

## IMAGES OF TURKEY AND THEIR RELIGIOUS AND GENDER-SPECIFIC CONNOTATIONS

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### ABSTRACT

This article is based on the results of a research project on current configurations of European identity and religiously interpreted cleavages in the EU. The article questions how the European secularised majority expresses its own religious roots and gender relations by means of a gender-specific discourse on the ‘other’ religion. In a qualitative and comparative research design, Austrian and French print media were selected for discourse analysis. The French and Austrian print media discourses analysed here, though, reveal that gender relations and religion are particularly significant. In line with the key methodological principles of the research tradition, the research process can be characterised as non-linear, grounded and reflexive. The study is based on an in-depth analysis of a relatively small number of texts. The individual case studies were drawn together and compared across countries.

The aim of this article was to analyse the relations between the gender-specific construction of the “other” religion and constructions of the “European own”. In both French and Austrian cases, references to Islam as the ‘other religion’ are often used for reinforcing specific national understandings of secularity and laicism.

**Keywords:** Gender, European Union, Religion, Print Media.

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## TÜRKİYE’NİN İMAJI VE BUNUN DİNİ VE TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET ODAKLI ÇAĞRIŞIMLARI

### ÖZET

Bu makale Avrupa kimliğinin güncel yapıları ve AB’deki dini olarak yorumlanan çelişkiler hakkında yapılmış bir araştırma projesinin sonuçlarını temel almaktadır. Makale, laik Avrupa çoğunluğunun kendi dini köklerini ve toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkilerini “öteki” din üzerine toplumsal cinsiyet odaklı bir söylem aracılığıyla nasıl konumlandığını sorgulamaktadır. Niteleyici ve karşılaştırmalı bir araştırma tasarımı içerisinde söylem analizi için Avusturya ve Fransa yazılı basını seçilmiştir. Burada incelenen Avusturya ve Fransa yazılı basınının söylemleri ise toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkileri ile dinin özellikle önemli olduğunu göstermiştir. Araştırma geleneğinin temel yöntemsel esaslarına göre araştırma süreci doğrusal olmayan, sabit ve reflektif olarak nitelenebilir. Çalışma nispeten az sayıda metnin derinlemesine analizine dayanmaktadır. Tekil olay incelemeleri bir araya getirilmiş ve ülkeler arasında karşılaştırılmıştır.

Bu makalenin amacı “öteki” dinin toplumsal cinsiyet odaklı inşası ile Avrupa’nın “kendi din” inşası arasındaki ilişkileri analiz etmektir. Fransız ve Avusturya durumlarının ikisinde de İslam’a “öteki din” olarak yapılan atıflar genellikle laikliğin belirli milli anlayışlarının güçlendirilmesi için kullanılmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimler:** Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Avrupa Birliği, Din, Yazılı Basın.

### 1. Introduction

This article is based on the results of a research project on current configurations of European identity and religiously interpreted cleavages in the EU.<sup>1</sup> One of the central questions was how the European secularised majority expresses its own religious roots and (frequently challenged) gender relations by means of a gender-specific discourse on the ‘other’ religion. In this respect, the debates on Turkey’s EU-accession proved to be very revealing due to their religious connotations such as the appeal to “Christian-occidental

<sup>1</sup> Säkularisierung und geschlechtsspezifische Konstruktion der ‚anderen‘ Religion“ (Secularisation and the gender-specific construct of the ‘other’ religion), research project conducted at the Institute of Conflict Research (Vienna/Austria), funded by the Federal Ministry of Sciences and Research within the framework of the research program >node< New Orientations for Democracy in Europe, 2006-2008.

values” and traditions. Hence, religiously and gender-specifically connoted markers such as the headscarf came to the fore.

In the following, these strategies of othering will be delineated on the basis of the discourse in print media which reflects and reproduces competing societal patterns of interpretation and constructs of the “other”. Because of its wide range, this discourse considerably contributes to general opinion making. In a qualitative and comparative research design, Austrian and French print media were selected for discourse analysis. This comparison is particularly relevant to the research question as, on the one hand, both countries show a vehement rejection of Turkey’s EU-accession, while this rejection, on the other hand, is based upon different historical experiences, different relations between state and church, and different patterns of migration.

