, the Cyprus dispute, etc. Therefore, as the quintessence of European integration, the EU's role in the bilateral relations is of paramount importance, and its ability to reconcile and disrupt these bilateral relations is evident. The Europeanisation of the Greek Revolution underlies Ankara's assumption that Greece used Europe as leverage against the Turks. Indeed, Europelessness, meaning the absence of normative Europe, lets old anxieties resurface, and anxieties provoke nationalism.

Greeks remember *Tourkokratia* as a period of foreign oppression rather than a period of cohabitation and/or tolerance (Demirözü 2018, 43). The projection of the Oriental Self on the "Turk", which is already the Oriental existential threat to Europe, not only conceals the non-European traits of the Greeks but also manifests the Self's Europeanness, since the Greek Self's existential threat is also Europe's existential threat. However, the Greek Self, aware of its Oriental traits, is in a predicament in the domain of the real. Their antecedents were the founders of European civilisation, although they acquired oriental peculiarities in time. The dichotomy this predicament puts Greeks in is similar to the Turkish one, as the country is considered a bridge between the West and the East – not Western enough to be a fellow European state, albeit somehow not Eastern. Turks have been undergoing this putative existential anxiety since the late Ottoman period. Both suffer from this duality/dichotomy in their self; they go through denial of their Oriental Self. The symptoms of the denial are expressed in the form of Turkophobia in the case of

Greece and Arabophobia in the case of Turks. The fallacy of being simultaneously privileged and persecuted arouses existential anxiety in both parties.

The Turkish distrust of Europe dates back to the Balkan Wars. The European powers insured the Ottoman state against territorial loss. However, the Ottoman state lost the Balkans altogether at the end of the war. Moreover, they were further ostracised and distressed by the silence of the Europeans in the face of the atrocities that were perpetrated during the Balkan Wars. Kemalist nationalism was preferred as a means to Westernise/Europeanise modern Turkey – the "change in continuity" concept in OSS. The Islamist form of nationalism is inclined to remember these issues. In this context, biographical continuity necessitates the distrust of the EU and the "Normative Power Europe" concept.

Both entities hold Europe in high esteem as a lofty ideal. However, both parties are resentful and envious of Europe as well. Once being the main constituent of vast empires, they, on the one hand, aspire to be European and an equally European entity and, on the other hand, they are of the opinion that they receive unfair treatment. The Greeks accuse Europe of negligence and, apparently, hypocrisy since European civilisation is based upon Ancient Hellene civilisation and should pay homage to the contemporary Greeks. The Turks, being indignant over the "European bias", criticise Europe for "incommensurate treatment" since the Concert of Europe. A part of both entities constructs a sense of belonging to Europe whilst another part demurs and contravenes the sense of belonging to Europe.

Millas (2004, 62-63) argues that there are optimists and pessimists in both societies regarding bilateral relations. The pessimistic Greeks regard earthquake diplomacy as a diplomatic triumph for Ankara – as Ankara has taken another step to becoming an EU member state without having made any compromise – whereas the pessimistic Turks are convinced that the EU has become a form of leverage in the hands of Athens (Millas 2004, 62-63). As the people remain sceptical of the other, the entities follow suit. Whilst Ankara has been wary of succumbing to a small state, Athens is averse to capitulating to an assertive and disdainful neighbour (Heraclides 2004, 70). In the 19th and the early 20th

centuries, the main obstacle to pacific bilateral relations was Greek irredentism and the Ottoman Empire as a pre-modern political entity – bereft of modern political tenets. The crux of the issue lies in the contradictory narratives of the past events and the perceived existential threat, resulting in anxious Selves as Being.

The reconversion of Hagia Sophia appeals to the rising nationalist sentiments. Religion always goes hand in hand with nationalist movements. In the Turkish case, the reconversion symbolises Turkey's refusal to accept inferiority to Europe – inferiority that Europeanisation and the EU bid require. The weakening sense of belonging to Europe has finally resulted in Ankara's novel quest for superiority over Europe, by means of returning to a religious form of Turkish nationalism as an alternative. In addition to the way nationalism evolved in both Greece and Turkey, the EU's lack of normative clout has further distressed the already emotionalised bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey on the periphery. The intense and overwhelming emotions arouse anxiety in both Greeks and Turks. Anxiety corresponds to an appalling psychological state, i.e., ontological insecurity. Under the circumstances, both anxious Selves as Being make their foreign policy decisions in an ontologically insecure state.

