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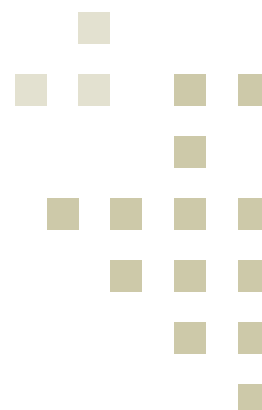
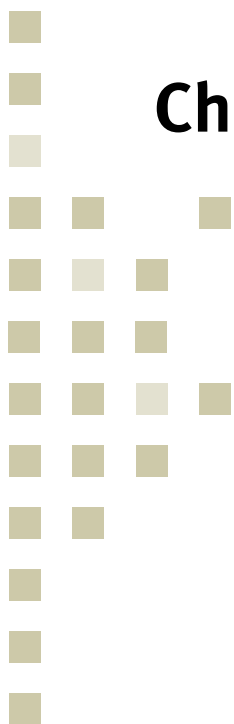
European Identity and Its Changing Others

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European Identity and Its Changing Others

Iver B. Neumann

Based on a speech to the EU summit fringe conference 'Constructing New Identities in Transforming Europe: Enlargement and Integration: Are They Compatible?', University of Helsinki, 5 October

[Abstract] Taking its clue from Finnish experiences with identity politics, this lecture introduces the concept of collective identity. Collective identity is about forging an acting 'we'. It constitutes the polis, and is therefore basic to any politics. Constituting the polis is a relational act: the group in question constitutes itself by drawing up and maintaining boundaries towards other groups. Drawing on these insights, the bulk of the lecture discusses European identity in term of Europe's relations to some of its constituting others. Pointing to the importance of not sealing itself off from its Muslim citizens and neighbours, the lecture ends with a plea for Turkish EU membership.

European Identity and Its Changing Others

It is not only a great pleasure, but also somewhat intimidating to be invited to speak about European identities here in Finland. There are good reasons for that. Finland's historical experience shines with successful identity-building projects. Different political groups have had differing experiences with the importance of collective identity formation. The greater the number of other political groups that have been involved in a group's own identity formation, the closer the relations with those other groups have been; and the more varied they have proven to be, the more well versed in the importance of identity formation that group has become.

Finland is extremely well equipped with varied historical experiences that make for self-reflection. I am not thinking primarily about the country's experiences with national awakening in the 19th century and the relevance of Sweden and Russia here. Although these experiences were both important and intense, several other European nations have parallel histories in this regard.

No, I am thinking about how the sovereign state of Finland has an unbroken history of consciously linking identity projects to its foreign policy. It was present from the very start, in the country's post-independence attempts to forge ties to other newly independent post-Russian empire states, the Baltic States and Poland. When that did not work out, in 1923, Finland embarked on a prolonged and eminently successful identity project to become a Nordic country. It was there in Finland's impressive effort to pay back loans to the United States – an effort that did much to consolidate the foundations for Finland's Western identity. And it was of course there in Finland's dash to join EFTA. Today, when Finland's European identity has become so firmly established that no-one asks about history and credentials any more, it is perhaps only those of us who are professionally interested who can remember all the political acumen that was required for Finland to achieve EFTA membership. Moreover, as a precondition for Finland's joining the EU, that EFTA membership should not be underestimated.

Most recently, Finland's tradition of being aware of the importance of identity-building paid off in 1994, when the entire country mobilised for EU membership. In 1993, I was involved in conducting some interviews in the foreign ministries along the Baltic rim, to check on preparations for the ensuing wave of Europeanization.¹ In Sweden, our questions about preparations

¹ See Olav F. Knudsen & Iver B. Neumann (1995) *Subregional Security Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Area. An Exploratory Study* Oslo: NUPI-report no. 189.

were laughed at; the attitude was that Sweden would simply take EU membership in its stride. No need to worry about identity building and all that. In Finland, by contrast, everything was planned and prepared for down to a 't'. Diplomats – even those stationed abroad – had been briefed and trained, up and down, in and out, as to how the EU system worked. As a result, a prepared Finland took to the Brussels-based politics of the EU like a duck takes to water. Not everybody did. Finland understands the importance of being in the thick of things, of coming across as belonging. So I feel that importing an outside, like myself, to speak to Finns about the political importance of identity is a bit like carrying coals to Newcastle.