Especially with respect to concepts of Europe and “European identity”, the discourse on Turkey’s EU-accession is revealing. Previous research in this field particularly emphasises the European self-understanding expressed through this discourse, where Turkey plays the role of a symbolic border (Giannakopoulos/Maras 2005, 224). Thereby, the construct of a collective European identity works as a means of exclusion (Maderker 2006, 14). In this context, Maderker (2006, 4) also probes the role of identity-frames such as geography, history, or religion, whereas Wimmel (2006; 2005) addresses the transnationality of media discourse as well as the dependency of Turkey-related debates on the respective nationally coded images of Europe.

In most of this literature, the category of gender plays a rather marginal role. The French and Austrian print media discourses analysed here, though, reveal that gender relations and religion (as well as their intersection) are particularly significant. But how do these mechanisms of othering actually work? Further, in what way are they connected to national visions of Europe, national historical images, and national characteristics and understandings of laicism and secularity? These questions will be addressed after a brief methodological overview.

## **2. Methodology and data**

The qualitative analysis of print media presented in this article builds on established approaches of textual analysis (cf. Mayring 2000; Altheide 1996) and, specifically, on the Vienna school of discourse analysis. In line

with the key methodological principles of this research tradition (Fairclough & Wodak 1997: 258-284; cf. Wodak, 2001), our research process can be characterised as non-linear, grounded and reflexive. Contrary to methods such as content analysis or other quantitative methods of text analysis, our study is based on an in-depth analysis of a relatively small number of texts.<sup>2</sup> This analysis was not guided by predefined models, but categories of analysis and ‘conceptual tools’ were developed in an inductive way which implied a constant movement back and forth between theory, methodology and empirical data and thus allowed modifying the theoretical and methodological approach throughout the research process. Finally, beyond media texts only, various *loci* and different sites of the discourse on Turkey’s accession to the EU (including its historical and socio-political context) were looked at, thus allowing a multi-level contextualisation of the data.

The actual discourse analysis was conducted along a set of clearly defined steps. First, a series of broad database searches on a variety of French and Austrian weekly and daily newspapers was conducted. Then, a preliminary screening of this corpus was carried out, and a selection of the exact time period (2004-2006) of research, the newspapers to be analysed and the database search terms<sup>3</sup> to be used was made (see table 1 below). In a further

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<sup>2</sup> It has to be stressed that the ideals established within a certain understanding of social research (such as objectivity, validity and reliability) are not suitable criteria for evaluating the quality of this type of research. Qualitative analysis seeks to reconstruct and understand the specificity of the worlds it purports to study; it does not strive for general and replicable results. Furthermore, the researcher is inextricably part of the research process. Data gathering is always selective, and it is subjective since it necessarily reflects the particular experience of each researcher in his or her field. Doing away with subjectivity, thus, seems to be a futile endeavour, and consequently other criteria for assessing the quality of research have been conceived of such as transparency, groundedness, “indication” or reflexivity (cf. Steinke, 2000; Angrosino & Mays de Pérez, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Given the different languages and possibilities of the software used, we used different search terms for each country. In Austria, they were „türkei and (europa or eu or union) and beitrirt“. In France, the large number of hits was reduced by using some of the more refined options provided by FACTIVE and LEXIS-NEXIS: “((hlead(turquie) or hlead(turc) or hlead(turque) or hlead(turcs) or turco!) and (europe! or union) and LONGUEUR(>400) and (adhesion or candidat!) and not (RUBRIQUE(editorial) or hlead(editorial) or INDEXATION(editorial) or AUTEUR(editorial) or hlead(gaza) or hlead(liban)))”. For editorials, a slightly broader search strategy was used: “((hlead(turquie) or hlead(turc) or hlead(turcs) or turco!

step, selected key texts were analysed in detail (pilot study), and, on this basis, an analytical matrix of categories was developed which was then applied to parts of the corpus (pretest). At this point, the final analysis could be prepared by drawing together the observations from previous pre-analyses and the parallel literature review in order to determine the final sampling procedure and revise the protocol of analysis.

