

COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF GERMAN-TURKISH POLITICAL RELATIONS IN THE LATE 19TH AND  
EARLY 20TH CENTURIES AND ITS IMPACT TODAY

CELINE CHARLOTTE ENGIN

SEPTEMBER,

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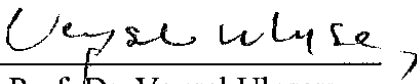
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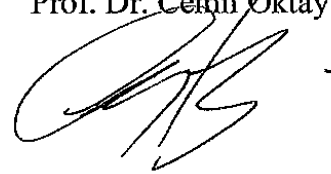
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 Prof. Dr. Cemil Oktay



This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

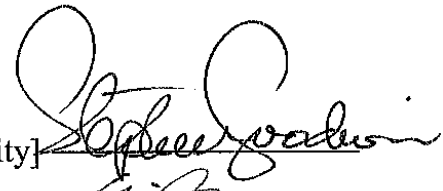
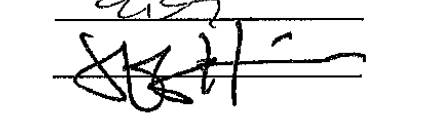
  
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## ABSTRACT

Germany and Turkey have highly diverse and complex political relationship. Their political relations mainly evolved during the period of the Ottoman Empire and resulted in close economic, military and educational cooperation in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. These developments engendered an expansive and diverse literature on German-Turkish relations. Yet, most of the literature focuses either on the historical relations or on current issues. This research aims to show that political relations between the two countries cannot be separated into pre- and post-empires but should be regarded as a complex construct in which historical developments shed light on current issues. Maurice Halbwachs' collective memory theory is used as a theoretical framework to analyze how the collective memory of past relations between the Ottoman Empire and the German Kaiserreich still influences and shapes current political relations between Germany and Turkey. The results of this thesis demonstrate that the common theme in German-Turkish political relations is a dichotomy that is characterized by an unequal balance in the political relationship on one side and close economic, military and educational cooperation on the other. Recognizing this dichotomy is important as it is a deciding factor in new developments and challenges in the two countries' relations down to the present day.

*Key words: German-Turkish political relations, Maurice Halbwachs, collective memory*

## ÖZET

Almanya ve Türkiye arasında oldukça farklı ve karışık siyasi ilişkiler bulunmaktadır. İki ülkenin siyasi ilişkileri temelde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu döneminde gelişmiş ve 20. yüzyıl sonları ile 21. yüzyılında yakın ekonomik, askeri ve eğitimsel ilişkilere zemin oluşturmuştur. Bu gelişme, Almanya ile Türkiye arasındaki ilişkilere ait literatürün genişlemesine ve çeşitli konuları kapsamına yol açmıştır. Yine de, literatürün büyük bir kısmı tarihi ilişkilere veya kapsamındaki güncel konulara odaklanmaktadır. Bu tezin amacı, Almanya ve Türkiye arasındaki siyasi ilişkileri imparatorluk öncesi veya sonrası olarak ayıramayacağını göstermektir. Bu amaçla Maurice Halbwachs'ın kolektif hafıza teorisinin yardımı ile Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Alman Kaiserreich arasındaki geçmiş ilişkilerle ilgili kolektif hafızanın günümüzde Almanya ile Türkiye arasındaki siyasi ilişkileri nasıl etkilediğini ve şekillendirdiğini incelenerek gösterilmektedir. Bu tezin sonucunda iki ülke arasındaki farklı alanlardaki ilişkilerin günümüze kadar büyük ölçüde etkilemiş olan bir fikir anlaşmazlığı olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu fikir anlaşmazlığı siyasi ilişki ile yakın ekonomik, askeri ve eğitimsel işbirliği arasındaki dengesizlik ile nitelendirilmekte ve yeni gelişmeler ve çıkan zorluklar konusunda belirleyici bir faktör teşkil etmektedir.

*Anahtar Kelimeler: Almanya-Türkiye siyasi ilişkileri, Maurice Halbwachs, kolektif hafıza*

To my family  
who always supports and inspires me  
and to whom I am deeply grateful.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Germany's political relationship towards Turkey looks back at a long history that was mainly shaped during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, mostly through the foreign policy of Emperor Wilhelm II (1859-1941). In its history Germany has established a special relationship with Turkey which ranges from the military cooperation in the Ottoman Empire to the German-Turkish Recruitment Agreement in the 1960's, due to which a large Turkish minority (4-5% of the German population) is living in Germany today. Thus, both countries look back at a long historical cooperation that extends into different areas of politics, military, economy and education.

At the military level, both countries have commenced their cooperation with military education and training in the Ottoman Empire. This was the first step through which the German Empire was able to secure armaments orders that benefited the German economy. In the present, military cooperation between the two nations mainly exists at the level of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Yet, military cooperation in the field of armaments orders and army technology are still increasing between the two nations. Politically Germany has a great interest in the geographical location of Turkey and is constantly aiming to sustain good political relations with the Turkish government. In the area of education and culture both countries are closely interwoven. The close cooperation in this field is demonstrated by the establishment of a *Turkish-German University (TDU)* in the Turkish metropolis Istanbul. Bilateral Trade and commerce are increasing annually.

Despite of all the above, the current political relationship between Germany and Turkey seems to be problematic and conflicted. At the level of political relations – especially concerning Turkey’s accession to the European Union (EU) – disagreements and inconsistencies are obvious. The German media frequently portrays a picture of the Turkish Republic as an undemocratic, increasingly Islamic shaped and backward oriented country (cf. Kalnoky and Toprak, 2012; Jacobsen, 2014). Besides, the question whether Turkey as a predominantly Islamic country can be regarded as part of the Western community of shared values is a continuing debate in the German public sphere – especially in the context of Turkey’s accession to the EU. Despite the long traditional “partnership” of the two nations, Germany is one of the most vehement opponents regarding Turkey’s EU membership. Thus, strong opponents can be found in the public and political sphere. The current political government of Germany, run by Angela Merkel, does not support a full membership of Turkey to the EU, but rather advocates a privileged partnership between the Turkish Republic and the EU (Szymański, 2007, S. 37). At the same time, the CDU/CSU coalition seems to not be pursuing a clear-cut course in its EU-politics towards Turkey. Despite of its rejection of Turkey’s full membership to the EU, close cooperation with the Turkish government intending to make the country EU-compatible continues (“EU-Beitritt der Türkei,” 2013). These reforms mainly benefit economic relations between Germany and Turkey (cf. Ginsburg, 2014).

In the light of the dichotomous relationship between the two nations, that is shaped by strong political and economic cooperation on one hand and disagreements and difficulties on the other hand, it is the aim of this research to evaluate and assess this phenomenon. This research centers on Germany's political relationship with Turkey. In this context the two countries' cooperation in the field of economy, military and education will also be examined. Thereby, the dichotomy in current political German-Turkish relations will be analyzed. An explanatory approach will be given through the framework of Maurice Halbwach's (1877-1945) collective memory theory. Based on this theory this research is aiming to show that the prevailing contradiction in the two countries' current relationship is shaped by historical developments and is implying a close link to the past up to the present day.

### **1.1. Literature Review**

Germany and Turkey have a special relationship that is highly diverse and complex. The two countries' relations mainly evolved during the period of the Ottoman Empire and resulted in close economic, military, cultural and social relations in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Due to this development the literature on German-Turkish relations is numerous and diverse. Yet, most of the literature focuses either on the historical relations between the German and the Ottoman Empire or on current issues in German-Turkish relations. The relations between the two countries cannot be separated into pre- and post-Empires but should be

regarded as a complex construct in which historical developments shed light on current issues.

Regarding the historical relations between the German Reich and the Ottoman Empire, there is a wide range of literature on different aspects. This thesis will focus on the work that has been published on the specific topic of German imperialistic intentions in the Turkish Empire. According to Brauns (2009) German politics in the region were driven by colonialist intentions. As a consequence, key positions in the field of politics, economy and culture have been brought under strong German influence. In general, he criticizes that the research literature on this topic is still coined by a colonialist image in which Turkey is portrayed as the victim while Germany is portrayed as the offender. Türk (2007) shares this view by stating that the Germans could strengthen their power status in the Ottoman Empire due to the activity of their officers in the Ottoman army. McMeekin (2011, pp. 34ff.) adds that the Germans harshly tried to diminish British and French influence in the region. Illich (2007, p. 236), on the contrary, argues that German imperial activity in the Ottoman Empire was quite moderate and cannot be considered unusually aggressive, competitive or militaristic but rather “tepid”. Trumpener (1996, p. 125-126) even states that the Germans, although for selfish reasons, provided political support to the sultan’s empire and tried to help in the process of modernization and training of its army. He claims that at least some of the economic projects in the Empire that were financed by German companies were of service to the Ottomans.

Today's relationship between the two nations builds upon this history. Authors like Steinbach (2011) note that history is a continuum that is characterized by a central theme throughout the years. Thus, for Steinbach, Turkish-German relations need to be seen not as single stages but as a continuum with a central theme that needs to be assessed as a whole. Mangold-Will (2013, pp. 25ff.) strengthens this argument by showing that there has not been a strict break or fresh start in the two countries relations in the change from the German Reich to the Weimarer Republic in the twentieth century and that mutual networks continued to exist. Kreiser (2014, pp. 9ff.), on the other hand, demonstrates this continuum by reference to the Turkish-German Friendship Associations that also demonstrate the large variety of the two nations' relationship in the field of economy, politics and education. Halm and Thränhardt (2009) refer to this wide range of German-Turkish networks as a "transnational space".

Concerning the effect of history on today's German-Turkish relations, Fuhrmann (2006, pp. 78ff.) notes that even though the conquest of the Ottoman Empire remained a "dream", it has mainly shaped today's Turkish and German culture as well as the relations between the two countries. In this light, Bağ (2013) argues that the colonial paradigm of Germany towards Turkey has remained unchanged since the nineteenth century. Even though the medium of this paradigm has changed, the paradigm itself has endured. According to Bağ, this paradigm has to change if German-Turkish relations should not be changing to the disfavor of Germany. In a commentary of the German newspaper *Der*



*Spiegel*, Kazim (2014) has recently noted that the relations between the two countries have especially worsened over the last years. Although the two nations have close economic relations, prejudices and rejection prevail, not only among the civil societies but also in the political sphere. Kazim offers no explanation for this circumstance. Yet, like Bağ, he takes the view that a change in the relationship between these two countries that are so closely interlinked throughout history is needed.