Hagia Sophia is one of the various ontic spaces, albeit the most emotionalised one for Greeks and Turks alike, and causing reverberations throughout the world due to its unique history, whether reconverted or with its narrative reconstructed in the 2000s. Turkey has witnessed the reconversion of a number of museums, erected as Byzantine churches once into mosques, and the construction of the grandiose Çamlıca mosque and the Taksim mosque in the early 21st century. As Necip Fazıl Kısakürek argued, "Ayasofya is neither stone, nor line, nor colour, nor volume, nor the synthesis of these. It is just meaning, only meaning…" (Sofos 2021, 7). The Islamic variant of Turkish nationalism has re-contextualised and re-configured these ontic spaces in line with the new nationalist upsurge, in an attempt to reclaim Turkey's full sovereignty.

The anti-Turkey discourse in Europe has sparked the quiescent Islamic variant in Turkish nationalism. The rise of culture-oriented discourse and Turcoscepticism in Europe coincided with the upsurge in the Islamic variant, favouring and rallying popular support

for the reconversion. The impact of culture-oriented discourse in Europe on Turkey's EU bid demonstrates that cultural and religious differences are of paramount importance. The in-betweenness of Turkey renders Turkey's EU bid weak. As the former President of Turkey, Turgut Özal, once said, Europe will not admit Turkey into the EU because "we are Muslim and they are Christian, but they don't say that" (Rahimov 2021, 280). Correspondingly, Greece has Europeanised the reconversion by highlighting the non-Europeanness of the reconversion and its incongruity with European norms and values as of the 2010s.

The rise of culture-oriented discourse in Europe led to the debacle of Turkey's EU bid. Turkey's incessant appeal to the EU met with the rising culture-oriented discourse underlining Turkey's non-Europeanness. The false promise of the EU's normativity disheartened Ankara's Europeanisation. As the Europeanisation was hampered by the discussions over Turkey's Europeanness/non-Europeanness in Europe, Ankara suffered from anxiety, due to the unknowability of the future, and the absence of a sense of belonging to Europe. In response, Turkey readjusted its national narrative to secure its biographical continuity and stabilise its Self as Being. Turkey found itself in an ontologically insecure state, which resulted in emotive responses to the existential crisis. Accordingly, Turkey appropriated a number of ontic spaces in an attempt to cope with anxiety by either ascribing new meanings to these ontic spaces or reanimating the pre-nationalist memories and sentiments. Indeed, it was ontological insecurity which had led Turkey to the museumification of Hagia Sophia, in an attempt to transform the monument into the quintessential secular ontic space of modern Turkey. Secular Turkey aimed to demonstrate its Westernisation/Europeanisation by re-configuring its most internationally recognised monument with a multi-religious and multi-national background, in line with European norms and values. It was a very similar instinct that led the latest Islamist variant of Turkish nationalism to reconvert the museum into a mosque. The ontological insecurity of Turkey provoked by its non-European status in the "European gaze", and the ensuing ontological differentiation between Greek/European-Turkish/non-European resulted in Ankara re-contextualising the monument as a re-sacralised ontic space belonging to Turks.

Turkey has become an object of fear in the minds of the Greeks. Ergo, the desecuritisation of this issue incites anxiety in Greece, because Turkey as the existential threat is a component of their narrative. Furthermore, Greece serves as a perennial ontological threat in Turkey as well. Hence, both sides' narrativisation is somewhat alike.

6. CONCLUSION

This thesis argues that Greece and Turkey are ontologically insecure in their bilateral relations due to (1) the historical background, i.e., the contradictory narratives of their common history, and (2) the absence of EU normativity on Europe's periphery, i.e. the EU's failure to be an ontological security provider, and the EU's transformation into a trigger for ontological insecurity.

In four chapters, the thesis has discussed how OSS makes sense of the dispute between Greece and Turkey on the EU's periphery by underlining the emotive relationship between Greek and Turkish nationalisms and Greek and Turkish, weak and lack of respectively, sense of belonging to Europe, with reference to the Hagia Sophia debate and Turkey's EU bid from 1999 to 2020. I conclude that the material disputes are the symptoms of the emotionalised bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey. Ankara and Athens are the prisoners of contradictory national narratives, resulting in an anxious relationship in the absence of EU normativity on Europe's periphery.

The thesis contributes to the OSS literature and the literature on Greece-Turkey bilateral relations due to (1) the comparative analysis of the nationalisms in Greece and Turkey in the context of ontological security, (2) unravelling the contemporary bilateral relations between Ankara and Athens on the EU's periphery in relation to existentialist concepts such as Self as Being, biographical continuity and sense of belonging, and (3) demonstrating the relevance of the "ontic space" concept to IR. Furthermore, the study questions the analysis of bilateral relations in the framework of material disputes, and offers an analysis based on emotions such as anxiety and ontological (in)security.