On the basis of this protocol, an analysis sheet was filled out for each fully analysed article (146 in total, see table 1) which would include basic information on date, heading, genre, topics, and a brief summary of the article, as well as an in-depth analysis by categories. In general, not every article in our sub-selection was fully analysed, but, according to the notion of theoretical sampling, saturation of categories was aimed at.<sup>4</sup> This idea was implemented by first performing a comprehensive analysis of three newspapers or magazines in each country (selected on the grounds of diversity and richness of coverage), and then looking at the remaining corpus to test, expand and add to these analyses. Documenting our results, a case study containing a general description of the corpus, information on sampling and a summary of the analysis by categories was written up for each newspaper. Finally, these individual case studies were drawn together and compared across countries.

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or atleast2(turquie)) and (europe! or union) and (adhesion or candidat! or enlargissement) and (RUBRIQUE(editorial) or hlead(editorial) or INDEXATION(editorial) or AUTEUR(editorial)))”.

<sup>4</sup> The notion of theoretical sampling caters to the need of openness and flexibility of the research process on the one hand and avoidance of opportunistic sampling on the other. The key idea is not to look for representativeness in terms of a population but in terms of concepts, i.e. the researcher does not count individual occurrences but he or she looks for incidents and events that will “maximise opportunities to discover variations among concepts” (Strauss & Corbin 1998, p. 201). Clearly, this kind of sampling cannot be designed from scratch but evolves with the research process in which relevant concepts are gradually discovered. This implies that analysis should be performed immediately after data collection in order to guide further sampling choices. While the sampling strategy is open in the beginning, in order to generate as many categories as possible, it becomes more focused over time, aimed at “developing, densifying, and saturating those categories” (ibid., 203).

**Table 1: Corpus and sampling (France)**

	Database hits	Reduced corpus <sup>1</sup>	Full analysis	Partial analysis / subsumed
Libération	259	70	9	11
Le Figaro	526	65	21	18
L'Humanité	199	38	4	7
Le Monde	267	72		5
Le Nouvel Observateur	115 <sup>2</sup>	29	3	3
Le Point	118 <sup>3</sup>	26	6	-
L'Express	177	24	2	-
	1661	325	45	44

**Table 2: Corpus and sampling (Austria)**

	Database hits	Reduced corpus	Full analysis	Partial analysis / subsumed
Profil	274 <sup>4</sup>	156	17	8
Die Presse	965	99	27	28
Kurier	906	84	28	32
Neue Kronen Zeitung	726	39	26	6
Format	106	16	3	-
	2977	394	101	74

### 3. Gender-Specific Othering in the National Contexts

#### 3.1. The French Discourse

The analysis of the French discourse shows that Turkey's ability to become an EU member state is judged first and foremost on the basis of rights and standards which in theory any country is able to achieve: human rights, minority rights, democracy, the rule of law, and laicism (which in the French context is often used synonymously with secularity). The emphasis on these

universal criteria and their combination with culturally defined values may vary according to the political orientation of the respective medium analysed, but nonetheless they build a common ground in the French discourse. Thus, Turkey's ability to join the EU is seen before the background of a civilising mission (of France) which – also via laicism (Guénif-Souilamas 2006, 39) – could abolish gender inequality in Islamic countries like Turkey and thus make them potential EU-members.

The perspective of the former colonial power trying to export its standards to “foreign countries” becomes visible also with regard to gender-specific othering. Such strategies of othering can frequently be found in the context of articles on gender relations and especially the inner-Turkish struggle for private rights. The other seems to reveal itself in the way sexual and family lives are organised, or in the way “deviant behaviour” such as homosexuality and adultery are politically dealt with. Here, a struggle of women and minorities is traced, and this struggle is described either as holding the promise of heroic success or as doomed to failure (according to the respective position taken in the debates on accession). The national French understanding of Europe as a “mission civilisatrice” – specific to the French discourse – can easily be recognised in these gender specific strategies of othering, where the central point of reference is the fulfilment of universal standards, notably not only in pro- but by and large in contra-argumentation, too.