A specific aspect of German-Turkish political relations that poses challenges to the two countries relations is Turkey's accession to the European Union. According to Röper (2005, p. 153), none of the other candidate country has affected Europe's population as much as Turkey. Its candidacy has aroused a discussion of religion, prejudices, immigration fears and tradition that has not been held concerning any other candidate. Walter (2008, p. 57) defines the dichotomous view of Turkey as the core of this debate. He argues that Turkey is not seen as "the other Europe" but rather as something "in between". Although the nation was always closely linked to Europe throughout history it was defined as the Islamic "other" Geographically Turkey is located "in between" Europe and Asia or East and West. (ibid., pp. 17ff.). As a result, Walter notes that Turkey is defined as a part of Europe and not a part of Europe at the same time. An article ("EU-Beitritt der Türkei", 2013) in a German newspaper identifies this dichotomy in terms of Germany's attitude towards Turkey's EU membership. According to this article Germany's ruling party, the Christian Democratic Union, is strongly supporting negotiations with Turkey while

opposing its full membership at the same time. This leads to a paradox position in their point of view on this topic. Another article published in *The Economics* (“A fading European dream,” 2010) argues that the problem is that Turkey might be losing interest in joining the Union taking into account the disturbing process of negotiations. The challenge, according to the author, is to keep negotiations busy and sustain Turkey’s interest in joining.

Another important part of the German-Turkish relationship is economic. Authors such as Atilgan and Kleinschmidt (2013) and Höhler (2014) have outlined the long history of German-Turkish economic relations from their historical background to their present situation. According to Höhler these economic relations have intensified and expanded over the last years. Likewise, further publications on present German-Turkish economic relations (cf. Bund Türkisch-Europäischer Unternehmer, n.d.; Falkner and Leger, 2013; Leoprechting, 2012) reveal that the two countries economic relations have reached a peak over the last years. Bürgin (2004) and others emphasizes the importance of Turkey’s growing economy for German investors as well as the importance of Europe as a market for Turkish products. Güvenç (2007) adds to this discussion the argument that in a globalized economy, the stability of the Turkish economy highly depends on the German and the U.S. market. Other authors additionally point out the risks and problems in today’s German-Turkish economic relations. Höhler and Käfer (2014) argue that negative developments in the Turkish economy directly affect German companies and investors that are active in Turkey. Wilson (2010) takes into consideration the political difficulties

that the two nations are facing (e.g., Turkey's accession to the EU and Germany's visa requirements for Turkey) and which negatively affect their relationship. In the light of these difficulties, an article published by the *American Institute for Contemporary German Studies*, argues that Germany and Turkey would be well advised to promote a positive connection towards each other at times of political tumult in the Middle East and an economic crisis in the euro zone.

Another important factor in the relationship between Germany and Turkey is education. As Gencer (2002) and Kloosterhuis (1994) note, education played an important part education in German-Turkish relations in the twentieth century, especially after the Young Turk Revolution 1908. While the Germans were hoping to influence the Ottoman society to their own advantage, the Turks were aiming to initiate a process of self empowerment through education. According to Kreiser (1990, p. 15), there were even plans to establish German university education in the Ottoman Empire to widen German influence. There was a plan to not only reform the Turkish army, but also its education system. Yet, due to its early end, the German "cultural mission" remained unsuccessful and the Germans were not able to achieve Turkey's dependency (Gencer, 2002, pp. 120ff.).

## 1.2. Research Interest and Methodology

The research interest of this thesis lies in the influence of historical German-Turkish relations on current political developments between the German Federal Republic and the Republic of Turkey. In this research the two countries' relationship will be presented and analyzed from the perspective of Germany. The hypothesis assumes that *German-Turkish relations are – at least since the 19<sup>th</sup> century – characterized by a dichotomy that is shaped by a hierarchical structure and superior position of Germany towards Turkey. This structure is mirrored in today's political relations between the two nations.*

The underlying research question is *how does the collective memory of the relationship between the German Empire and the Ottoman Empire in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries influence the political relations between the German Federal Republic and the Republic of Turkey today?*

The theoretical framework used to analyze this hypothesis and research question is Maurice Halbwachs's collective memory theory. This theory demonstrates how the collective memory influences social behavior and thinking. In the light of this research Halbwach's theory is applied to explain how a society (in this case Germany) reconstructs its relationship towards another society (here Turkey) through its current social frame in the present time period.

### **1.3. Limitations and Research Aim**

The subject matter and content of the separate chapters of this thesis are determined by the mentioned research interest. In the limited frame of this thesis no chronological display of German-Turkish relations from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards with all interlinked national and international involvements can be given. Instead this research focuses on the direct bilateral relations between the German Empire and the Ottoman Empire respectively between the German Federal Republic and the Republic of Turkey. Further, this research consciously begins with the 19<sup>th</sup> century because the political relations between the two countries have been mainly shaped in this period – especially through the foreign policy of the German Emperor Wilhelm II. This period is further defined as a central historical period in terms of this thesis' research interest.

In this research a short overview the historical German-Turkish relations in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the current bilateral cooperation in the areas of politics, economy, military and education in the light of the research question will be given. Although the main focus of this research lies in German-Turkish political relations, an overview into other areas of bilateral cooperation will be given. This is due to the fact that political relations are inextricably linked to military and economic interests. No politics is possible without military and economic interests. The same is true for cooperation in the field of education that is embedded in political instruments such as laws and institutions.

The aim of this research is to fill a research gap in the area of German-Turkish political relations. While research in this area generally draws a sharp line between the historical and the current relationship between the two countries, this research is aiming to show that they cannot be separated into pre- and post-empires but should be regarded as a complex construct in which historical developments shed light on current issues. Thus, this thesis is striving to contribute to the research on German-Turkish political relations by presenting a new perspective that demonstrates how current developments between the two nation states are mainly shaped by the historical relationship between the German Empire and the Ottoman Empire. Through this the author aims to contribute to a better understanding of the seemingly paradox relationship between the two nations today.

#### **1.4. Outline**

This research is divided into three main parts. Firstly, the methodological framework of this thesis – Maurice Halbwachs' collective memory theory – will be presented in an overview over main points of his work based on this thesis' research interest (Chapter 2). Thereby, the relevance and application of Halbwachs' theory to this thesis will be pointed out (Chapter 2.2). The following chapter will present a short overview over main aspects in the historical and current relationship between Germany and Turkey from the viewpoint of the latter (Chapter 3). Here five different areas of German-Turkish relations that are closely interlinked will be addressed: politics, economy, military and education.

The content of these chapters focuses on important aspects of their cooperation based on the research interest of this thesis. Further, the development of relations in these five fields since the 19<sup>th</sup> century will be outlined and analyzed within the framework of Halbwachs' theory (Chapters 3.1.3, 3.2.3., 3.3.3 and 3.4.3). Based on this development, the collective memory of German-Turkish political relations within the theoretical framework will be subject to analysis in the subsequent chapter (Chapter 4). Last but not least, the observations and results of this research will be summarized (Chapter 5). In the conclusion part, the special political relationship between Germany and Turkey will be presented in summary and evaluated in regard to prospective difficulties and challenges. This thesis will end with an outlook over future perspective and challenges in the two nations' political relationship, also regarding Turkey's accession to the European Union.

## **2. MAURICE HALBWACHS' COLLECTIVE MEMORY THEORY**

In his theory of the collective memory Halbwachs applies the fundamental thesis of the Durkheimian sociology to the memory. In his reflections about the individual and the collective memory he draws on Emile Durkheim's conception of the collective consciousness. According to Durkheim (1984, p. 38-39) "[t]he totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own". Thus, Durkheim's collective consciousness can be seen as a society's or group's

mental unity that finds expression in language, beliefs, moral attitudes and knowledge.

On the basis of the Durkheimian collective consciousness, Halbwachs proposes his main thesis of the social conditionality of memory. In his memory theory Halbwachs works out a social frame of reference without which no individual memory can constitute or preserve itself (Assmann, 2013, p. 35).

## **2.1. Collective Memory and Individual Memory**

The differentiation between the “collective memory” and the “individual memory” is a key point in Halbwachs’ theory. The individual itself has a share in both forms of memory. Every individual naturally possesses an individual memory that only he or she can access. The collective memory on the other hand is constituted within a society or group<sup>1</sup> and influences the individual memories. Halbwachs believes that the individual memory is driven by the collective memory. The collective memory contains all individual memories, yet, it does not become one with them (Halbwachs, 1980, pp. 50-51).

The central assumption underlying this hypothesis is that thought and perception of the individual does not take place isolated on its own but rather

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<sup>1</sup> According to Halbwachs, society as a whole is divided into different social groups and communities (Weiß, 2013). Among these social groups are families, religious groups or social classes. Each of these groups has a collective memory that is specific to the group and, in context and form, differs from other group memories (Philipps, 2002, p. 15-16). The individual itself can be part of different groups and is able to switch between groups.



through memories that originated in coherence with others. Every individual is carrier of his own memories, however, their content and form is transmitted within the group. The group is where “social frames” (Original: „*cadres sociaux*“) <sup>2</sup> are created, *in which the collective memory evolves through communication and interaction* (Assmann, 2013, pp. 36-37).<sup>3</sup> Consequently, the collective memory in turn is reliant on the individual memory.

In summary it can be said that on the basis of the concept of collective consciousness Halbwachs demonstrates that individual and collective memories are closely connected and interdependent. Furthermore, according to Halbwachs’ theory the individual memory is likewise a social product, because it not only develops within societal parameters but is also largely determined by the latter (cf. Weiß, 2013). Thus, Halbwachs interprets memory as a social phenomenon, which is acquired by the individual through a process of socialization (Assmann, 2013, p. 35).

### **2.1.1. Reconstructiveness of Collective Memory**

In his collective memory theory Halbwachs also addresses the subject matter of reconstruction of memories through the collective memory. He suggests that our memories can be completed through the memories of others. In this way, different points of views or different emphases mold into an overall

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<sup>2</sup> cf. Halbwachs, M. (1925). *Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

<sup>3</sup> Assmann (2013, p. 36) notes the analogy to Erving Goffmann’s (1974) “frame analysis”.

picture. This process happens within a group through communication with group members (cf. Assmann, 2013, pp. 36-37; cf. Halbwachs, 1980, pp. 22ff.). As a result, the common memories produce a cohesion that spreads across the group. However, memories can also get distorted during this process. According to Halbwachs (1992, p. 182), memories of the past mostly get distorted and complemented through fictions during this process.