OSS makes sense of the world that political entities and societies live in. It circumstantiates subjective rationality – a political entity is not supposed to be rational in all respects. Self as Being may prefer ontological security to somatic security. Based on the distinction which the ontological security literature draws between fear and anxiety, the thesis argues that anxiety provoked by menaces to Self as Being is as dangerous as the perils of somatic insecurity.

As subjectivity and relativity are of paramount importance in international politics, Self as Being is constructed via narrativisation. Self as Being is a product of narrativisation, which is a subjective process. Therefore, an analysis of bilateral relations warrants a grasp of subjective rationality. The actions and decisions of Self as Being are instructed by insight into its milieu and environs. OSS accounts for quasi-impulsive and supposedly unpredictable actions and decisions of political entities.

There are internal and external determinants of "becoming", i.e., Self as Being. Internal determinants may pressure Self as Being into a change of course, whilst international factors may delimit the room for manoeuvre. Internal determinants ought to be addressed, because they constitute the precondition for a stable and uninterrupted biographical continuity. International factors are obligatory for a secure sense of belonging.

The thesis postulates that agency is imperative for a unit to possess ontology. It is agency that enables the Kierkegaardian "possibility of possibility". Units participate in international relations of their own volition – intelligent Dasein acting at its own discretion in the Heideggerian sense. It is agency that leaves units prone to anxiety on account of uncertainty (Mitzen 2006b) or "unknowability of future" (Rumelili 2020). Rumelili (2020, 262-63) distinguishes "unknowability of future" from uncertainty, with reference to uncertainty's lack of emotional underpinning. The triangulation of agency/anxiety/uncertainty is reciprocally informing. The correlation among these three factors has somewhat causal and partially constitutive impacts on each other.

Units respond to uncertainty-fuelled anxieties in two ways. On the one hand, a unit resorts to cognitive actions as conscious and relatively rational performances, e.g., the case of Greece. Cognitive drives lead to ontological security. This enables the agent to challenge and get rid of anxiety, albeit not with certainty. Thanks to its less European status, Greece has not lost its will to Europeanise in the face of acute and chronic ontological insecurity. Nevertheless, Greeks suffer from ontological insecurity, on account of their less European status regardless, since less European is still not European enough.

On the other hand, a unit falls prey to emotive actions such as impulsive and uncontrollable emotions, e.g., the case of Turkey. The non-European status of Turkey in the "European gaze" further exacerbates Turkey's ontological insecurity. Emotive impulses provoke anxiety, which aggravates the fears of agents. The agent becomes a prisoner of its own fears. Then, the agent prefers fear over anxiety to ameliorate its ontological insecurity.

The thesis resorts to the Existentialist roots of ontological security to make sense of Greece-Turkey bilateral relations within the confines of emotions and OSS, and excludes the duality/dichotomy-focused prism. The Self/Other-focused analysis that academia makes use of, on the other hand, lacks the focus on the narratives and their usage of the fear object alleviating existential anxiety which this thesis brings into Greece-Turkey bilateral relations.

Living under Ottoman rule for hundreds of years, the people who had been identified as *Romii* speaking *Romeika* (Romeic) (Herzfeld 1986, 19) did not follow a linear trajectory from Ancient Greece to modern Greece. The classical Hellene culture thrived in the cities scattered around the Mediterranean and the Black Sea in the 8th and 6th centuries BCE. This de-territorialised ancient Hellenic culture has been rediscovered for the advent of modern Greece. This utopian definition of space has resulted in a yearning for the repopulation of these "Greek" cities (Sofos and Özkırımlı 2009, 20). The modern Greek entity has been incapable of reclaiming many of these "Greek" spaces. A feeling of insufficiency has bedevilled the Greek Self as Being in consequence. Preoccupied with defectiveness in the spatio-temporal sense, the Greek Self has re-imagined the inherently "Greek" territories re-Hellenised. These territorial aspirations have paved the way for the development of the *Megali Idea* concept – the revival of the Byzantine Empire on two continents and around five seas. The concept was put into action with the coming of Eleftherios Venizelos to power. As the rising separationist/nationalist movements prevailed over the *Ancien Régime*, the rifts between the nations were further widened with the 1912 Balkan Wars. The loss of the Balkans, on the other hand, is an unforgettable and un-mourned trauma for the Turks. Anatolia became the last shelter where the Turks could seek refuge in the face of the Greek incursion into the "Turkish heartland". Therefore, the

territorial aspirations of the Greeks have been in collision with the Turks' imagined territories for almost a century. Whereas the advent of conflicting narratives vindicated/stigmatised the establishment of the First Hellenic Republic and the Kingdom of Greece, the conflicting narratives also justified/vilified the defeat of the Greek forces in Anatolia, and the rise of a Turkish nation-state approximately a century later.