This thesis can be exemplified with the presentation of Leyla Zana in the corpus of *L'Humanité* (mentioned 67 times in 194 texts). Leyla Zana, a Kurdish politician and activist, was sentenced to 15 years of prison for treason and support of a terrorist organisation in 1994. In the context of *L'Humanité*, she stands for the struggle of the oppressed against the Turkish regime in the name of universal human rights. Zana represents a positively connoted, non-traditional and hence active form of femininity, and by the same token she becomes an icon of a pro-European Turkish civil society. As an antipole to this positive notion, *L'Humanité* sees the militarily dominated Turkish regime which is portrayed in terms of a barbaric masculinity. It is not least for solidarity with victims like Leyla Zana that a support of Turkey's EU-accession is advocated by this paper.

The dichotomisation of progressive and regressive forces in inner-Turkish relations which becomes evident in this example is characteristic for the French corpus. The dividing line of the two camps sometimes corresponds

with the differentiation between the secular and the religious. The relationship between those can be coded by means of asymmetric counterconcepts such as tradition/modernity<sup>5</sup> which, as in the following example, are linked to a set of other concepts and evaluations such as: the modern, European and open-minded on the one hand, regression, anachronism, exclusion, discrimination on the other.

“(…) the immense improvements, as achieved during the last years in an intensive process of democratisation, have shown the great vitality of a Turkish civil society already being fit for Europe. (...) European by compassion and understanding, Turkey marches towards the EU, but the AKP which has accelerated this progress may in the end also be its brake.”<sup>6</sup>

This critique of the AKP and the majority society, which is predicated as “Islamic”, is particularly strong in reports on concrete victims of the regime, notably the Catholic minority (*Libération* 28.2.2006) or homosexuals (*Libération* 9.12.2004). The dichotomy of the laicist and the religious, the latter being flatly suspected of Islamism, becomes a one-sided picture in terms of black and white and manifest constructs of the enemy. While laicism is associated with Europe/diversity/tolerance/peace/rights, the religious stand for intolerance/discrimination and potential violence. Such black and white dichotomies correspond to French imaginations of a diametrical opposition of non-religious, laicist powers on the one hand and exclusively religious, anti-laicist powers on the other hand. This image hardly corresponds to the actual constellations in Turkey as described in the academic literature.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The counterconcepts tradition/modernity and progress/regression are also used in other texts concerning Turkey, e.g. with regard to minority rights or lawsuits against intellectuals, whereas on the side of regression there is not only Islam, but also nationalism and the military.

<sup>6</sup> (...) les immenses progrès accomplis ces dernières années dans un intense processus de démocratisation [...] a montré la grande vitalité d'une société civile turque qui vit déjà pleinement à l'heure européenne. (...) Européenne de coeur et de raison, la Turquie marche vers l'UE, mais l'AKP qui a accéléré ce processus pourrait aussi en être le frein. (*Libération* 28.9.04)

<sup>7</sup> Besides Turkish nationalism, Sunnite Islam is considered an important legitimating factor of the Kemalist state, religious homogeneity being desirable as a means for construing national identity and territorial integrity (Karakas 2007, 10). Particularly since the military coup in 1980 the Islamic civil society was considerably furthered by the laic state and the Department for Religious Affairs generously budgeted (cf. Caglar 2003, 208).

A model of EU integration along the lines of a multicultural and multi-religious EU is explicitly declined in the French discourse. In analogy with the French Republic, the European political bond is not imagined as an expression of given pre-political (e.g. religious, cultural) identities; on the contrary, entering the sphere of the political demands the constitution as “citoyen”, viz. the abstraction of “private” (religious, *etc.*) convictions and values in the political public.