It is important here to note that in Halbwachs' point of view the past as such does not exist but is rather a product of the present that is reconstructed according to the group's need for meaning. Halbwachs attributes an own dynamic to the memory and to the reconstruction of the past, which is inferior to the dynamic of the group, by which it is significantly determined (Assmann, 2013, pp. 41-42). According to Halbwachs, the past is a social construction that is reconstructed through the need for meaning and the framework of the respective present (ibid., p. 48). The collective memory only keeps these parts of the past that the respective society in its present framework can reconstruct (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 189):

“[...] social thought is essentially a memory and that its entire content consists only of collective recollections remembrances. But it also follows that, among them, only those recollections subsist that in every period society, working within its present-day frameworks, can reconstruct.” (ibid.)

The collective memory thereby not only reconstructs the past, but shapes and influences the present. Social beliefs, according to Halbwachs (1992, p. 188)

are therefore not only collective memories or traditions, but also social conventions and ideas that “result from a knowledge of the present”. Thus, “there is no social idea that would not at the same time be a recollection of the society” (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 188).

### **2.1.2. Unity of Memories within a Group**

Halbwachs further explains the process of remembering within a group and the object of memory. He emphasizes the necessity of the creation of shared subject matters for the remembering group, on the basis of which the individual group members can establish a common picture (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 31). A society can only continue if a sufficient unity of viewpoints among the individuals and groups comprising it exists (id., 1992, p. 182). For this reason society tends to erase everything from its memory that might separate individuals or the groups from each other and “it is also why society, in each period, rearranges its recollections in such a way as to adjust them to the variable conditions of its equilibrium” (ibid., p. 183). So there is no chaotic flow of memories but rather an emergence of certain points that reveal the relationship among the group members and to their environment. On the basis of that common foundation a common picture or the image of a past can be reconstituted. That reconstruction requires “shared data of conceptions” (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 31).

According to Halbwachs the main elements of a collective memory of a group is comprised of memories of specific events and experiences. However, those events and experiences are not based on the individual group members but rather on what most of the group or a big part of the group shares. They either originate from the group member's independent lives or from their relationship to other groups that they have the most contact with (Halbwachs, 1980, p 31-33).

### **2.1.3. Group and Time Reference**

In line with Halbwachs (1980, p. 80), the collective memory never reaches beyond the group that carries it. The various groups that exist within a society are capable of reconstructing their past at any time. Yet, as mentioned above, "they most frequently distort that past in the act of reconstructing it" (id., 1992, p. 182). As Assmann (2013, p. 40) notes, the group upholds its past according to the aspects of content and time. The group becomes conscious of its own identity through believing that it has remained the same throughout time. The collective memory portrays the group from within and "provides the group a self-portrait that unfolds through time, since it is an image of the past, and allows the group to recognize itself throughout the total succession of images" (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 86). What changes are the group members' relations to each other or with other groups. Since the group remains the same "any changes must be imaginary, and the changes that do occur in the group are transformed in

to similarities” (ibid., p. 86-87). Thus, the continuity of the collective memory is not marked by clear demarcations:

“The present (understood as extending over a certain duration that is of interest to contemporary society) is not contrasted to the past in the way two neighboring historical periods are distinguished. Rather, the past no longer exists, whereas, for the historian, the two periods have equivalent reality.” (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 82)

As already mentioned above, society can only survive if a sufficient unity of viewpoints among the individuals and groups comprising it exists. This is why a society distorts its memories in every phase in a way that differences are eliminated and the memories are adjusted to new circumstances (id., 1992 p. 182). Consequently, Halbwachs’ idea of the collective memory is present day oriented at all times. It merely is a reconstruction of the past.<sup>4</sup>

Halbwachs further divides “real time” in mathematical terms from “social time” in an abstract sense. Social time, in the sense of Halbwachs (1980, p. 93), “is artificial, created from the addition, combination, and multiplication of data derived solely from the duration of individuals“. It is how time is experienced by individuals within social groups. Thus, there is a “framework of time” in reference to memory that aids in putting memories in order (i.e. “is suitable for enframing our remembrances”) (ibid., p. 99). As a result, the collective memory can go back to varying points in the past. How far it goes

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<sup>4</sup> For that reason Assmann (2002, p. 9) argues that in Halbwachs’ theory there is no objectification of the past.

back depends on the particular group and what happens beyond that certain point in time does not affect the group (ibid., p. 106-107).

Halbwachs further distinguishes this understanding of time from the historical understanding of time that is itself an artificial construct that is however different from the time experienced by the group:

“History is necessarily an abridgment; hence it compresses and concentrates into a few instants developments extending over entire periods. In this sense it extracts changes from duration. There is nothing to prevent our collating together events thus separated from real time and organizing them into a chronological series. But such a series unfolds within an artificial duration having no reality for the groups from which these events are borrowed. This is not the time in which their collective thought habitually functioned or localized what was remembered of their past.” (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 106)

#### **2.1.4. “Forgetting Due to Separation from a Group”<sup>5</sup>**

Halbwachs also dedicates himself to the issue of forgetting. In this context, memories that are missing a framework in the present will be forgotten (Assmann, 2013, p. 36). Since the collective memory is maintained through communication, oblivion happens if communication (through a change in framework) is discontinued. It is only remembered what is communicated and is fit into the current framework of the collective memory (ibid., p. 36-37). Thus,

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<sup>5</sup> Halbwachs, 1980, p. 24.

the situation that has been experienced by the group as well as the meaning that the situation had for the group or the group members plays an important role.

To illustrate this Halbwachs (1980, p. 26) gives the example of a teacher who encounters his student after a long time. While the student can remember the teacher and many details of the old schooldays, the teacher neither has remembrance of the student's name nor of any specific event that occurred during the old schooldays. According to Halbwachs the reason for the different perceptions lays in the difference of the experience from the teacher's point of view and from the student's point of view. As the schooldays were a unique experience for the student, he considers the events that took place during that time to be special. The teacher on the other hand taught new students every year and therefore did not consider that specific student's experiences to be special or any different than those of his other students. In consequence, the teacher tends to forget the events of that specific school year a lot quicker than the student does. According to this we have a greater memory of events that directly affect us or have a special influence on our lives. We tend to forget routine or non-special events or only remember memory fragments. Furthermore, people brand themselves on our memory only through their attribution with other people within a group. While the student is categorized within a group of students in the teacher's memory, the teacher stays in the student's memory as a tutor and is therefore coupled with a respective significance (Halbwachs, 1980, pp. 26ff.).

A further reason for this discrepancy lays in the students' relationships to other environments. This means that the students preserve their memory of the old schooldays by constant repetition outside of the classroom, thus preventing forgetting. They would meet former classmates evoking shared memories or talk to their parents about schooldays, which leads to the preservation of the memories (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 26). Here one can see that the dissolution of the group does not necessarily lead to the deletion of the group memories. Those memories can outlive the group when the group members carry out the memories into other environments, share them within those environments and when those memories had any significance for the individual group member. In this case the individuals can recall the individual memories.

### **2.1.5. Collective Memory versus History<sup>6</sup>**

Halbwachs (1980, p. 78) draws a sharp distinction between collective memory and "formal history". According to him the collective memory possesses certain characteristics that differentiate it fundamentally from history. The collective memory "is a current of continuous thought whose continuity is not at all artificial, for it retains from the past only what still lives or is capable of living in the consciousness of the groups keeping the memory alive"

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<sup>6</sup> As Assmann (2013, p. 43) notes, Halbwachs adopts a positivistic assumption of history that is no longer supported by current scholarship. Since every recorded history is subject to the time frame and personal interest of its author, Assmann (ibid.) states, that Halbwachs' distinction between "memory" and "history" can no longer be maintained. Rather history should be regarded as a special form of social memory (cf. Burke, 1991, pp. 289ff.).



(Halbwachs, 1980, p. 80). The construction of the memories adjusts when the social framework conditions change. This results in the fact that a society can have a different image of the past depending on time and circumstances. Halbwachs argues that a society modifies “conventions” of the past depending on its current state. This modification of the collective memory on the other hand shapes the memories of the individuals of a society as each individual evokes his memories by relying on the framework of social memory as a reference point (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 182).

According to Halbwachs (1980, pp. 83ff.) another characteristic distinguishing the collective memory from its history is the fact that history is unitary, meaning that history seeks an objective and universal historical narrative as opposed to the collective memory that cannot fulfill this aspiration. The collective memory rather “requires the support of a group delimited in space and time” (ibid., p. 84).

Another important aspect is the necessity of similarity for the memory. History is interested mainly in differences in memories, which is a prerequisite for the memory since the only things remembered are those having the common feature of belonging to the same consciousness (ibid., p. 84). Memory on the other hand is rather built on resemblances that enable the group to “perpetuate the feelings and images forming the substance of its thought” (ibid., p. 86).

## **2.2. Collective Memory Theory's Relevance and Application to this Thesis**

Halbwachs' theory is one of the most notable memory theories and has been applied across various disciplines.<sup>7</sup> The cultural scholar Jan Assmann (2013), for example, has used his theory as a reference point for his concept of "cultural memory". Besides its application in cultural studies, Halbwachs' theory has also contributed to political studies (cf. Leonhard, 2002). This thesis seeks to widen its application in the studies of political science. Halbwachs' concept will serve as a theoretical framework to analyze political German-Turkish relations. It will be evaluated to what extent his theory can be used to explain the current dichotomy in the relationship between the two nation states.

Halbwachs' memory theory has been selected as a theoretical framework for this research because it presents an explanatory approach to how current actions and ways of thinking are reconstructed through the contemporary frame of reference of the collective memory. Through this approach it can be analyze how past relations between Germany and Turkey are reinterpreted and

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<sup>7</sup> In a notable publication by Gerald Echterhoff and Martin Saar (2002) Halbwachs' theory is examined from the perspective of various disciplines such as philosophy, philology, historical and political sciences.

reconstructed through the collective memory (i.e. history books, media, academic research etc.). This on the other hand makes it possible to associate the historical relations between the German Empire and the Ottoman Empire with current relations between Germany and Turkey, because the collective memory (according to Halbwachs) constructs a continuous “image of the past” that goes back to a certain point in the past that is of importance for the group. In the case of German-Turkish relations, it will be argued, that this point is the late 19th century, because the relations between the two nations have been effectively shaped during this period.