None of the rebellions constituted a threat as fatal and existential as the Greek War of Independence and the succeeding Greek incursions (the Cretan Revolt of 1866-1869, the 1897 Greece-Ottoman War, the Balkan Wars and the Greek Invasion of Anatolia in 1919-1922) into Ottoman territories. The secession of vast territories in favour of Greece subsequently triggered nationalist sentiments in and Turkification of Anatolia. The Turks followed in Greeks' footsteps with "economic boycotts", the expulsion of minorities and so on, which resulted in a vicious cycle of violence and misperception (Millas 2009, 110). The ontological insecurity is evident in the forgotten memories of cohabitation and tolerance – the erasure of the Ottoman past from the Greek narrative, and the downplaying of the Ottoman past from the Turkish narrative.

"Pan-Turkism" and "Turanism" both grew roots among the Ottoman Turks as a by-product of the nationalist/separatist movements in the Ottoman territories in the late periods of the Ottoman state. However, the founding father of Turkey dismissed the irredentist ideologies and acclaimed the National Pact in the early years of the Republic. The official relinquishing of revisionist ideologies did not put an end to nationalist policies. Turkey's founding doctrine ostracised the Ottoman period, similar to the doctrine of modern Greece. Having a more convoluted relationship with the Ottoman past, the founding elites diverted attention from the Ottoman and Muslim past to the pre-Islam periods, particularly to the Turkishness of Anatolia.

A period of Turkification ensued in Anatolia. Subsequently, the THT was established, in an attempt to imagine Turks as the founding fathers of civilisation in Anatolia, thereby, on a par with Western Civilisation – inspired by Ancient Greece – as a great civilisation of its own. As Ottomanism and Islamism failed their proponents, Turkish nationalism came under the spotlight. The THT is the official concretisation of the nationalist upsurge

in modern Turkey. The THT depicted a glorious past continual in time, in opposition to the Greek one which has been interrupted in time, and travelled across space until its final destination, contrary to the Greek one which has continually been located in the same space, albeit subjugated by external actors. Whereas the Greeks accentuate their culture as related to intervals of time in their past, the Turks give prominence to the civilisations their antecedents created in different spaces, albeit continuous in time. Thus, biographical continuity is ensured, and a stable Self as Being is formed.

As Hellenisation has downplayed anything non-Greek in modern Greece, Turkification has toned down and forgotten anything non-Turkish in modern Turkey. The forgotten memories of tolerance and cohabitation have cost both sides dearly, leading to a lack of empathy. Anxiety has taken over both sides of the Aegean, with an emphasis on the memories of traumatic events.

Greeks remember the period from 1071 to 1453 as the inception of barbarism and agony, whereas Turks revere the era as the dawn of the Turkish motherland. Similarly, Greeks dub the period from 1453 to 1821 as the "Turkish yoke" and *Tourkokratia*, whilst Turks recall it as a time of tolerance. The contemporary discourses and name-calling are an extension of the national narratives on both sides, permeating both societies through historiography, historical textbooks, commemoration days, monuments, historical sites, etc.

The inception of premature nationalism on both sides has given birth to two anxious nation-states. The remembered memories of wars and atrocities and the forgotten memories of tolerance and cohabitation have further aroused anxiety. Thus, the hostile threat perception has been aggravated – leading to a downward spiral in bilateral relations. Indeed, the memories of lost territories and past traumatic events have still retained smouldering indignation on both sides. These memories have become an integral part of the national narrative in Greece and Turkey. Athens has recompensated for the demise of the *Megali Idea* with the conceptualisaton of Greece as an "Aegean nation state". Ankara has countervailed the loss of the Balkans by constructing Anatolia as Turk's motherland.

The bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey have a protracted history of contention. Most of the territories of modern Greece had been under Ottoman rule from the mid-15th century until the 1821 Greek War of Independence. Modern Greece expanded its territories at the expense of the Ottoman state and modern Turkey, until the cession of the Dodecanese islands to Greece by Italy in 1947. The Turks and Greeks have waged a series of wars against each other since 1821 in the context of nationalism, until the 1919-22 National Liberation War of Turkey. The prior wars were waged in the pre-nationalist period; thereby, they are omitted from the narrative. All the events above have been conducive to creating bitter memories bedevilling contemporary bilateral relations.

The bilateral relations between the two nation-states had been defined by cooperation until the 50s. The Cyprus dispute heralded a downward spiral in bilateral relations. The conflict between Greek and Turkish Cypriots incited nationalist sentiments and led to emotive responses to the conflicts in Cyprus in both Greece and Turkey. Also, both sides have remembered the bitter memories and past trauma and are distressed by the revival of negative and contradictory emotions, already forgetting the period of pacific relations.

