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Focus: Turkey

Dr. Bo aç Erozan

Turkey and the West: A History of Ambivalence

In his contribution, Dr. Bo aç Erozan argues that the ambivalence in Turkish attitudes toward the west, especially toward Europe and the European Union, is in part a historical legacy. Erozan explains how the Ottomans tried to conquer the West because they saw themselves as superior to the European neighbors. This attitude changed during the 19th century due to the political and economic circumstances. The author sheds light on the difficult relations of the past, in particular during the era of the Ottoman Empire, and the deep-rooted influence of the European imperialism. Afterwards, European states became role models for public life, politics and culture in the Ottoman Empire especially in the period of the Tanzimat reforms. Furthermore, Erozan analyses the relationship of the Turks to Europe in the 20th century and concludes that the Turks do not wish to give up on the West entirely, while still resist becoming fully Western.

Turkey, European Union, Europe, Relationship

Dr. Cengiz Aktar

Turkey's Accession to the European Union – History, Rationale, Constraints and Perspectives

Dr. Cengiz Aktar describes and analyses the history, the present and the future prospects of Turkey's pre-accession process to the European Union. However, he argues that the pre-accession process that started in 1999 has come to a standstill. The EU accession of Turkey has been a long journey, Aktar says. He concludes: "We should always remember that arguments put forth by political forces and lobbies both in Turkey and in Western Europe against Turkey's membership contradict with the vision of Europe as a world power."

Turkey, Pre-Accession Process, European Union, Accession

Dr. Durmu_ Özdemir

Institutional Impact of the EU on Turkey and the 21st Century Scenarios

In his article, Dr. Durmu_ Özdemir focuses on the institutional framework of the accession of Turkey to the European Union. For Özdemir three possible scenarios exist: the scenario with accession, non-accession but staying within Europe and non-accession and formation of a new alliance with Russia, Central Asian countries, Iran, and China.

Turkey, European Union, Accession, Europe

Dr. Rainer Hülse

Don't Blame the "Euro-Turk". Turkey's Nationalism is the Major Obstacle to EU-Accession

Dr. Rainer Hülse argues that a successful EU accession of Turkey can only be realized if both Turkey and Europe accept that national identities are constructed rather than naturally given. Understanding this is the most important precondition

for the EU membership of Turkey. Furthermore, he points out that "Euro-Turks" are not as important for the integration process of Turkey as generally perceived. Because first and foremost, Turkey must demonstrate its ability to overcome its old-fashioned nationalism and instead develop a European, post-national Turkish identity. As a conclusion, Turkishness and Europeanness should not be defined as mutually exclusive.

Turkey, Europe, European Union, Accession, Integration Process, Turkishness, Europeanness, Nationalism, Euro-Turk

Nebi Kesen

Kurdenfrage in der Türkei. Eine aktuelle Bestandsaufnahme

In his contribution, Nebi Kesen discusses one of the most controversial aspects in modern Turkish history: the question of the Kurds. He focuses on the ongoing political and social debate within the Turkish society about the status of the Kurds and the historical roots of the "Kurdish problem". Kesen clarifies that discussing the Kurdish question is no longer deemed a social taboo in Turkey. Furthermore, it is no longer a matter of ethnic boundaries but rather a matter of political views. Thus, the military often exercises a negative influence on the normalisation process. Other international and domestic actors try to exploit the question of the Kurds for their own goals. He states that the leading party of Turkey, the AKP, is unwilling to initiate the legal procedures to an entire opening of a sovereign Kurdish representation because the AKP wants to preserve the Turkish "national unity".

Türkei, Kurden, Kurdenfrage, PKK, AKP

Ya_ar Aydin

National Discourses between Universalisation and Ethnicalisation in Contemporary Turkey

Ya_ar Aydin argues contemporary debates on nation and nationalism in the Turkey show that the importance of the nation as well as the structuring force of nationalism is far from shrinking. In this case, he particularly focuses on the increase of a new kind of ethno-nationalism in the Turkey. This ethno-nationalism may be described as a reaction to universal tendencies within the national discourse as well as to particularistic tendencies at the local level. Therefore, he describes the Ottoman millet system, modern Turkish nationalism and the main political conflicts. One of his conclusions is that the main competitor of Turkish state-nationalism no longer is the Pan-Turkish reactionary nationalism, but a new kind of nationalism which has developed as a response to globalisation with its characteristic elements such as ethno-pluralism, xenophobia, anti-Westernism, anti-Zionism and so on.

Turkey, Universalisation, Ethnicalisation, Nationalism

Dr. Rolf Mützenich / Patrick Fels

Politische Ausrichtungen russischer Neueinwanderer in Israel

In their contribution, the authors focus on the immigration of Russians to Israel. They describe the long-lasting migration process from Russians to the Israeli state after its foundation in 1948. In their analysis the authors point out the several political attitudes of the new Israeli citizens, the Arab reaction as well as the different political movements, their political views in the political landscape and during elections. Thus, the Russian migration to Israel transformed the Israeli society in many aspects, both authors state. Vice versa, the Russian migrants integrated into the Israeli society whereas anti-Arab sentiments have recently intensified.

Israel, Russia, Immigration