Moreover, Finland has successfully played its hand in the game of European identity formation. I was working as a policy planner in the Norwegian Foreign Ministry when Finland launched its Northern Dimension Initiative – and I clearly recall thinking that Norwegian diplomats were green with envy. Up until that initiative, Finland had done well enough with its Rovaniemi Process, but Norway felt that it was one step ahead with its Barents region-building project. And then Finland used its newly acquired EU membership to lift the game up to a level where Norway as an outsider had no way of following. While Finland was playing the entire Northern field, including cities from St. Petersburg to Vilnius, Norway was left struggling in the icy Arctic backwaters.

My final reason for feeling a bit out of place with this assignment concerns the academic merits of Finns who have been working on identity formation. Truly ground-breaking work has been done. In Geography, there is the work of people like Anssi Paasi, Pami Aalto and Sami Moisio. In International Relations, there are figures like Pertti Joenniemi, Teija Tiilikainen and Vilho Harle. So why should I be standing here before you, given all the local expertise? In fact, the reason is intimately linked to the logic of identity formation. Every group needs an outside perspective to be recognized. Identity resides in the nexus between the in-group and the out-group, those who know how to do things and those who don't, the civilized and the barbarians, the self and the other. In the final analysis, only the outsider can recognize and validate us. So, once again, my congratulations on all your past achievements. Their very existence establishes the importance of identity formation to politics. I should now like to focus on the nature of that importance, and on some challenges that lie ahead for European identity as such.

Let us turn to Plato, and his dialogue *The Statesman*. Plato is interested in what it is that is specific to the work of the statesman, and by implication, to politics. His answer is that politics is the overarching or perhaps better undergirding art of regulating the relationship between the one and the many. The *polis*, Plato suggests, is a web, a weave. The calling of the statesman is to finish this weave. The resultant cloth should be a perfect and all-inclusive mix of the bold and the prudent. Such a weave, such a political community, Plato concludes, would be the most shining one of them all.²

2 This then we declare to be the completion of the web of political action, which is created by a direct intertexture of the brave and temperate natures, whenever the royal science has drawn the two minds into communion with one another by unanimity and friendship, and having perfected the noblest and best of all the webs which political life admits, and enfolded therein all other inhabitants of cities, whether slaves or freemen, binds them in one fabric and governs and presides over them, and, in so far as to be happy is vouchsafed

To Plato, then, politics concerns tying together the threads of personal fates into a weave where they are all complementary, joined in a community of practices and of fate. This is collective identity formation as seen from above. As seen from below, it is all about belonging and acting in accordance with pre-existing scripts. We find this theme throughout the political theory canon. To the contract theorists, for example, people alienate their natural state in order to forge a community. Underlying all the questions of everyday politics, of what kind of constitution a community should have, how resources should be allocated etc. we find the basic question of who we are. Groups are key to human life. The larger they are, the more imperative to cohesion it is that there exists some kind of glue, some markers of commonness, some integration.

It is impossible to act collectively without having some kind of preconceived scheme of who is acting. This problem grows with the size of the group. Any workplace, for example, is rife with occasions where the idea and practices of commonality are repeated, over and over. Why – so that the employees should feel good? That too, for feeling commonality is one of the things that make most people feel good. But the key thing is that the feeling of commonality rests on a repertoire of knowledge about when and how to act together. It so happens that this knowledge is also a key part of productive power. It follows that a collective that knows itself to be a ‘we’ is simply more productive, with a larger capacity for action that it would have had if the we-feeling had been weaker. So, as people have been pointing out since Plato, this we-feeling is a good thing all around.