Thereby, the past and current relations between the two nations are interpreted as a continuous narrative that is reconstructed and reinterpreted through a certain contemporary framework within society. This makes it possible to view German-Turkish relations as a complex construct in which historical events and developments shed light on current issues. This research will evolve this interpreted narrative of German-Turkish relations by outlining and analyzing different fields (i.e. politics, economy, military and education) of their past and more recent relations and interpreting them as continuum that shapes the content of current relations between the two nations. The collective memory of German-Turkish relations (in line with Halbwachs) is, further, seen as reconstructed narrative that is not static, but rather constantly changing. As a result, the reconstruction and interpretation of German-Turkish relations (e.g. in media or academic research) is diverse and sometimes even inconsistent and constantly changing over time. Thus, the aim of this research is not to portray the

German-Turkish relations from a historian's point of view.<sup>8</sup> Rather it strives to present an explanation for how and in which way current political relations between the two nations are shaped from the viewpoint of the Republic of Germany.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For this reason this research does not present a detailed and chronological list of German-Turkish relations but rather highlights certain aspects of their relationship that shape current political relations between the two nation states.

<sup>9</sup> That is through the way past relations are currently reconstructed and reinterpreted.

### 3. AREAS OF GERMAN-TURKISH RELATIONS SINCE THE LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

#### 3.1. Foreign Policy

##### 3.1.1. Foreign Political Relations with the Ottoman Empire

Germany's foreign political relation with Turkey has been mainly shaped during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The weakened Ottoman Empire, the rivalry of the Western powers over colonies and natural resources as well as competitive struggle for economic advantages promoted German interest in the Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The foreign policy course that Kaiser Wilhelm II promoted after the forced resignation of Reich Chancellor Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898) ultimately placed the imperialistic strive for world power on the political agenda (cf. Ulrich, 2012). From then on the Kaiserreich was driven by the imperial ambitions to secure its "place in the sun" ("Platz an der Sonne").

The Kaiserreich's political strategy of "peaceful penetration" (or *pénétration pacifique*) in the Ottoman Empire during the turn of the century involved different aspects ranging from military engagement, to cultural imperialism and diplomatic influence (Brauns, 2009). The objective was to widen the military and economic influence while maintaining the formal status quo (Fuhrmann, 2006, p. 156). This objective was concealed by the demonstrative indifference of the Kaiserreich towards critical aspects of Ottoman domestic politics and the public denial of any territorial expansion at the costs of the Ottoman Porte (ibid.). Despite the maintenance of the formal independency of the Ottoman Empire, the Kaiserreich was striving to expand its

influence to an extent that the Empire ultimately was to serve German strategic interests. By this means the Kaiserreich intended to gain control over the economic market and natural resources in the region (Brauns, 2009).

In this light, the purpose of the bilateral agreements (e.g. on the modernization the Ottoman military) was to weaken the Russian, French, British and Austrian influence in the region, to promote German economic interests and eventually to secure the support of a strengthened military ally (cf. Türk, 2007; Brauns, 2009). Since the Kaiserreich, in contrast to the French and British colonial policies, did not openly pursue territorial claims, it seemed to be the better partner for the Ottoman Empire (Gökpınar, 2011, p. 36-37). After all, it was also in the Ottoman interest of push back French, British, Austrian and Russian influence.

The access to oil and natural resources in the Ottoman Empire was of main interest to the German Kaiserreich and other colonial powers from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on (cf. Canis, 2011, p. 351-352; Eichholtz, 2007, p. 14). The Ottoman Empire was rich in minerals and natural resources, such as zinc, copper, chrom and lead (McMeekin, 2011, p. 37). In addition to its advantageous geostrategic position, the Empire further offered investment opportunities and a large exports market. Besides, all main routes of European trade with the Far and Near East were crossing through the Ottoman Empire (Kirkkanat, 2013, p. 5). Through the *capitulations* (i.e., unilateral contracts) European powers had soon gained privileges regarding the trade with the Ottoman Empire, which in the long term led to its political and economic

dependency on European capital. The “Eastern Question” of dealing with the “Sick man of Europe” consequently triggered diplomatic and political tensions and a competitive struggle between the European powers. The issue was how the European powers and Russia were to deal with the advancing decline of the Ottoman Empire and the resulting power vacuum in light of their partly conflicting political interests without provoking a military conflict (Brauns, 2009). The German interests laid in the preservation and reinforcement of the Ottoman Empire under German guidance. For only an Ottoman Empire that existed independently from other Western influences could benefit German economic and strategic interests (cf. Gencer, 2002, pp. 44-47; Brauns, 2009).

In this context, Wilhelm II’s journey to the Orient in 1898 as a highlight of German-Ottoman foreign relations has to be mentioned. As a result of Wilhelm II visit in the Ottoman Empire, German influence was strengthened and expanded. Regarding the economic relations, German investors were able to secure major projects such as the concession to the expansion of the Haydarpaşa harbor and the confirmation of a future concession for the finalization of the Baghdad Railway. After his return to Berlin in December 1898, Wilhelm II emphasized that his journey was successful in securing new markets and strengthening the relationship between the two Empires (Andresen, 1995, p. 282).

### 3.1.1.1. The Ottoman Empire as a Half-Colony

The propagandized *thrust towards the East* (“Drang nach Osten”) of colonial forces<sup>10</sup> in the newly established Kaiserreich was initially rejected by the moderate foreign policy view of Bismarck (Fuhrmann, 2009, p. 48). Bismarck rather followed a foreign policy of moderate trade imperialism that emphasized economic interests in the Ottoman Empire. The Eastern settlement was therefore operated by individual groups. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century several German settlements existed in the region of Istanbul and Anatolia. In Istanbul, the settlers established German schools, churches and a hospital (Wehr, 2009, pp. 130ff.). In a speech on the German colonies in Istanbul, Wilhelm II praised their work in their Ottoman Empire (cf. Obst, 2011, p. 175), which shows that their actions were at least approved during the imperialistic phase of the German Empire. Wilhelm II’s change in foreign policy at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was met with enthusiasm on the part of these colonial forces. According to them, the power in the Ottoman Empire was to be accessed through the means of arms deliveries, infrastructure development and the occupation of key positions in the Ottoman army and administration. The Germanization of the Ottoman Empire was to transform it into a German colony, while the religious and worldly Ottoman authorities should formally be kept in power (Fuhrmann, 2009, pp. 173-174).

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<sup>10</sup> Since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century not only single intellectuals, but whole organizations such as the *German Colonial Society* (Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft) and the Pan-German League advocated for German colonialism of different world regions (Alldeutscher Verband) (Fuhrmann, 2009, p. 47). The acquisition of habitat (*Lebensraum*) for the “Germanic race” in the East was central to their endeavors (Weger, 2008, p. 5). The “East” included the Balkan and from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the Anatolian heartland (cf. Fuhrmann, 2009, p. 48).



The newspaper<sup>11</sup> *Welt am Morgen* described this imperialistic strategy in November 1898 as follows:

„Nur die Türkei kann das Indien Deutschlands werden. [...] Der Sultan muß unser Freund bleiben, natürlich mit dem Hintergedanken, daß wir ihn ‚zum Fressen gern‘ haben. Zunächst freilich kann unsere Freundschaft völlig selbstlos sein. Wir helfen den Türken, Eisenbahnen bauen und Häfen anlegen. [...] Der ‚kranke Mann‘ wird gesund gemacht, so gründlich kuriert, daß er, wenn er aus dem Genesungsschlaf aufwacht, nicht mehr zum Wiedererkennen ist. Man möchte meinen, er sehe ordentlich blond, blauäugig germanisch aus. Durch unsere liebende Umarmung haben wir ihm soviel deutsche Säfte einfiltriert, daß er kaum noch von einem Deutschen zu unterscheiden ist. So können und wollen wir die Erben der Türkei werden, von ihr selbst dazu eingesetzt. Wir pflegen den Erblasser getreulichst bis zu seinem Tode. [...] Diesem Zukunftsgedanken hat die Kaiserreise kräftig vorgearbeitet. [*Only Turkey can be German India. [...] The Sultan must remain to be our friend, of course with the ulterior motives that we would most like to gorge on him. In the beginning, our friendship can be absolutely generous. We help the Turks in building railways and ports. [...] The ‘sick man’ will be made healthy, so efficiently cured that, when he woke up from his convalescence sleep, he will be out of all recognition. This means, he will look blond, blue eyed and Germanic. In our loving embracement we will inject into him so much German juices that he will not be distinguishable from German. Thus we can and we want to be the self-appointed heirs of Turkey. We will look after the testator faithfully until his death. [...] these projections prepared the Kaiser’s journey.*]” (Cited and translated in Deren, 2004, pp. 77-78).

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<sup>11</sup> According to Scherpe’s (2010, p. 165) analysis, the public space of the Kaiserreich from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the First World War was characterized by an imperialistic language and symbols.

According to Fuhrmann (2009, p. 80) these colonialistic ambitions failed due to the competition of other colonial powers (such as France and Britain) that for their part had economic and military interests in the Ottoman Empire. The colonialistic goal of settlement and exploitation of Ottoman Anatolia remained wishful thinking (ibid., pp. 78ff.). The “dream of a German Orient” ultimately ended with the German defeat in the Great War.

In light of German late 19<sup>th</sup> century ambitions it has been argued that the Ottoman Empire held the status of a “half-colony”, i.e., a formally independent nation under the broad control and influence of the European powers (cf. Brauns, 2009). Whether the Ottoman Empire can be described as a half-colony dominated by German influence remains subject to further discussion regarding the large influence of other European powers, such as Britain and France, in the Ottoman Empire (cf. Brauns, 2009). In any case it can be noted that the German rulers were not treating the Ottoman Porte as an equal partner. Rather they were keen to widen their political and economic influence in the region by pursuing a “peaceful penetration” strategy in the Ottoman Empire.

### 3.1.2. Foreign Political Relations with the Turkish Republic

The foreign political relations between Germany and Turkey have a long history. Traditionally, they have been shaped by different motivations and interests. Whereas rivalry, ambition for power and conflicts have marked the foreign political relations on one hand; cultural, military and economic cooperation have provided a common point of interest that continues to the present day. Despite recent political differences and tensions<sup>12</sup>, there are regular exchanges at the foreign policy level.

At the foreign policy level, both countries visit each other regularly. Although visits by the respective state officials are not always unproblematic<sup>13</sup>, they demonstrate the intensity and importance of the two countries' foreign political relations. In the last decade, numerous German members of parliament and ministers visited Turkey to establish contacts and pursue economic and political interests. Particularly, with regard to the beneficial economic relations, visits by German state officials are of great importance to secure projects and orders for German companies. These endeavors continue regardless of political tensions or conflicts (cf. Kopp, 2014).

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<sup>12</sup> This political tension became visible in the spying affair of the German Federal Intelligence Service (*Bundesnachrichtendienst*) that also targeted the Turkish government in 2014 (cf. Eddy and Arsu, 2014).