This background may explain why the role of “religion” is discussed so frequently in the French corpus. Furthermore, religion can be understood in various ways. In some contexts, it is religion in general which is decontextualised and constructed as the other of modernity and a secular (laic) politics. This religion *tel quel* mostly bears very negative connotations, and is seen as a worldview which always contains the seed of ideologisation, exclusion, and fundamentalism (e.g. *Le Figaro* 24.5.04).<sup>8</sup>

More frequently, however, the term “religion” means primarily the other religion, namely Islam. Here, two main types can be distinguished: In the first one, “our” (French, European) model of secular politics is understood to be explicitly a-religious and to result from a deliberate disruption with the own Christian tradition.<sup>9</sup> In this case, Islam appears as an obstacle to the process of Turkey’s accession to the EU. This obstacle, though, could be overcome by a triumph of the laic powers in Turkey over religious traditions. In a second type, on the other hand, the secular political model of “the West” itself appears as the outgrowth and expression of “our” specific cultural and religious identity as well as historical development.<sup>10</sup> The dif-

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<sup>8</sup> L’entrée de la Turquie dans l’Europe serait une divine surprise pour les intégristes de toutes confessions et de tous pays qui voient dans la crise actuelle des démocraties libérales une occasion inespérée de prendre leur revanche. (*Le Figaro* 24.5.04)

<sup>9</sup> Certes, sans le christianisme d’Occident, l’Europe n’aurait pas existé, telle du moins qu’on la connaît. Mais, précisément, elle est telle parce qu’elle a relativisé et surmonté sa détermination confessionnelle. / Ce qui fait problème entre l’Europe et la Turquie, ce n’est pas l’islam ou le christianisme, c’est le fondement profane du lien social et des institutions. La Turquie aura toute sa place dans l’UE dans la mesure où elle aura su à son tour relativiser et dépasser sa définition en termes religieux ... (Libération, 19.7.2004)

<sup>10</sup> Un autre argument a été clairement exprimé par Alain Besançon : « Le monde turc est étranger à toutes les grandes expériences qui ont fondé l’Europe en tant que civilisation, à savoir l’héritage de l’empire romain, la conversion au christianisme latin, les innovations du Moyen Age, la Renaissance, la Réforme, la contre-Réforme,

ference between Europe and “Islamic Turkey” is then seen not as one of temporal development but of founding “values”, which implies an *a priori* incompatibility. Hence, the question of accession is reframed as a problem of the “occidentalisation of Islam” (*Le Figaro* 1.12.2006) or of Turkey’s “conversion”, as a text in *Le Figaro* (15.12.2004) puts it in a portrayal of Premier Erdogan (representing the whole country).

### 3.2. Austrian Discourse

The Austrian discourse differs considerably from the French one. One of the main differences is the extraordinary presence of scenarios of danger and threat in the Austrian case. These images of threat are diverse and can be found in very different contexts and argumentations (arguing both in favour of as well as against an EU-accession of Turkey). In some instances, the threat of Turkey’s accession to the EU is even imagined as an existential one: images of an imminent “occupation” of Europe/Austria by an Islam-dominated Turkey and of being overwhelmed by Turkey’s demographic strength are quite frequent; fears from migration and the threat of Islamic fundamentalism are common motives. Furthermore, the issue of Turkey is often dealt with as a symptom of a critical state of the EU, characterised by the crises of constitutional reform, finances, and enlargement. Hence, it is argued that an accession of Turkey would overburden the EU and thus signify a “lethal blow” to the EU, while the latter seems to follow a “suicidal drive” and gets caught in a “Turkey-trap” (*Die Presse*). The discourse is about “devastating consequences”, the “beginning of the end of the EU” (*Kurier*), a new “Turkish storm” and “Turkish war” (*Neue Kronen Zeitung*). The list of examples could be continued.

Gender-specific othering and the construction of the “other” religion also work within the general framework of constructions of threat, while rights and standards rarely play a similar role as in the French corpus. In some articles, the fear of a possible erosion of equality and already achieved emancipation is crucial, as in the following example:

“Women who for a long time had to fight for their rights in Christian Europe – the struggle not yet being resolved – cannot with open eyes agree that the fundamental rights be hollowed out in a confederation currently struggling for its values. They have to revolt against this also on the ground

of solidarity with women in the Islamic world.”<sup>11</sup> (*Die Presse*, 1.8.2005)