Under the circumstances, Greece and Turkey alike have considered each other revisionist and expansionist in the Aegean Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean. Athens condemns Turkey for violating Greece's sovereign rights, whilst Ankara regards the Greek viewpoint as an attempt at Hellenisation of the Aegean Sea.

Greeks regard their country as the typical example of civilisation, and are of the opinion that their past was the inspiration for the Enlightenment. The ground zero of the utmost political, economic, military and cultural sophistication on earth, Greeks curb their ontological insecurity and alleviate their small state security syndrome, i.e., a security-oriented foreign policy. The Greeks remember the Ancient Greeks as not only their forefathers but also the inception of European civilisation. The mighty past encourages Athens to punch above its weight in international affairs. Botched and futile attempts at foreign policy have result in a victim mentality and a "brotherless nation" psychology. A member of the European cultural and political community, Greece's threat perception is high regardless. Greeks have considered a wide spectrum of states a menace to the Self.

However, the perennial source of apprehension is the "Turk", even though Athens is under the auspices of the EU and NATO.

The Turkish narrative depicts Greece as the "spoiled child of Europe", longing for an ancient and, in fact, a chimaera of Greater Greece, stretching over two continents and five seas. The Rum had flourished as the overlords of the Orthodox Christians and of trade in the Aegean Sea and the Balkans under Ottoman rule. Ungrateful for the privileges bestowed upon them by the Ottoman state, they revolted against their benefactors, extended their territories at the expense of the Ottoman state, developed the *Megali Idea* concept and invaded Anatolia, which is the cradle of Turkish nationalism. Athens has been conspiring against and lurking in the shadows, waiting for modern Turkey to grow weak so as to put their revisionist policies in action, as in the Cyprus Dispute, the Aegean maritime dispute and, lately, the Eastern Mediterranean maritime dispute. The Turkish narrative is based on a defensive mentality – the fear of territorial loss and sovereignty – emanating from emotionalised subjective rationality. Suffering from drastic territorial losses in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Turkish mindset is apprehensive about foreign intervention in domestic affairs and about ethnic uprisings. Indeed, while boasting of a mighty military prowess and relatively immense size, Ankara is nevertheless wary of the loss of territory and sovereignty – concretised as the "Sevres syndrome" and the "Tanzimat syndrome" (Heraclides 2010 236) – as rights given to the minorities are believed to foment ethnic nationalism and result in the dissolution of the state. These syndromes, transformed into phobias, have planted the seeds of distrust of not only Greece but also the whole of Europe. Distressed by anxiety, the Self as Being creates and focuses on a fear object, in order to alleviate its ontological insecurity and maintain a stable psyche.

On the other hand, the Turkish narrative is also susceptible to the sublime past. The THT has portrayed the forefathers as the bearers of civilisation, bringing civilisation with them, and establishing a state wherever they settle. However, the THT has never reverberated through Turkish society. The dread of weakness, the reverence for power, and a superiority complex – emanating from the "Sevres syndrome" and the imperial past – led to instability in biographical continuity and the sense of belonging to Europe. These

dichotomies reveal the fear of another dissolution and result in the mentality that "Turks have no friends but Turks".

Athens is sure that Ankara has revisionist aspirations in Cyprus, Greek/Western Thrace and the Aegean Sea. The Greeks are convinced that the Turks pursue expansionism at the expense of the Greeks. Neo-Ottomanism is soaring among the Turks who eye the division of the Aegean into two parts and eventually annexation of the eastern Greek/Aegean islands. The ascent of Erdoğan to absolute power – eliminating the former President Gül and the erstwhile PM Davutoğlu – attests to the actualisation of the nationalist "real Turkey" conspiracy. In an attempt to overcome the threat to the East, Greece must make use of international law and normativity as a European Self as Being. Greece must further strengthen its Europeanness and refer to international law in the face of Turkish expansionism and revisionism, ignoring the fact that Turkey is a middle-sized power and Greece is a small one.

The Turks are convinced that the *Megali Idea* is unscathed and uninterrupted. The Greeks still hanker for a vast chunk of Anatolia/Asia Minor, with İstanbul/Constantinople as the crown jewel of Greater Greece. Even though some Greeks still regard İstanbul as Constantinople and call it the City, they make use of more subtle means such as international law to achieve the desired result. Accordingly, the Greeks consider the Aegean Sea the Hellenic heartland and a "Greek lake" and deem Cyprus a historically and culturally Hellenic territory. In order to strengthen its ties with Cyprus, Athens has instrumentalised the EU, and de facto integrated with it. Greeks' "legalistic stratagem" is doomed to failure, since the Turks' cause is righteous and just, in addition to Turkey's military prowess.