<sup>13</sup> For example during the German Federal President Joachim Gauck's visit to Turkey in April 2014 when former Prime Minister Erdoğan responded harshly to the former's criticism on democratic deficits in Turkey. Erdoğan denounced Gauck's criticism as an unacceptable interference in the internal affairs of the country (cf. "Wortgefecht bei Staatsbesuch," 2014).

Further, there is regular exchange between the Foreign Ministers of both countries in the form of bilateral talks or international conferences. Thus, the *Strategic Dialogue* at foreign ministry level was launched in May 2013. The goal of this dialogue is to consolidate and intensify previous dialogs and contacts. This includes regular consultations between the Foreign Ministers and the establishment of working groups to address various bilateral issues, such as security policy, counter-terrorism and the partnership with Europe (cf. Federal Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany & Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, 2013, p. 2).

### **3.1.2.1. Germany and European Union Accession Negotiations with Turkey**

The present foreign political relations between the two countries are strongly influenced by the policies of the European Union. The political debate of Turkey's full membership in the EU began in the 1960s with the aim of bringing the country closer to Europe and securing it as a strategic partner during the Cold War (Steinbach, 2011). Thus, in 1963<sup>14</sup> an association agreement (*Ankara Agreement*) was made between the *European Economic Community (EEC)* and Turkey. The agreement included the prospect of Turkish membership. In his speech marking the signing of the agreement, the former president of the EEC Commission Walter Hallstein reaffirmed that Turkey was

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<sup>14</sup> Two years before the German-Turkish recruitment agreement (*Anwerbeabkommen*) was concluded.

part of Europe and that its full membership was a joint endeavor (Hallstein, 1963, pp. 738ff.). However, from the beginning on, this vision of Turkey was not part of the public consciousness (cf. Steinbach, 2011). Besides, there were considerable differences of opinion between the EEC countries concerning the meaning and purpose of the agreement with Turkey (Kramer und Reinkowski, 2008, p. 156).<sup>15</sup> For the German government security and strategic interests prevailed. Thus, the prospect of Turkey's EEC-membership was meant to link the country to the western world (cf. Steinbach, 2011).

Further negotiations and agreements with the *European Community (EC)*, and later the *European Union (EU)*, were mainly shaped by economic interests. After some back and forth in the negotiations in the 1970s and 1980s, both parties affirmed the completion of the customs union (which was already mentioned in the Ankara Agreement) in March 1995. Turkey was obliged to adopt all EU regulations, allowing for the unrestricted bilateral trade of industrial goods (Kramer and Reinkowski, 2008, p. 163). The 1993 Copenhagen criteria for future EU candidates also applied to Turkey (cf. Centrum für angewandte Politikforschung, 2007).

Turkey finally achieved EU candidate status in 1999. The requirements included the settlement of the Cyprus conflict by 2004 and the fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria, particularly in the area of human rights (ibid.). It was

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<sup>15</sup> Kramer and Reinkowski (2008, pp. 156ff.) present a detailed analysis of the motives and inconsistencies of the EEC member states in relation to the association agreement with Turkey.

stressed that the accession negotiations launched in October 2005 were an open-ended process. At this time, the German government under Gerhard Schröder showed a great interest in Turkey's approximation to the EU and supported the negotiations.<sup>16</sup> It wanted to bring the country closer to Europe and to continue to expand the bilateral relations. At the same time, however, Turkey's political situation was criticized and reforms that indicated the country's preparedness for full membership were demanded ("Schröder mahnt, Erdogan nickt," 2005).

Although today's Federal Government under Angela Merkel reveals itself to be one of the traditional opponents of accession and calls for a so-called "privileged partnership" between the EU and Turkey, it is also interested in an approximation of the country to the EU ("EU-Beitritt der Türkei," 2013). This is motivated by economic and strategic political interests. On one hand, Turkey is of vital importance for stability in the region and for the EU's (and Germany's) energy supply. On the other hand, the country is an important mediator to the Near and Middle East as well as to North Africa due to its geopolitical position (cf. Auswärtiges Amt, 2014b). Nevertheless, the German government is holding on to the privileged partnership model while paradoxically calling for the continuation of the open-ended accession negotiations and the implementation of European standards and laws in Turkey (cf. "Merkel verweigert Erdoğan," 2014; "Überflüssige Beitritts-Verhandlungen," 2014). Consequently, it seems the

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<sup>16</sup> The support of the accession negotiations cannot be seen as a paradigm shift in Germany's policy toward Turkey. Rather, Turkey was to be retained as a traditional strategic partner.

current government follows no clear line with its political stance regarding Turkey's accession to the EU (cf. "EU-Beitritt der Türkei," 2013).

Meanwhile, the counter-arguments for Turkey's full membership in the EU within the German public are multifaceted. In addition to geographical, religious and economic aspects, the question of the EU's self-definition is also subject to the debate (cf. Kramer, 2003, pp. 10ff.). According to Walter (2008, p. 55), Turkey (despite its self-portrayal as a secular-democratic state) is portrayed as backwards and non-democratic in this discussion. Moreover, it has been argued that the Turkish Republic solely seeks access to European financial funding (Walter, 2008, pp. 55ff.). Kramer (2003, p. 6) examines the main counter-arguments of this debate on EU membership of Turkey and concludes that they are neither theoretically nor empirically well-founded and can therefore not be regarded as valid arguments against Turkey's accession. He emphasized that while Turkey is up to now economically and politically dependent on the EU, the economic benefits for the EU have already been secured by the establishment of the customs union. In addition, Kramer (2003, p. 6) argues that the expansion of economic relations is not necessarily dependent on Turkey's full membership in the EU.

### **3.1.3. The Collective Memory of German-Turkish Foreign Political Relations**

Germany's foreign political relations with Turkey look back at a long history that was ever since shaped by various military and economic interests. In

contrast to the historical political relations in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, current political relations are also influenced by EU politics. Political discussions, such as the Cyprus issue, the human rights situation or democratic basic rights in Turkey, are led within the framework of Turkey's accession to the EU.

Despite the two nations' traditional "partnership", Germany's current government is one of the most vehement opponents of Turkey's membership in the EU. Although the bilateral relations (e.g. in the field of economy, military or education) are traditionally close and the German government upholds foreign political relations with Turkey as with no other country outside Europe, Turkey is not recognized as an equal partner country within Europe. Rather Turkey is offered to cooperate with the EU on the basis of a "privileged partnership" that involves an economic and political neighborhood policy between the country and the EU. In the German public an ongoing debate of counter-arguments against Turkey's EU membership supports this political viewpoint (cf. Kramer, 2003, pp. 10ff.). Yet, at the same time Turkey's economic rapprochement with the EU is highly supported by the German government. This is due to the fact that the customs agreement between Turkey and the EU in the mid-1990's and the adaption of norms and laws to European standards has improved the trade conditions between Germany and Turkey and has therefore benefited German economic interests (cf. Ginsburg, 2014). Hence, the German concept of a "privileged partnership" includes the formation of a Free Trade Area between Turkey and the EU and Turkey's adaption to European economic and educational standards (cf. Chardon, 2013, p. 276).



In addition, the German government has non-European interests regarding Turkey. Turkey is recognized as a traditional strategic partner. This is demonstrated in political initiatives such as the “Strategic Dialogue” between the foreign ministers of both states. Indeed, there has been a political dialogue between the governments of the respective nations since the era of Wilhelm II. The discussed issues have not changed fundamentally. Strategic political and economic interests that comprise the military and education sector remain at the center of the political agenda.

At large, the political relations between the two nations since the 19<sup>th</sup> century are marked by a dichotomy. From the imperialistic endeavors of the German Kaiserreich and the opportunistic “partnership” with the Ottoman Empire in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries until the EU politics of today’s Federal Republic of Germany, a hierarchical structure can be exposed. This structure is characterized by Germany’s superiority over Turkey. At the same time, the political relationship is marked by a close cooperation in the field of economy and military that continues to this day.

This development can be analyzed within the framework of Halbwachs’ theory. According to Halbwachs’ the past is a social construct that is reconstructed through the present framework of society and shapes and influences present social thought at the same time. From his theoretical point of view, there is no social idea that is not a memory of society at the same time (Halbwachs, 1992, pp. 188-189). In this sense the present German perception of

its relationship with Turkey is constructed and influenced by their past relationship with the Ottoman Empire. This past relationship was, at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, characterized by a hierarchical structure with the German Empire's distinct military and political superiority. Thus, the narrative of German-Turkish political relationship is characterized by a close economic and military cooperation, on one hand, and the superior position of Germany that strives to enforce its strategic and economic interests, on the other hand. This narrative influences the contemporary perception of the Turkish Republic by the German society. Thus, Turkey is still perceived as an unequal "partner" within the EU that serves economic interests. This narrative is constructed and sustained through communication, which is mainly sustained through the media at the present day. The portrayal of Turkey in the German media is thus often informed by its past, which will be further outlined in the fourth chapter of this research.

From the standpoint of Halbwachs' (1980, p. 106-107) theory this collective memory does not reach beyond a certain point in the past that is of interests to the group. Developments beyond that certain point do not affect the group or society. The society is further able to better remember things that are of importance (ibid., pp. 26ff.). In regard to the Ottoman Empire, the period of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries sustainably transformed and shaped the two empire's political relations. Their military cooperation in the Great War, for instance, had a lasting effect on both sides that ultimately led to the demise of both the German and Ottoman Empire. At the same time it has to be noted that according

to Halbwachs' (1992, p. 182) memories get distorted through the process of reconstruction. Thus, the portrayal of the past in German collective memory is neither objective nor accurately reflects historical realities. This explains the dominantly inferior perception of Turkey in German society, although the Ottoman Empire was at times a strong global empire with military strength.

In this understanding of Halbwachs' (1980, p. 82) collective memory past and present are not distinct but rather merged. The group itself is perceived to remain the same over time. This allows us to view the political relationship between Germany and Turkey as a continuum although their names, political structure and system of government have changed essentially over time. From the viewpoint of collective memory this changes are merged into a unitary narrative to provide cohesion within the group or society (Halbwachs, 1992, pp. 182-183). Thus, the collective memory is not marked by clear demarcations but is rather a uniform and continuous construct (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 80). In regard to foreign relations with Turkey, the collective memory of German society therefore creates a unitary image that is common to the entirety of the society (although individual opinions might differ from this image). This image again shapes and influences the present social beliefs and thoughts in German society. The social beliefs of German society in regard to Turkey are thus a combination of past memories and present knowledge that is informed by the media, academic publications or education. This point will be further elaborated in the analysis of the fourth chapter.