This construct of alterity is carried to extremes in letters to the editor (mostly by male writers) in the *Neue Kronen Zeitung* – an Austrian tabloid with enormous coverage – where gender relations are dealt with as a particular potential of threat. The exclusion of Turkey is brought about by introducing the problem of gender division, which is considered a thing of the past in the West:

“I don’t want a binational ‘new homeland’ with Islamic holidays and gender division together with the veiling of women. I want a community of Europeans on the basis of the Latin and not of the Arab and the Hadsch. (...) I don’t want immigration of mostly illiterate Anatolian wives whose children, as first-graders in Vienna, are not able to follow the classes.”<sup>12</sup>

In this example, the author seemingly cares about the rights and emancipation of women. On the other hand, his/her rejection of the “immigration of mostly illiterate Anatolian wives” reveals that the main motivation is keeping out the “others”.

Variations among stereotypical images of Turkey can be demonstrated by analysing the various ways in which Premier Erdogan is portrayed as a typical representative of Turkey: The Turkish Prime Minister is predicated as an irrational, brutal, Islamist, and misogynist despot (*Die Presse*, 7.10.2005), in another case he is represented as a charming conqueror who knows how to deceive women and who consequently tries to deceive Europe (*Profil*, 13.12.2004). Furthermore, *quasi* in a counter-discourse, Erdogan represents a heroic and rational statesman who sticks by his conviction (Islam) but, as a secular hero, simultaneously leads his country into Europe (*Profil*, 20.3.2006). Sometimes, comparisons and oppositions of laic and Islamic/ Islamist positions can be found, sometimes also differentiated explications,

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<sup>11</sup> „Frauen, die im christlichen Europa lange um ihre Rechte ringen mussten - der Kampf ist noch lange nicht ausgestanden -, können nicht sehenden Auges zustimmen, dass in einem europäischen Staatenbund, der gerade um seine Werte ringt, ihre Grundrechte in der Lebenspraxis ausgehöhlt werden. Sie müssen dagegen auch in Solidarität mit den Frauen der islamischen Welt aufbegehren.“ (Walterskirchen, *Die Presse* 1.8.2005)

<sup>12</sup> <sup>16</sup>Ich will nicht, dass wir eine binationale „neue Heimat“ bekommen mit islamischen Feiertagen und Geschlechtertrennung samt Verhüllung der Frauen. Ich will eine Gemeinsamkeit der Europäer über das Lateinische und nicht über das Arabische und die Hadsch. (...) Ich will keine Einwanderung großteils analphabetischer anatolischer Ehefrauen, deren Kinder dann zu 25% als Volksschülerklassler in Wien dem Unterricht nicht folgen können. (*Neue Kronen Zeitung* Leserbrief 10.2.06)

but not as recurring models. On the whole, the image of Turkey is outlined only indistinctly, while the image of Islam is a more or less monolithic block – both, however, are presented in terms of danger and threat (e.g. as a “Moloch”, an “indigestible chunk”, a “bottomless pit”, the “biggest religion in the EU”, *etc.*). Human and minority rights, democracy, the rule of law, and secularity play a comparatively minor role in the Austrian print media. Even if they are put to the fore it becomes evident that the authors’ intentions are not about these standards but in fact about other criteria of exclusion, as in the following example: “Seen from a democratic perspective, Turkey is not European. In terms of freedom of religion, Turkey is European at best on paper. Geographically, Turkey is not European. And even if it were: the EU has to be able to choose who is fits and who does not.”<sup>13</sup>

Turning to a discourse-historical perspective, specific Austrian images of Europe and history can easily be traced: The historical image of the Turkish siege of Vienna has been passed on to the present, various legends being told until today about the perfidiousness and cruelty on the part of the Turks<sup>14</sup> and about the particular courage and outstanding faith in God on the part of the local Austrian population (Kritzinger/Steinbauer 2005, 108ff.). Images of Turks can also be found in artworks in and on buildings and on historic articles of daily use. Just to mention one example, the “Pummerin” – the biggest bell of Vienna’s St. Stephens Cathedral – shows scenes of the Turkish siege; initially, the bell was cast in metal stemming from Turkish cannons (ibid.). Correspondingly, terms used in the corpus analysis such as “Turkish storm” and “Turkish war” recall events dating back several centuries.