Heraclides (2019) draws attention to the fact that these two societies have cohabitated in the same territories from the Balkans to Anatolia/Asia Minor for centuries. From 1821 to 1922, one tragic event followed another, which led to a forever rivalry between Greece and Turkey. The Europeans distinguished Greeks from Turks by the end of the 18th century during the periods of neoclassicism and romanticism (Millas 2019, 66). The

Greeks, who had assumed identical and derogatory characteristics with Turks hitherto, were more highly esteemed as having Europeanness by Europeans in the late 18th century.

The Greece-Turkey bilateral relations are, in fact, not confined to a zero-sum game. The national interests of both states are not inevitably mutually exclusive. The crux of the issue lies not in material interests but ontological insecurity. Both entities remember/forget certain memories and construct a narrative accordingly. They both deem the other a perennial existential threat and themselves the injured party. The nationalist narrative (a protective cocoon) enables and endorses biographical continuity and a sense of belonging on both sides. Based upon these two tenets, Self as Being tackles anxiety and ensures ontological security, to the extent that the national narrative takes root and holds its ground. In the Greece-Turkey case, a fear object was established at the beginning of the two nationalisms on both sides, to substitute for and obscure the anxiety of death, meaninglessness, and guilt/condemnation.

Turks have been interacting with Europe for centuries. It is a common past fraught with a mixture of conflict, trade and cohabitation. History is a vital determinant to take into account, since mutual history haunts their contemporary relations. The narratives of their relations and the image of each other are acutely historicised. Turkey's EU bid falls prey to contradictory narratives as well. As the biographical continuity concept dictates, Turks are the descendants of the Ottomans in the "European gaze". Modern Turks also narrativise Europe with reference to their own image in the "European gaze" and the shared history that is badly narrativised by both. These distorted memories lead to an overtly emotionalised state and enable subjective rationality to prevail over rational decision-making mechanisms.

The underdeveloped Ottoman Empire doomed Greeks to the same fate. The Greek Self as Being was accordingly constructed on the inevitability of revolution/uprising. The dawn of the Greek Self as Being was warranted for the survival of Greekness and integration into Europe. The Turkish Self as Being has always been in an even more precarious condition. The Turkish Self as Being exists on a slippery slope tending towards ontological insecurity.

On the one hand, the Turks have gained national consciousness in the face of an existential threat, i.e., Greece as an extension of Europe. On the other hand, the Turkish fervour for Europeanness and western-style modernity has been dissipated neither by the Greek incursion into Anatolia nor by European support for that intrusion. Greece and Turkey follow a policy of Europeanisation to varying degrees, because they both seek the favour and recognition of Europe. Their interests are not mutually exclusive. However, it is enmity rather than amity which is steering the bilateral relations, because they are an existential threat triggering ontological insecurity for each other. These political entities have embarked upon a quest to narrativise their past in accordance with their partial remembering acts and interpretation of past events – "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas". Their self-narratives are in collision with each other since they remember different versions of the same events. This contradiction renders them anxious and grants them an ontologically insecure status. Therefore, they would have had a proclivity for brinksmanship in every crisis, had there not been external pressure, i.e., USSR expansionism and the NATO umbrella. The continuance of the fear object has not only allowed these two anxious Selves as Being to prolong their biographical continuity, but also to keep their anxiety at bay.

The acts of remembering are vital to the self-narrative, and how Self as Being makes sense of the milieu, i.e., its bilateral relations and international affairs. Haunted by the Sevres Syndrome, Turks are wary of Europe's ulterior motive. Euroscepticism weighs heavily on Turkey, due to allegations such as Europe's pressure on Ankara for Greek control of Cyprus and in the latest Eastern Mediterranean dispute. As the EU demanded that Turkey arrive at a solution to the Cyprus dispute and in Greece-Turkey disputes, Ankara has grown increasingly wary of the EU's motives. The Turkish narrative presumes that the EU's norms and values apply to EU member states, and non-EU states do not enjoy the EU's normativity. Indeed, Turkey is excluded from European history as an existential threat to Europe. Turks underline their unique in-between position and endorse Turkey as a bridge between the West and the East, and a means to an all-inclusive normative European future, i.e., a post-nationalist EU.