Lastly, the collective memory is not a static construct but rather subject to change depending on the present framework of the group or society (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 183). With regard to German-Turkish foreign political relations this indicates that with Turkey's economic growth and its present foreign policy in the Middle East, the present perception of the Turkish Republic as a framework for the collective memory might change.

### **3.2. Economics**

#### **3.2.2. Economic Relations with the Ottoman Empire**

German influence in the Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries extended into the economic sector. The advancing industrialization and growth of population in the German Empire in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century forced a change in its foreign policy. The geographic and industrial developments in the Kaiserreich demanded the exploitation of natural resources and export markets (McMeekin, 2011, p. 37). Hence, the important issues of foreign trade and capital exports were put on the foreign policy agenda. Following the French and British Empires, the German Empire eventually entered its imperialistic phase at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As Brauns (2009) notes, during this imperialistic phase (that ended with the First World War in 1914) political (i.e., diplomatic) and economic interests were closely linked.

Comparatively insignificant economic relations of individual German entrepreneurs existed before the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Rather, Ottoman foreign trade was dominated by French and British influences until the end of

the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since the middle of the century, the Ottoman Empire however became increasingly important for the German foreign trade and domestic industry. Alongside the military missions (see Chapter 3.3.1), exports of German industrial products (such as automobiles, airplanes, arms and railway wagons) in the Ottoman Empire were enforced (cf. Brauns, 2009; Gencer, 2002, p. 46). Besides, German companies were commissioned with the development of the infrastructure (i.e., the construction of ports, railway lines and roads). As Gencer (2002, p. 47) notes, the increasingly isolated German Empire of the pre-war period was keen to gain economic and military influence in the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the diplomatic strategy of assisting in the modernization of the Ottoman army was serving vital political and economic interests.

As with the merchandise exports, German capital flow was insignificant compared to British and French influences in the Ottoman Empire before the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The political decline of the Ottoman Empire had forced a raise of its military budget that was financed through foreign capital (Brauns, 2009). A deciding factor in the increase of German capital in the Ottoman Empire was the *Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA)*. This organization was founded in 1881 to ensure the payment of the Ottoman's debt to European bondholders (Birdal, 2010 p. 8). The OPDA further served as an intermediary between European companies seeking to invest in the Ottoman Empire. The executive committee of the Administration included German holders (alongside French, Austrian and Italian members) that were under the influences of their governments (cf. *ibid.*, p. 6-10). According to Birdal (*ibid.*, p. 176) the OPDA

“worked as a private company pursuing the maximization of its own profits” (that was economic interests of the European loaners) regardless of political consequences in the Ottoman Empire. Brauns (2009) compares this foreign debt management to an imperialistic cartel for the repression of the Ottoman Empire. According to his research, the financing of important economic projects such as loans for the construction of the Baghdad Railway were decided by the international committee before the consultation with the Ottoman authorities. In the case of Germany, the loans for arms deliveries or the advance payment of the construction of the Baghdad Railway increased the Ottoman Empire’s debts to the German Empire. Consequently, the Kaiserreich held the second largest share (that is 23%) of the total of Ottoman debt (ibid.).

The driving forces behind the expansion of German capital in the Ottoman Empire were German banks, such as the *German Bank* (Deutsche Bank), the *German Palestine Bank* (Deutsche Palästina Bank) or the *German Orient Bank* (Deutsche Orientbank) (Brauns, 2009). The German influence increased to an extent that on the eve of the First World War German companies and banks (besides other major projects) run the electricity supply and the infrastructure in Istanbul. The strategic value and power of these capital investments strengthened the Kaiserreich’s influence in the Ottoman Empire. Brauns (2009) concludes that the German capital had succeeded in penetrating the Ottoman economic area that was formerly dominated by British and French influences. In his view, the strategic investments were part of the political agenda of German imperialism that aimed at further political and economic

expansion (Brauns, 2009). The project of the Anatolian Railway and later the Baghdad railway has to be assessed within this context.

### **3.2.1.1. The Anatolian Railway and the Baghdad Railway**

The Anatolian Railway and its extension to the Baghdad Railway one and a half decades later were the largest and most important German projects in the Ottoman Empire. With this modernization project Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1842-1918) wanted to establish a better integration of the periphery into the Anatolian heartland of the Empire. Besides, he was aiming to achieve a better mobility of the army in an Empire that was destabilized by inner uprisings (Brauns 2009). The German Kaiser, for his part, was striving for a better control of the Ottoman's sphere of influence through the Baghdad Railway. Hence, the construction of the Baghdad Railway became a "German-national" project that was central to German imperialistic endeavors in the Ottoman Empire (ibid.; Eichholtz, 2007, p. 21).

The railway project was financed almost exclusively through German capital and built with material that was imported from the Kaiserreich. The funding was provided by mainly through the *German Bank* (cf. Brauns, 2009). The bank's objective in the construction of the railway was the economic penetration of the region. The construction was to provide exclusive areas of operation for the German industry and trade. Thus, the bank ensured that a large amount of contracts was assigned to German companies. The material supply

was likewise largely provided by German companies such as the *Friedrich Krupp AG* (Eichholtz, 2007, p. 15).

Furthermore, the planned construction of the Baghdad Railway and the involved economic and political influence in the region triggered a power struggle between the European powers of Britain, France England and Germany. This development was due to their large interest in the Mesopotamian oil region in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The German Bank was able to secure its prospect of sharing in the exploitation of the oil sources with the so-called “oil concession” of July, 17th 1904 (Eichholtz, 2007, pp. 22-23). Beforehand, the bank had received the right for the exploitation of resources in a 20-km-long strip on both sides of the railway (ibid., pp. 16-17). With the railway concession further agreements and rights (such as the harbor construction in Baghdad and in Basra) were obtained that corresponded with the Kaiserreich’s interest of shipping the natural resources and oil (ibid., p. 21).

The project of the Baghdad Railway was interrupted by the outbreak of the First World War and was never finalized. Yet, the completed railway lines proved to be of use for the transportation of troops and material during the war (Franz, 2003).

In summary, the Baghdad Railway can be seen as a symbol and major success of German capital and foreign policy in the economic penetration of the Ottoman Empire. According to Brauns (2009) it became one of the propagandized symbols of German imperialism alongside the German battleship. The involved strategic military and political interests made the construction of



the Baghdad Railway a political issue in the power struggle of the European nations. Thus, some scholars have even named the construction of the Railway and the involved conflicts as a cause of the First World War (cf. Maloney, 1984, p. 15).

### **3.2.3. Economic Relations with the Turkish Republic**

As shown in the previous chapter, the economic cooperation between Germany and Turkey has a long history. Today, Germany is Turkey's most important trade partner (Auswärtiges Amt, 2014). In addition to English and French, German is one of the most common business languages in Turkey (cf. Aussenwirtschaftszentrum Bayern and Aussenwirtschaft Austria, 2014, p. 5).

Since the nineties, Turkey has been experiencing a large economic growth. Particularly over the past decade, the young population, the reforms and the increasing liberalization and opening up of the domestic market have contributed to a significant economic upswing (cf. Simon, 2015). The German companies involved in the country continue to benefit from this economic boom (cf. Bund Türkisch-Europäischer Unternehmer, n.d.).

#### **3.2.2.1. Foreign Trade and Investments**

In 2013, with an increase of nearly 5 percent, the bilateral trade volume between Turkey and Germany reached a record high of nearly 33.8 billion

Euros. Thereby, Turkish exports to Germany increased by 1.4 percent (13.5 billion Euros) while imports from Germany increased by 7.1 percent (21.5 billion Euros) (cf. Auswärtiges Amt, 2014). Thus, the larger part of the trade volume remains to be German imports to Turkey.

With 11 billion U.S. dollars in the first half of 2014, the Federal Republic of Germany is the third largest exporter to Turkey. In 2014, Germany held the first place among the importing countries of Turkish goods, followed by Iraq, the UK and Italy (cf. Bagoglu, 2014a). In the same year, Germany recorded a sum of over 32 billion Euros in foreign trade with Turkey (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 2015).

Germany, as the biggest importer of Turkish goods and the largest supplier of industrial products and capital goods, is the most important foreign trade partner of Turkey. Turkey, on the other hand, is a medium-sized export market for German companies. In 2014, Turkey placed 16<sup>th</sup> in the ranking of Germany's largest trade partners (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, 2015).

With regard to trade relations with the EU, Germany is a clear front-runner. The bilateral trade volume between Germany and Turkey accounts for almost a quarter of the commodity exchange with other EU member states. That means almost one quarter of all Turkish exports into the European market meet demand in the German Republic (cf. Otto, 2013, p. 12). In total, almost half of Turkey's export volume is transported into the EU (cf. Avci, 2013, p. 76). In this

light, the reforms and adjustments related to Turkey's accession to the EU are beneficial from an economic perspective.<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, Germany is the largest foreign investor in Turkey with an investment volume of over 12 billion U.S. dollars since 1980. Turkey's current economic development and the prospect of its EU membership are promising to German investors (cf. Höhler, 2007). The number of German companies and Turkish companies with German capital contributions in Turkey has risen to 6,000. The companies' operating areas are diverse, ranging from industrial production and product sales to different services (cf. Auswärtiges Amt, 2014).

### **3.2.2.2. Economic Organizations and Agreements**

The importance and intensity of economic relations between Germany and Turkey is reflected in the large number of business organizations and agreements between the two countries. The *Association of German Chamber of Commerce and Industry* (DIHK) has maintained a German delegation („*Offizielles Delegiertenbüro der Deutschen Wirtschaft in der Türkei*“) in Turkey since 1984. In 1991, the *German-Turkish Chamber of Industry and Commerce* (DTR-IHK), following the initiative of the former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the former Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller, was founded in Istanbul (cf. Deutsch-Türkische Industrie- und Handelskammer,

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<sup>17</sup>Belke and Terzibas (2003) have dealt in detail with Turkey's EU accession from an economic perspective.

2015). Ten years later (on the basis of the DTR-IHK protocol) the *Turkish-German Chamber of Commerce* (TD-IHK) was established with headquarters in Cologne. The TD-IHK is a trade association represented by a ten-member board, half consisting of Turkish entrepreneurs and the other half of German entrepreneurs. The Chamber is responsible for promoting bilateral investments and commercial initiatives in order to reinforce Turkish-German economic relations (cf. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, n.d.-b). This demonstrated the close economic cooperation between the two countries, exceeding the usual economic relations between the Turkey and the EU.

Since 1962 an investment protection agreement between the two countries has been in effect, which guarantees the protection and security of mutual investments against nationalization, expropriation and expropriation-like acts as well as free capital and revenue flow in both countries. The agreement also aims to facilitate and intensify the economic cooperation between the two countries (cf. BGBl, 1965, pp. 1193-1212).