However, humans are not bees or ants. There exists no group-mind that can orchestrate the behaviour of each and every individual, so the group will necessarily be heterogeneous in some degree. This in turn means that much of the feeling of commonality will be imagined, not actually lived. Take the example of two people who love each other and decide to set up a common household. Let’s say that they are both Finns. Along comes December. Each of the two will have very clear ideas of what Christmas is. They will probably agree that they both know what a Finnish Christmas is, and how it should be celebrated. But what happens once they get into the details? Should we go to church? Should we have a Christmas tree? How should the tree be decorated? Should we put the presents underneath? When are the presents to be opened? And what are we going to eat? When are we going to celebrate with your family, and with my family? You see where this is heading – when it comes right down to it, your partner knows nothing about what a real Christmas entails after all. She just *thinks* she knows, and you yourself were foolish enough to imagine that she would know. Close up, culture is not really shared. Even when we imagine that we share it, there are differences. Collective identity is furthered by the existence of common practices, but these practices are common in the sense that they are *thought* to be the same, not that they actually *are* the same. Collective identity is imagined – and it is no less real for that. After all, it hardly makes sense to chuck out your partner just because she does not know how to celebrate Christmas. The partner-

to a city, in no particular fails to secure their happiness.’ (Plato: The Statesman, transl. by Benjamin Jowett; online at <http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/p/plato/p71st/complete.html>)

ship continues, despite her abysmal ignorance as to the proper Finnish way to celebrate Christmas.

Collective identities are also patchy. You may be a Finn even if you celebrate Orthodox Christmas 13 days late (as seen from the majority viewpoint), if you don't celebrate it at all (you are, perhaps, a Finnish Jehovah's Witness), or even if you celebrate some other holiday concurrently (you are, say, a Finnish Jew). Collective identities are what social scientists call fuzzy sets or, following Ludwig Wittgenstein, family resemblances. There is no one physical or cultural trait that guarantees cultural similarity, say blonde hair or language competence. Being a member of a group is a case of knowing it when you see it, as social anthropologists say when they are pressed into a corner.

Collective identities are also relational. Where some groups are concerned, being a member of that group is compatible with being a member of another group, no questions asked. No one in their right mind would argue that it is not possible to be a male and a Finn at the same time, or a Finn and a Nordic. In the first case, the universe of identities (genders) is complementary; in the second case, the universe of identities (territorial political communities) is nested. In the case of territorial political communities, identities that are now obviously nested may not have been so in the past. Finnish Nordic-ness a hundred years ago is a case in point. So is the European-ness of, say, an EU country like Malta. As a Norwegian, I live with the question of possible compatibility between national identity and European identity every day. Prior to the referendum in 1994, vast numbers of pamphlets and leaflets were issued about Norway's relationship to Europe. Most of them were kitted out with the Norwegian flag and the EU flag on the cover. The implication seemed to be that there was somehow a choice to be made between them: either the one, or the other. By contrast, in Helsinki, the Finnish and the EU flag may be flown side by side, signalling the compatibility and 'natural' nestedness of the two entities.

In the case of Norwegian and European identity, the relationship between them is highly contested. To many people, being Norwegian depends on maintaining a safe distance to the EU. The EU is what we may call a 'constitutive Other' of Norwegian identity. All identities have their constitutive Others. You are a male because you are not a female, a female because you are not a male. The cultural infatuation with homosexuality, transvestism and transsexualism is due, I would argue, to the way in which these practices remind us that something that we are told is preordained by nature is actually dependent on culture. Identities are culturally made. At the boundaries of any collective identity, be it one of gender or one of territorial political community, there exists a continuous need to shore up and perpetuate that identity. Collective identities may be imagined and patchy, but since they are relational, there always exist other identities which confirm them by being different. Which these Others are, will vary within the group, and also historically. In the 1930s, a member of the Lappo movement and, say, a Swedish-speaking liberal living in Helsinki would have had different ideas about who the constitutive Others of Finnish identity were. Today, a German nationalist living in Hessen and a French Algerian-born liberal living in Paris will probably not see eye to eye on who the constitutive Others of European

identity are, either. But, by necessity, the constitutive Others will be there in some fashion – no inside without an outside, no in-group without out-groups.