Their bilateral relations is a conundrum in itself. It manifests that there is more to material disputes. It has seen ebbs and flows hitherto. A lack of trust has defined the bilateral relations, despite the fact that both units are committed to and/or prefer cordial relations with the same institutions, namely the EU and NATO. These two units are committed to the same international institutions. Their interests inform them of the prospects of good neighbourly relations. However, their narrativisation of the same events and issues is profoundly at odds. In 2015, 46 per cent of participants of a questionnaire said that Greece should not cooperate with Turkey in Greece (*Public Issue* 2015). In 2016, 77 per cent of participants in another poll said that most of the problems Greece faces emanate from Turkey (*Public Issue* 2016). In Turkey, 53.5 per cent of respondents said that Greece is a threat to Turkey in 2019 (Aydın et al. 2019) whilst 58.9 per cent of participants answered in the same vein according to the annual public perceptions survey of the Centre for Turkish Studies of Kadir Has University a year later (Aydın et al. 2020).

Greeks, albeit European, suffer from less European status, regardless. Greeks are Eastern Orthodox, making them the "wrong kind of Christian". However, Greece is not only located in Europe but also of Europe regardless of being less European, whilst Turkey is located in Europe but not of Europe. Therefore, Greeks are "included/excluded" and culturally belong to Europe. Turks are the existential threat to Europe and Europeanness, including European normativity, since they are non-European and antithetical to anything European. Turks are merely excluded in the "included/excluded spectrum".

Greece has embarked on a quest to Europeanise itself with EU norms, and transformed into a less nationalist and more European Self, albeit not completely Europeanised yet, with the ascent of Costas Simitis to the prime ministry in 1996. Meanwhile, Ankara swings to and fro – with a conservative narrativisation of itself and the vicinity, on the one hand, and with a newly emerging, though lately disrupted, sense of belonging to Europeanisation and European norms, on the other. Greece, an EU member state, is unwilling to offer an incentive to Turkey. Ankara, a non-member state, is afflicted by the EU's double standards favouring Greece and the admission of Cyprus to the EU, regardless of Cypriot Greeks' opposition to the Annan Plan. Greece has been Europeanising, increasing the sense of belonging to Europe, albeit incompletely, and

assuaging its ontological insecurity. On the other hand, Turkey has been undergoing a faltering Europeanisation process and an increasingly weak sense of belonging to Europe, and cannot cope with its ontological insecurity, since the culture-oriented Turcosceptic discourse prevails over the norm-laden discourse in the EU. The impediments to the prospective self-narratives and normalisation of bilateral relations attest to the fact that ontological (in)security matters in bilateral relations.

The thesis argues that pan-European subjectivity is still present in Europe. Hence, the EU has not served as an avenue for a peaceful resolution to the disagreements between Greece and Turkey so far. The culture-oriented discourse and ontology-focused definition of Europe prevent the EU from exerting a normative influence on the periphery. On the one hand, the EU demands complete Europeanisation from candidates. On the other hand, the realisation of total Europeanisation does not transform the newcomer into a core European entity. They are to be less European. In line with this argument, this thesis contends that the EU has turned into an arena where Greece and Turkey quarrel about their material differences. Greece enjoys European support, thanks to its less European status, in its relations with Turkey which is accorded non-European status.

Nevertheless, the less European status is an ontological insecurity trigger for Greece, which further worsens bilateral relations. Moreover, the EU's irresoluteness towards Turkey's EU bid also destabilises bilateral relations. The EU's non-normative interventions in the bilateral relations have further emotionalised them. Hence, the EU's clout provokes ontological insecurity in Greece and Turkey alike, since the EU is non-normative in its involvement in Greece-Turkey bilateral relations, and occasionally favours one side over the other.

Greece is of Europe and culturally European, according to the EU states. Athens is considered less European regardless, since its Europeanisation is incomplete. The less European status is inadmissible, since Greeks are the descendants of Ancient Greece – the inspiration for the Enlightenment. Indeed, Greece suffers from a fragile sense of belonging to Europe, and, thereby, Athens is ontologically insecure on account of this flank state mentality, and Ankara's emotive answer to the "European gaze". The EU

simultaneously regards Turkey as non-European since (1) Ankara is an outsider and (2) Turkey has been on a de-Europeanisation path lately. Turkey's turbulent relations with the EU, and Turkey's EU bid debacle both result in a weakened Turkish attachment to the EU. Indeed, Ankara is afflicted by ontological insecurity, owing to the lack of a sense of belonging to Europe. The deterioration in bilateral relations is a repercussion of the overtly emotionalised and negatively attached nationalisms, and Europe-lessness on the EU's periphery.

Athens did not veto Ankara's EU candidacy in 1999. It was a turning point in Greece's policies towards Turkey. Greece displayed its willingness for further Europeanisation in the form of EU-isation. Accordingly, the EU considered Greece eligible for the Eurozone in 2001, and strengthened Athens' sense of belonging to Europe. Greece not only Europeanised itself but also endorsed Turkey's Europeanisation. Hence Athens' positive attitude towards Ankara.