Furthermore, Turkey and Germany have an agreement on the avoidance of double taxation and tax evasion with respect to taxes and income that was renewed in 2011. This affects people who live in one or both of the two states and have any source of income. According to its content, this agreement is characterized by the desire to promote the mutual economic relations by removing fiscal obstacles (cf. BGBl, 2012, p. 527). At the same time, the German government hopes for increased tax revenues since tax losses can be

prevented with the help of increased information exchange between the two countries (cf. “Deutschland gibt den Weg frei,” 2012).

The growing economic relations between Germany and Turkey also required that the DTR-IHK introduced an arbitration board to settle disputes in German-Turkish legal relations. The board aims to improve the conflict resolution in trade relations between the two states (cf. Buchwitz, 2012). Turkish and German companies can use this board to resolve discrepancies concerning payment or delivery delays. The current arbitration board provides the clarification of legal disputes in a formal process through institutionalized arbitration (cf. *ibid.*).

Since 2013 a bilateral economic and trade commission, the *Joint Economic and Trade Commission (JETCO)*, exists. As of spring 2015, annual meetings are held under the direction of both economic ministers with the aim of providing a platform for the various economic sectors in both countries (cf. Auswärtiges Amt, 2014).

The *KfW Development Bank* is an important German financial institution in Turkey. Funding is provided through the cooperation of the *Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development* and Turkish partner banks. These loans are provided on the basis of low-interest and long-term. Overall, 4.7 billion Euros have been implemented in the last fifty years (cf. Simon, 2014). Especially, projects in the field of renewable energies and energy efficiency are increasingly promoted. In 2012 and 2013 alone, the KfW provided 190 million

Euros of its own resources to the Industrial Development Bank of Turkey (*Türkiye Sınai Kalkınma Bankası*) to finance the development in the energy sector (cf. KfW, 2015).

The *Development Cooperation* (EZ) between the German Federal Ministry and the Turkish government began in 1959 and ended in October 2012. The termination was due to the fact that Turkey, at its current level of development, was considered an equal partner for Germany (Entwicklungspolitik Online, 2012). Succeeded by India and Egypt, Turkey had been the third largest recipient of financial and technical support from Germany for decades. In financial and technical areas of cooperation, more than 4.5 billion Euros had been provided in form of loans and grants. With this, more than 400 projects had been launched and maintained (cf. Auswärtiges Amt, 2014). Due to Turkey's geo-strategic importance and the historical relationship between the two countries, Germany had been the largest supporter of the country (cf. "Deutschland streicht Türkei die Entwicklungshilfe," 2012). However, despite the end of the EZ, cooperation between the two countries continues, especially in the energy sector.

### **3.2.2.3. Energy Sector**

As made clear in the previous section, the energy sector is an important part of current German-Turkish economic relations. In November 2012, the former German Minister of Economics and Technology Philipp Rösler and the

former Turkish Energy Minister Taner Yildiz signed an agreement on intensified future cooperation in the energy field. For this purpose, a *German-Turkish Energy Innovation Forum* is held annually with the aim of exploring new fields of cooperation in the energy sector. Besides, the forum is supposed to intensify the dialogue between policy makers and entrepreneurs (cf. Auswärtiges Amt, 2014).

For German industrial and political representatives, the energy market in Turkey is extremely promising. The country's energy demand has been steadily increasing due its economic growth, population increase and rising average income. To reduce its dependence on foreign imports, the Turkish government has been investing in the renewable energy sector. So far, Turkey is heavily dependent on cooperation with foreign companies in the implementation of planned energy projects. The privatization of the Turkish energy market has opened it to Turkish and international companies and investors (cf. Höhler, 2006). By the year 2023, an estimated total of 130 billion U.S. dollars has to be invested for the expansion of electricity production and energy efficiency in Turkey. According to the President of the TD-IHK Rolf A. König, the Chamber will support German companies in acquiring contracts in this field (cf. Türkisch-Deutsche Industrie- und Handelskammer, 2013). Several German energy companies, such as *E.ON* and *EnBW*, have already entered the Turkish energy market with large investments, while German companies, such as *Siemens*, are assigned with major projects (cf. "Wachstumsmarkt," 2012; "Frischer Wind aus Kleinasien," 2013; Bagoglu, 2014b).

Besides, Turkey is increasingly developing into a hub of oil and gas trade between Europe, Asia and the countries of the Caucasus. Major projects such as the *Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline (BTC pipeline)*, the proposed *Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline* and the proposed *Nabucco-West pipeline* demonstrate the current political and economic significance of energy supply in the region. German investors, such as the energy company *RWE*, are involved in large projects. The political objective of both the German and Turkish governments is to achieve greater independence in the energy supply, mainly of Russia and Iran. At the same time, the supply of natural gas and oil is to be ensured by calling for safe alternatives. In the light of the currently unstable political relationship between the EU and Russia, this is of great importance for Germany.

In summary, it can be stated that the Turkish energy sector offers enormous financial potential for German companies and investors. This opportunity has been recognized by the German government. Cooperation in this field is thus supported and heavily promoted on the political level (cf. “Delegationsreise: Deutsch-Türkische Energiebeziehungen,” 2014).

### **3.2.3. The Collective Memory of German-Turkish Economic Relations**

In contrast to tension on the political level, Germany’s economic relations with Turkey have been growing continuously. Since the first major project of the Baghdad Railway, the economic cooperation has expanded over various sectors. Today, Turkey remains to be an important exports market and



trading partner for the German Republic. Over the last years, German exports to Turkey have increased fourfold, while Turkish exports to Germany have doubled (“Deutsche Exporte in die Türkei,” 2012). The mutual trade is diverse and ranges from automobiles and machine supplies to chemical products. The inexpensive human labor, the young population, the high purchasing power and the geographical status of the country, continue to attract German investors.

In regard to the collective memory theory, Germany’s economic relationship with Turkey during the era of Wilhelm II in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were shaped by German industrial and economic superiority. The German Empire was aiming to enter the Ottoman market to the benefit of the German industry. German companies were to build up the Ottoman infrastructure and advance the exploitation of resources in the Ottoman Empire. Through its activities in the Ottoman Empire, the Wilhelminian Empire was striving to widen its sphere of influence and to establish an influential position in the Middle Eastern region. Thus, the image of Turkey that is reconstructed in this period is one of an economically inferior nation that serves German economic interests.

It can further be argued that the framework of the collective memory of German-Turkish economic relations has not changed fundamentally. While the development of infrastructure, the purchase of harbors and their modernization, as well as exploitation of resources, were at the centre of German economic activities in the Ottoman Empire, similar projects are realized today. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Kaiserreich was striving to ensure its access to Mesopotamian oil

springs through the Baghdad Railway; today projects such as the proposed *Nabucco pipeline* and the *Ilisu Dam* demonstrates the ongoing ambitions of German investors in this field. The Turkish market still offers large investment opportunities, which is demonstrated in German companies' (e.g., E.ON and EnBW) recent activities in the Turkish energy market.

Since the present framework of the two nations' economic relations has remained, the image of Germany's economic relations with Turkey continues to be perceived as unequal. Thus, Turkey's latest economic growth is often portrayed in German media as a temporary appearance that will soon come to an end (cf. Thumann, 2015; Tinç, 2014). In this sense, the collective memory of Germany's economic relations with Turkey reveals the same dichotomous structure that has been outlined in regard to Germany's foreign relations with Turkey. This becomes visible in the already mentioned EU politics of the German government. While the Turkish Republic is not attributed the status of full-membership, its adaption to European standards is supported by the current German government. These reforms mainly benefit trade and investment opportunities of German companies in Turkey since they adapt the Turkish legal and political system to European standards.

To sum up, the collective memory of German society in regard to its economic relations with Turkey is based on the image of an economic inferior Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Since German economic interests in Turkey have not fundamentally change to the present day, this image is still upheld in the collective memory of German society. Turkey's recent economic

growth might entail a change in the present framework of German society in regard to their economic relations. This development will be further outlined in the following chapters.

### **3.3. Military**

#### **3.3.1. Military Cooperation with the Ottoman Empire**

In keeping with the economic penetration of the Ottoman Empire, the military cooperation was an important field of German-Ottoman relations. The amount of political intentions behind the military missions of the Kaiserreich in the Ottoman Empire is controversially discussed among scholar today. According to Brauns (2009), Otto von Bismarck was well aware that the missions were means of gaining influence in the Ottoman Empire. In his opinion the German intention was to widen its influence in the region and to gain an ally by preventing the Ottoman's affiliation with the emerging anti-German coalition (ibid.). An Ottoman army that was modernized and strengthened under the German supervision was meeting German strategic political interests. In this light, Götting (2014) states that the Ottoman troops were exploited for not publicly declared German military objectives. At this point, it only be noted that the geostrategic position and the already existing political relations made the Ottoman Empire the ideal ally for the German Reich in the case of an European war.

On the Ottoman part, the modernization and reinforcement of the army was urgent given the external threat through Russia and other European powers

as well as internal uprising. From Sultan Abdul Hamid II's perspective, the German Empire was the ideal partner for this project because it did not make any territorial claims in the Empire and had a strong military (Brauns, 2009; Gökpınar, 2011, S. 36; McMeekin, 2011, p. 37). Besides, the German Reich was in competition with the other European powers and therefore was keen to limit French, Austrian and British influence in the Ottoman Empire.

From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century on the German Kaiserreich was training Ottoman soldiers and was sending German officers to the Ottoman Empire that were aiding in the modernization and education of the army. Through the influence of its officers in the Ottoman Empire, the Kaiserreich was able to receive armaments orders (among other for the *Friedrich Krupp AG*), which benefited the German arm industry (Brauns, 2009; Türk, 2007). Besides, the Kaiserreich was able to raise a Germanophile core in the Ottoman Empire that gained political influence after the *Young Turk Revolution* in 1908 (Brauns, 2009). Kaiser Wilhelm II called this development a German success since the revolution was partly executed by officers that were educated in the Kaiserreich (Brauns, 2009). Many of these officers gained important political positions in the *Committee of Union and Progress* (Ittihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti) that came into power after the revolution. This development ensured the continuity of German-Ottoman political and military relations after the revolution (Türk, 2007). The political strategy behind the military missions that was aiming to reinforce German influence in the Ottoman Empire had succeeded.