The point that collective identity is relational, that it is the group's relations with other groups that sustain the group itself, is an old one. But in the decades following the Second World War, this insight was elaborated upon in ways which made it into the very cornerstone of social analysis of collective identity. Philosophers like Emmanuel Levinas, Simone de Beauvoir and Jacques Derrida did the theoretical groundwork. In terms of method, however, the breakthrough came within the social science that has specialised in identity since in its inception, namely social anthropology. In Bergen, in 1969, Fredrik Barth and associates published *Ethnic groups and boundaries*, where the key point was that the maintenance of ethnic groups could be studied from the borders and inward, and specialized in terms of which differences the groups themselves saw as constituting them. From that point onwards, social anthropology never looked back; and over the past thirty-odd years, the other social sciences have followed suit.

The point that identity could be studied along the boundaries has various implications for the way in which we think about European identity. First, it means that attempts to draw up a list of historic and social traits from some outside vantage point – that of the Christian theologian, for example, or that of the Western philosopher – have limited value. I would hold that it is impossible to find a cultural trait that is shared by all Europeans and not shared by any non-Europeans. It is, for example, true that the traditional costumes of most Europeans look about the same – but you find similar costumes elsewhere. It is true that there is a European food tradition, but it is internally split, you also find it elsewhere, and in Europe itself it lives side by side with other food traditions, such as the Turkish and Chinese ones. Similar points may be made for all other cultural traits.

A second implication of the fact that identity is relational concerns the compatibility between European and national identities. The more similar the two kinds of identities are, the more averse the relation between them. The more different they are, the less chance that they will be activated at the same time, and the less chance of a clash between them. Here we have the reason why the European Commission's attempts during the 1970s to build a 'European identity' on the basis of a European flag, a European hymn etc. were so blatantly unsuccessful, and in fact probably counterproductive. This way of building identity had long since been cornered by nation states. Building a European identity by means of the same symbols in competition with national ones invited competition, with nation states being the home team. Not a good idea.

A third implication of the relational nature of identity is that the size of cultural differences depends not on some inherent trait, but on how different they are perceived to be. Finnish and Swedish belong to two different language families, whereas Swedish and Norwegian are linguistically very similar indeed. As identity markers, however, all three languages are equally good. To an outsider, the differences between Serb folk music and Croat folk music seem miniscule. To Serbs and Croats themselves, however, they are literally worlds apart – however close they may be musically, they are constitutive of a difference of identity. This point – that it is the difference as

perceived by the group itself that is so central to cultural difference – has important bearings on European identity. It means, for example, that all the things which are similar between Europe and its neighbours may count for nothing if everyone involved insists on the differences, not the similarities. Take a key marker like religion. What does it help to point out that Islam and Christianity come in many varieties, that they are of common origin ('we are all sons of Abraham'), that they share many structural similarities (monotheism and patriarchy, to mention but two), if most people involved see religion as a razor-sharp divider? This is what makes people like Samuel Huntington, Osama bin Laden and Jean-Marie Le Pen so dangerous – not because they point to real differences, but because they insist that these differences should be constitutive of who we are, and central to social and political life.