At the same time, the image of Turkey and of the Turks is influenced by the migration of so-called “guest workers” in the 1960s, when male workers were recruited especially in economically weak regions in eastern Turkey (Bauböck 1996, 13). Hence, topoi such as “millions of destitute Turks moving in” (*Kurier*) can be seen as a mixture of old and new representations of Turks.

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<sup>13</sup> „Die Türkei ist demokratiepolitisch nicht Europa. Die Türkei ist in Sachen Religionsfreiheit allenfalls auf dem Papier Europa. Die Türkei ist geografisch nicht Europa. Und wenn sie es wäre: Die EU muss sich aussuchen können, wer zu ihr passt. (*Kurier*, 25.6.2005)

<sup>14</sup> Many of these legends are much older than the Turkish sieges and go back to old Christian myths on Mohammed, Islam, and the Turks (Kuran-Burcoglu 2005, 31).

### 3.3. Contrasting National Narratives

Comparing the Austrian and French discourse, competing conceptions of Europe can be highlighted. In historical perspective, the Habsburg and the French understandings of Europe constituted two conflicting concepts. The clash of these two images of Europe and its after-effects are pointed out by Gilbert Weiss (2002) using the example of Grillparzer's play *King Ottokar: His Rise and Fall* (1825). For the Austrian "national" poet Grillparzer, Napoleon as well as revolutionary France with its civilising mission constituted the "fever of a sick time" which threatened to eliminate the old cultural cosmos (ibid.). The play ends in a denial of reality manifested in the cry "Long live Austria! Habsburg forever!". In 1955, the Burgtheater, Vienna's biggest and most well-known theatre, re-opened its doors with *King Ottokar* thus making the play "an intellectual founding act of the Second Republic of Austria" (ibid.).

According to Weiss, the reversal of the Austrian role with regard to Europe works as a trauma in Austrian history, and the opposition to the civilising project is effective until today (ibid.). The results of our analysis point in the same direction. They show a pathos of the Occident as (Christian) cultural mission as well as a mixture of powerlessness and megalomania. Hence, we can draw the conclusion that both in France and in Austria the construct of the "other" religion has the function of clarifying the own national understanding of secularity and laicism. Thus, it becomes evident that the research question concerning the "European own" can only be answered in the context of national peculiarities, since processes of gender-specific othering are also connected to nationally coded constructions of the "other".

### 4. Conclusion

It was the aim of this article to analyse the relations between the gender-specific construction of the "other" religion and constructions of the "European own". As a major result, it was shown how the question of belonging to the EU/ Europe (as posed by Turkey's accession) points to the national also with regard to this specific perspective, *viz.* gender-specific othering also runs along the lines of national narratives. In France, gender relations are discussed by and large following the question of implementation of an implicitly laic "mission civilisatrice", where the struggle of women for their rights within Turkey is strongly focussed on. In Austria, by contrast,

images of the other are ones of threat and danger, and the discourse is much more about defending what is already achieved, notably the progress made in terms of gender equality. In both cases, on the other hand, references to Islam as the ‘other religion’ are often used for reinforcing specific national understandings of secularity and laicism.

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## Footnotes

- 1 Texts irrelevant to our research questions were deleted from the sample, namely articles on domestic topics (such as conflicts between political parties), on EU/ international politics in general (such as EU enlargement), and on various topics related to Turkey other than accession (such as Cyprus, Iraq war, etc.).
- 2 This magazine covered by the database (FACTIVA) only since May 8, 2004. Searchterms: “turqu\*/f80/ or atleast3 turku\*”.
- 3 Searchterms (LEXIS-NEXIS) for Le Point and L’Express: “(atleast3(turquie) or atleast3(turc!)) or HLEAD(turquie) or HLEAD(turc!) and (europ! or UE) and length(>200)”.
- 4 Given the low number of hits compared to the other media, broader searchterms were used for Profil: “(Türkei and (europa or eu or union) and beitrirt\*) or (Türkei and (europa or eu or union) not (\*beitrirt or beitrirt\*))”.