From 1999 to 2010, the EU followed normative policies, which alleviated existential anxiety in Ankara and Athens. In 1999, Turkey was granted candidacy status in an emotionally stable climate. According to the Turks, the inception of the accession negotiations embodied the recognition of their Europeanness in Europe and, thereby, alleviated Turkey's ontological insecurity. A thaw in Greece-Turkey bilateral relations ensued from Turkey becoming more European and less nationalistic. EU normativity enabled Greece and Turkey to stabilise their bilateral relations in the absence of ontological insecurity.

There is an interrelation between the peaceful bilateral relations and the acuteness of the Hagia Sophia debate. The EU's normative policies provided a safe environment for a thaw between Greece and Turkey. In the same period, a small nationalistic cluster in each society was taking part in the Hagia Sophia debate. However, a downward spiral took place in 2007. The downfall of the EU's normativity heralded the lack of sense of belonging to Europe in Greece, and the debacle of sense of belonging to Europe in Turkey. Greece underwent the Greek debt crisis, and the growth of far-right nationalism, whilst Turkey witnessed the upsurge in the Islamist variety of Turkish nationalism. The

EU temporarily barred the accession negotiations with Turkey on account of the Cyprus dispute, although Ankara reiterated its willingness to further Europeanise and implement EU-isation in the form of reform packages. As EU normativity diminished, the Hagia Sophia debate deepened and broadened with the upsurge in the Islamist variety of nationalism in Turkey.

On the other hand, Greece coped with its ontological insecurity concerning the debate about one of the most significant ontic spaces of Hellenistic culture, i.e., Hagia Sophia, within the confines of Europeanness and European norms and values. Athens categorised and criticised the reconversion as un-European and an affront to global and European norms and values. Their less European status enabled Athens to cope with its ontological insecurity better than non-European Ankara, which could not cope with its ontological insecurity.

There are a number of ontic spaces that Greece and Turkey lay claim to. Hagia Sophia is the most emotionalised ontic space for both. It embodies Greekness with its emotional Mother Church status, emanating from the Byzantine period and its location in the City. It symbolises the grandiose Ottoman past and Turkey's reclaimed sovereignty for Ankara.

As religion is correlated with nationalism, the reconversion of Hagia Sophia was also related to the upsurge in Greek and Turkish nationalisms in the late 2000s. In Turkey, Hagia Sophia is a sacred national symbol. Accordingly, the reconversion implies Ankara's non-acceptance of European superiority. Turkey was rekindling pre-nationalist memories of and emotional attachment to Hagia Sophia as an ontic space of Turkishness. Indeed, Ankara has reappropriated the symbol of secular Turkey by re-sacralising it as a religious ontic space. Either through secular sacralisation in the form of museumification, or religious re-sacralisation in the form of reconversion, ontological insecurity has coerced Turkey to implement both policies.

Greeks have considered Turkey an existential threat for centuries in Greece. De-securitisation of the fear object triggers anxiety in Greece because the existential threat is a main pillar of the Greek self-narrative. Athens' involvement in the Hagia Sophia debate

is not unwarranted. Greece has dealt with its anxiety related to the status of Hagia Sophia within the confines of European values and norms by underlining the value of Hagia Sophia as an ontic space, not only for Greeks but also for Europeans and humanity in general, in contradiction to Turkey's stance.

Ontological security is an approach with a vibrant literature, enabling the analysis of various issues, including bilateral relations, e.g., the Greece-Turkey case. The Greece-Turkey case is an anomaly, because there is room for collaboration as much as enmity, even though animosity pervades the bilateral relations, and the anomaly is in the ontological security area of expertise. However, both states possess a particular representation of the existential threat in their intersubjective consciousness. The deep-rooted antagonistic understanding of the existential threat has a long history fraught with controversial issues as much as commonalities. Such a malign past precludes the resolution of enmities and feuds between two states. It is imperative to address anxieties and ontological insecurities between two sides, in order to settle on a pacific solution under such circumstances.

The thesis assumes that Turkey is an existential threat provoking ontological insecurity in the discourse of Greece, which has been established through decades, and vice versa. Hence, the enmity between Greece and Turkey emanates from emotive reactions and anxieties instead of rational decision-making. Furthermore, the Europeanisation of the bilateral relations further emotionalises the already anxious nature of their relations, and disrupts Ankara's goodwill in its relations with the EU. As then Prime Minister of Turkey, Bülent Ecevit, once said there is, in actuality, no conflict of interest between Greece and Turkey, and both sides would thrive on good neighbourly relations (Ecevit 2015, 210).

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