Speaking as a social anthropologist, I would say that the cultural boundaries of Europe are decidedly fuzzy. As Sami Moisio has pointed out in a recent article, if you look at your Euro currency notes, the authoritative map of Europe shown there is fuzzy at the boundaries, and rightly so.³ There are family resemblances between EU countries and their neighbours all around. Take the Eastern direction. It is impossible to draw a hard and fast line somewhere and say this is where Europe ends. The old Habsburgs used to insist that Asia started east of the Ringstrasse – the beltway circling Vienna. Balts and Rumanians will tell you that it starts across the river, in Ukraine. So will most Poles, if they are not of the expansive historical type that consider themselves to be Jagiellonian Poles, of a kind with Ukrainians. In that case, they will tell you that Asia starts in Russia, as will most Ukrainians. Most Russians will, however, insist that Asia starts somewhere off to their East and South.

In the southeastern corner of Europe, it is the same story. Austrians will tell you that Asia starts in Slovenia, Slovenes will point to Croatia, Croatians will point to Serbia, Serbs will point to Bosnia and Bosnians will point to Turkey. Most Greeks, and certainly Cypriots, will eagerly join in to support the idea that Europe stops at their doorstep.

Head south, and you find a watered-down version of the same tendency – watered-down by the waters of the Mediterranean. Moroccans aspire to EU membership, and since being European is an explicit prerequisite, they have to play up their European side. They are in no doubt, however, about the non-European status of their neighbours further south.

There are two quite different points to be made about this tendency always to elide Europe's boundary with your own. The first one is that these arguments are very hard to sustain. I have yet to see, say, a Romanian case for Romania's Europeanness and Ukraine's non-Europeanness, or a Slovene case for Slovenia's Europeanness and Croatia's non-Europeanness that would stand an intellectual chance outside the nation state inside which it was hatched. Any outsider who has attended service in a Romanian Orthodox and a Ukrainian Uniate Church, or who has eaten a Slovene and a Croatian meal, will question why one of the two should be seen as more European than the other. But the other point is the exact opposite: if enough peo-

3 Sami Moisio (2002) 'Rajat, identiteetti ja valta: laajentumisen poliittinen maantiede'. In Tapio Raunio & Teija, Tiilikainen (eds.) *Euroopan rajat. Laajentuva Euroopan unioni* Helsinki: Gaudeamus. Thanks to Katri Pynnöniemi for translating.

ple adopt these differences as constitutive of Europe, then that becomes a social fact, and thereby self-fulfilling. This is about forging a 'we', this is identity politics at work, and the stakes are high.

If Europe's relationships to its Others is constitutive of its identity, a tour d'horizon of them all should tell us something about the present state of European identity. Such a journey confronts us with an immediate problem, however, and it has to do with the lay of the land. Europe's identity is tied to Europe's relations not only to its neighbours, but also to more far-flung powers. Furthermore, there are other kinds of relationships that are also highly important. Take Europe's relationship to its own past. To some people, European identity is all about Christianity, so the Middle Ages present themselves as a particularly illustrious period. To others, the European heritage has to do with the triumph of secularism over faith, so Enlightenment thinking is the cornerstone and intellectual life in the Age of Enlightenment an ideal.

To the east, there is Russia. Russia and Europe have a continuous history of some 350 years in which both parties have debated their degree of familiarity. They are still at it. At present, I would argue, the key theme of this conversation concerns the role of the state. In Europe, sovereignty has been pooled, and universalist standards of various kinds are making ever larger encroachments on politics. Human rights, yes – but here I am thinking first and foremost about state–society relations. In Europe, the state is stepping back, not necessarily in the sense that it becomes less important, but in the sense of delegating more and more to other bodies, and to its citizens. We are seeing a turn towards indirect rule, orchestrated by the state.

Not so in Russia, where the state is in the ascent, and the tendency for it is to rule more things more directly. If a societal venture proves too successful, it gets closed down. We recall the case of Yukos, of the NGO legislation passed last January, of the state's attacks on religious groups other than the Russian Orthodox Church. In terms of European identity politics, this is a situation where pluralism and some kind of generalized liberalism are become increasingly central to European identity, with Russia opting for what looks to Europeans like old-fashioned state building. As a result, Russia is out of synch with the development of European identity. For example, I published an article in the Russian daily *Kommersant* a few months ago. People were not pleased, but I did not hear any intellectual counter-arguments.

We all know how, during the 1990s, countries from Estonia in the north to Slovenia in the south made considerable efforts to join the European Union. There are two very clear lessons here for other countries of the region. First, concurring with the Copenhagen criteria will take you not only a long way, but all the way. It is possible to succeed, and succeed fairly quickly. Secondly, and here I beg to differ with Abraham Lincoln, you may fool some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time. You may get an extension on implementing a policy here and you may get the Commission to turn a blind eye to some specific patch of politics there, but in the end there is no alternative to actually doing the necessary social and political work. The experience of European oddments like Norway and Switzerland points in the same direction – it is all about following and hanging on. European identity may be socially decentred, but when

it comes to politics, there is definitely a centre. Furthermore, the Brussels-centred politics of European integration is giving shape to more and more of European political life generally. In every single country of Europe, whether EU member country or not, the dividing line of increasing importance is to what degree that country should immerse itself. This, I feel, is far more important than which percentage of the electorate happens to vote which way on questions like adopting the Euro or adopting an EU Constitution. The agenda of politics has become a European agenda. That, I would argue, is more important than the question of the pace of integration.

The one thing that may reverse this trend is not resistance to further integration. Certainly, that may slow down the pace of integration and halt its spread to new areas of social life. But it would not by itself undermine the central role of Brussels-based politics. The one thing that may have that effect is if political life in European countries should evolve their *own agendas*, agendas that are not so much opposed to hegemonic Brussels-based politics, as simply of another kind. The only country where I can see the stirrings of such a development is Serbia. Its recent political history should also serve as a sobering reminder of what such a non-Brussels oriented politics might come to look like. Even in Serbia, however, we are talking about a minority position. In general, political life in Eastern Europe and the Balkans are a tonic to European identity; by wanting so very much to join in, they underwrite the validity of the European political project.

In my view, the key issues for European identity today do not have to do with Russia, which for the time being has decided to keep its distance, or with Eastern Europe and the Balkans, which on the contrary want to cut down the distances. No, these issues concern the intertwined questions of the United States and of Turkey.

The importance of the United States to global politics today can hardly be overestimated. There is not a political issue area or a political conflict that may be adequately understood without taking that country into the equation. The relationship to the USA plays an important role in the formation of every single political community of any scale, anywhere on the globe. As spelled out in such documents as the Quadrennial Defence Review, the long-term (25–30 years) goal of the United States is to block the emergence of possible competitors. We all know the short-term goal: it is to win what used to be known as the ‘war on terror’. We also know the means and the doctrine that Washington brings to this task. The means are military – unilateral when needed, multilateral if convenient. The doctrine is one of identity politics, as well tested by a string of morally dubious regimes on numerous historical occasions. To quote (among others) President George W. Bush, who is not with us, is against us.

This forward-leaning and Manichean policy has been standing in direct opposition to European politics for five years now. Even in Britain, the USA’s closest European ally for decades, opposition has been so strong as to bring about the downfall of the prime minister. There is a clash of world-views here. The United States has long favoured a more direct way of dealing with adversaries – and here I do not mean only its propensity for large-scale, all-out military operations aimed at unconditional surrender of the other party. We find the same propensity to employ physical force in uphold-

ing social order on other levels of American life. To take but one example, according to official US sources, more than four million Americans are currently under some kind of surveillance, with more than two million of them being incarcerated.⁴

There are two reasons why the relationship to the United States will be pivotal for European identity in the foreseeable future. The first is the unquestioned and overwhelming importance of US military and political power in the years to come for all the rest of the globe, Europe included. The second is that the United States has come to constitute a model for how to live, a model that in several key aspects stands in direct opposition to the European way of life. There is no need to give an interplanetary explanation for this as some have tried to do ('Europeans are from Venus, Americans are from Mars'). The long and short of it is that the United States, due to its experience as an immigrant nation, has evolved a way of looking at the rest of the world in terms of how ripe they are for adopting the only possible model, namely the American Way of Life. Resistance to this is interpreted as a hostile act. And, naturally enough, such an imperialistic attitude cannot fail to evoke resistance, particularly from those of us who feel commitment to some other and rivalling political community, for example the European one. European identity will be tested in the years to come, not least by the growing American imperialism. Empires have always sought to divide in order to rule – and, as seen not least in the campaign to establish itself in what US leaders have referred to somewhat incongruously as 'new Europe', the American empire is no different.

It is tempting to assail the United States on its hostility to other groups, and particularly to Muslims. While it would be easy to launch such an attack – President Bush has, for example, evoked an important heritage of hostility by pronouncing that his 'war on terror' is a crusade for civilization – it would not be fair to launch such an attack in this context. There are two reasons for this. First, as already noted, the US experience with immigration is a rather lustrous one. It is true that the American system has produced collective failure for certain groups, and has kept them in grotesquely unprivileged positions. To take but one example, more than half of the black male population between 18 and 34 have been or are under surveillance.⁵ But it is also true that for each such group, the American experience includes several other successful cases of integration. The second reason why US policy towards the Muslim world should not be attacked in connection with talking about European identity is that Europe's own record hardly warrants a holier-than-thou attitude. There are in Europe millions of Muslims – due to the secular way some states keep their records, and to illegal immigration, no one knows quite how many there are. One thing is clear: they are hardly well integrated. Furthermore, Europe's policy towards the fuzzy collective identity called the Ummah, the community of Muslim believers, is not exactly clear and constructive.

There exists a political issue which offers itself as a test of European goodwill towards the Muslim world, a test of its willingness to overcome the

4 According to the Federal Bureau of Statistics; for details about prisons, see <http://www.bop.gov/>

5 See <http://www.bop.gov/>

historical heritage of hatred and its ability to prove its commitment to pluralism. This is the issue of Turkish EU membership. Turkey has been standing in the queue for almost 40 years. Millions of Turks are already living and working in Europe. Most importantly, Turkey has undertaken fundamental political and social work in order to develop the compatibility needed to join. True, there remain many outstanding issues. They are real enough, and as was the case with the EU's Eastern enlargement, Turkey should not and will not be able to get away with policies that are too blatantly contradictory to the Copenhagen criteria. Turkey would, for example, be a long step closer to fulfilling the criterion of good-neighbourly relations if it came clean on its dirty deeds against the Armenians around 1915. But, as noted above, humans are not ants, and collective identities are not homogeneous. Turkey will remain different in some regards, and so it should – that is no reason why it should not be welcomed in the EU. This would, not least, send a much-needed signal to the rest of Europe's neighbours – and here we find countries with young, sizeable and growing populations like Egypt – that putting your own house in order can have its rewards in terms of your relationship to Europe.

The theme of this conference has been 'Constructing New Identities in Transforming Europe: Enlargement and Integration: Are They Compatible?'. Nested within European identity we find whole swathes of other identities, each with their Others, each with their dynamism, each with their potential to change European identity as such. Here I have chosen to focus on the Others along the geographical boundaries.

Let me end with a key point in this regard. There is a trade-off between integration and exclusion. Every time something or someone is included, something is excluded. Since who we are is dependent on what is on the outside of us and what kind of relationships we have to that outside, this cannot be helped. But exclusion is a matter of degree. When we, and particularly the statesmen amongst us, weave the web of Europe, it is imperative that we leave the ends of the threads dangling. Collective identities do not stand still for their picture. They are forever unfinished, in content as well as in social and geographical reach. Therefore, we should be open to those who seek our company, and compensate for the broader challenges of a larger and more diverse membership by continuing to strengthen Europe's common institutions as the undertaking grows – just as we have done with each enlargement of the European Union thus far.

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