As the demise of the Ottoman Empire became increasingly inevitable, the German Empire departed from their former “peaceful penetration” strategy. In the eve of the First World War, the German leaders perceived the Ottoman army as a means of power influence in the Ottoman Empire in case of its demise. In a secret meeting of the members of a new military mission on December, 9th 1913 Wilhelm II formulated the ambitions of the Kaiserreich in the Ottoman Empire as follows:

„1. Die Germanisierung der türkischen Armee durch Führung und unmittelbare Kontrolle der Organisationstätigkeit des türkischen Kriegsministeriums [*The Germanization of the Turkish army and leadership through guidance and immediate control over the organizational activities of the Turkish Ministry of Defense*].

2. Aufmerksame Beobachtung und strenge Kontrolle der Politik anderer Mächte in der Türkei [*Attentive observation and strict control of the politics of other powers in Turkey*].

3. Unterstützung und Entwicklung der türkischen Militärmacht in Kleinasien so weit, daß sie als Gegengewicht gegen die aggressiven Absichten Russlands dienen kann [*Support and development of the Turkish military power in Anatolia to an extend that it can serve as balance to Russia's aggressive intentions*].

4. Die Behauptung der dominierenden deutschen Autorität und des Einflusses auf Fragen der Außenpolitik [*The maintenance of dominant German authority and influence on issues of foreign policy*].“ (Cited in Brauns, 2009; translation by the author).

Another point involved the securing of the Ottoman's ability to repayment of German capital (Brauns, 2009).

On the eve of war, the Kaiserreich had gained significant influence in the Ottoman army. The German armament industry had an absolute supply monopoly in the Ottoman Empire (Türk, 2007). Hence, the Kaiserreich had gained an ally with an army that was trained after its own model and equipped with its weapons. This cooperation finally led to the two nations' war alliance in 1914 (cf. Götting, 2014).

### **3.3.2. Military Cooperation with the Turkish Republic**

The military cooperation between Germany and Turkey has a long history. From the "brotherhood of arms" in the First World War to Turkey's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the military cooperation between the two countries has undergone a development which could be subject to a whole separate thesis. Therefore, in the following only some important points of the two countries' current cooperation at the military level will be outlined.

#### **3.3.2.1. NATO**

Today, the military cooperation between Germany and Turkey is limited largely to cooperation within the NATO. Turkey has been a member state since 1952 and has the second largest army within the NATO. Turkey is of great

importance to the organization due to its strategic position, including the Dardanelles, access to the Mediterranean Sea and its direct proximity to countries such as Iran, Iraq and Syria.

Although the military cooperation between the two countries takes place within the framework of NATO agreements, it has been occasionally met with great skepticism by the German public. In a survey in 2012, 59 percent of German citizens were against the deployment of German armed forces at the Turkish border to Syria after the Turkish government had made a formal request to NATO in 2012 (“Bundeswehr in der Türkei”, 2012). When the German *Bundeswehr* took over the NATO mission the following year, this was widely discussed in the German media (cf. Niedorf-Schipke, 2012). At the political level, however, the deployment of German military equipment and soldiers in Turkey was justified as alliance solidarity within the NATO (cf. Bundeswehr, 2015).

### **3.3.2.2. Defense Industry**

Apart from NATO, the military cooperation between the two countries is dominated primarily by economic interests on the German side. Since the 1960s, Turkey has been one of the main purchasers of German armament (Stauch, 1994). In 2013, the Federal Republic of Germany supplied military equipment worth 84 million Euros to the Turkish state. Therewith, Turkey was among the twenty largest importers of German military equipment. The delivered items

ranged from ammunition to software and warplanes (cf. Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie, 2014, p. 87). While Germany has been benefiting financially from this trade for decades, Turkey has found itself strongly dependent on German and American arms exports.

In recent years, however, Turkey, strengthened by its economic boom, has turned to alternative arms exporters, such as China, in the international arms trade (cf. Kálnoky, 2013; Kazim, 2013). At the same time, the Turkish government has been investing heavily in the country's own defense industry for several years. After decades of dependence, Turkish political leaders strive to make the country independent from arms imports (e.g., from Germany) and strengthen its position as an arms exporter (cf. Güsten, 2013). Current President Erdoğan's declared goal is to advance the country to one of the leading export nations for technology and defense supplies by 2023 (ibid.). Consequently, the Turkish government has increased the budget for research and development in the defense sector enormously. In the meantime, the Turkish defense sector has been producing warships, combat helicopters and drones (ibid.). So far, Turkey's defense industry has already experienced a significant upturn and will continue to play a key role in the country's economic growth in the future (cf. "Bilanz 2013," 2014; "Türkisches Wirtschaftswachstum," 2015).



### **3.3.3. The Collective Memory of German-Turkish Military Cooperation**

In terms of the collective memory theory of German-Ottoman military relations, Turkey is remembered as a politically and military weakened force in the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that served German strategic military objectives. This past relationship was characterized by a hierarchical structure. The Kaiserreich's military superiority and its consequent assistance in the modernization of the Ottoman army enabled it to gain influence in the Turkish army and to channel Ottoman foreign policy decisions. This opportunistic "brotherhood in arms" has led to their collective defeat in the First World War that mainly shaped the further development of the two nations. In the present German collective memory, Turkey is therefore remembered as a military inferior force that serves German strategic military and economic interests. Thus, regardless of political tensions over time, the economic dimension of Germany's military cooperation with Turkey has expanded. Here again the traditional distribution of roles that is also reconstructed in the German society's collective memory is imminent. As in the imperial age, Germany provides the supply side while Turkey is widely dependent on German technology and arms exports.

The circumstances of German-Turkish military relations have obviously changed today. The two nations' military cooperation is currently mainly shaped by the NATO. Thus, the circumstances of military cooperation that existed during the Wilhelminian period have significantly changed. However, the Turkish military continues to purchase a large portion of material and

technological knowhow from the German Republic (cf. “Waffenbrüder,” 2014). As sales figures and the spectrum of German war material exported into Turkey reveals, Germany still holds an important role in providing military material for the Turkish army. Through this ongoing dependency, the image of Ottoman inferiority is still consistent with the current framework of German society’s collective memory. Thus, Turkey continued to be portrayed as a “needy partner” in the German media, on one hand, and as strategically important partner within the NATO on the other hand (Stauch, 1994; Walpot, 2015).

On the side of the Turkish government, its attempt to retire from this historically-based dependency is demonstrated in its orientation towards alternative trade partners, such as China and Russia, and its investment in research and development of defense production. With the latter, the Turkish government pursues the ambitious goal to become one of the largest producers of military equipment worldwide (cf. Güsten, 2013). Thereby, the government strives to release itself from its traditional position and from its dependency on (German) arms imports. Further, the Turkish government has increased its military cooperation with Middle Eastern countries such as Qatar (“Militärische Zusammenarbeit,” 2015). This recent development might shift the present framework of German-Turkish military cooperation.

### 3.4. Education

#### 3.4.1 Educational Policy in the Ottoman Empire

The German-Ottoman relations included the field of education. Both sides attached great importance to this field in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The *Young Turks* were striving to initiate a process of self-empowerment, while the Germans were hoping to sustainably transform Ottoman society to their advantage. On the German side, the educational activity was linked to the economic and military penetration of the Ottoman Empire. Its objectives were to limit British and French cultural influence in the Ottoman Empire and to strengthen the Empire's attachment to the Kaiserreich (cf. Kreiser, 2014, p. 10).

In the context of the Kaiserreich's "informal imperialism" that was forced since the 1900, the *German-Turkish Association (DTV)* was established in 1914 by the Foreign Office (Mangold-Will, 2013, p. 247). The cultural propaganda of the DTV involved the conveyance of German culture to the Ottomans (ibid., p. 248). Thereby, the "peaceful imperialists" (as Kloosterhuis has named them)<sup>18</sup> within this movement aimed at displacing the large French cultural influence and expanding the role of German culture in the Ottoman Empire. In contrast to imperialistic claims for a Germanization of the Ottoman Empire, their "peaceful" intention was to promote the spread of German values

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<sup>18</sup> cf. Kloosterhuis, J. (1994). „Friedliche Imperialisten“. *Europäische Hochschulschriften*, 3(558). Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang.

and perceptions and to enhance Ottoman cultural rapprochement to the Kaiserreich (Mangold-Will, 2013, pp. 250-252).

The board and committee of the DTV were composed of influential representatives from the financial and industrial sector. This demonstrates the political aspect of the DTV whose activities ultimately benefited German strategic and economic interests. Thus, the association was mainly financed by through donations from the industrial and trade sector (Kreiser, 2014, p. 10). Through the financial resources German schools, hospitals, scholarships for Turkish students and aid for Turkish students and trainees that arrived in the Kaiserreich from 1916/17 on were provided. Besides, the translation of German classic literature into Turkish was promoted. In the Kaiserreich language courses were arranged in preparation for the resettlement of Germans after the anticipated demise of the Ottoman Empire. In 1930 the mission of the DTV finally failed and the association dissolved (*ibid.*, pp. 10-11).

On one hand, the moderate imperialistic forces of this informal imperialism were welcomed promoters of the German-Ottoman military ally. On the other hand, their ambitions were assessed critically by the Kaiserreich's military and settlers in the Ottoman Empire. They were perceived as a threat because they unnecessarily boosted the Ottoman's self-confidence (Mangold-Will, 2013, p. 252).

To sum up, educational activities in the Ottoman Empire were going hand in hand with German economic and military interests. They were another

means to the end of widening the Kaiserreich's political influence in the Ottoman Empire by promoting German culture and institutions.

### **3.4.2. Educational Policy in the Turkish Republic**

As already mentioned, the educational and scientific cooperation between Germany and Turkey has a standing tradition dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with its focus mainly on education. Today, the cultural and educational cooperation between the two countries is not only fostered by the German Consulates in Istanbul and Izmir, but also by German cultural organizations such as the *Goethe Institute*, the *German Academic Exchange Service*, private schools of the German Embassies in Ankara and Istanbul, and the *Istanbul High School* (İstanbul Lisesi). Scientific cooperation is promoted by institutions and initiatives such as the *Orient-Institut Istanbul*, the *German Archaeological Institute* and the *Ernst Reuter Initiative for Intercultural Dialogue and Understanding* (cf. Generalkonsulat der Bundesrepublik Deutschland Istanbul, 2009).

According to the *Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)*, Turkey is an important partner for the Federal Republic of Germany due to its growing economy and achievements in science and research (cf. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, 2015). The Ministry point out that up to now Turkish students have been studying mainly in English and French at the country's elite universities. Thus, the BMBF continues to expand

its cooperation with Turkey in the fields of education and research to secure its great potential for Germany (cf. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, n.d.-a). In this light, the *German-Turkish Year of Research, Education and Innovation 2014* was aiming to strengthen the two countries' cooperation in the fields of science, industry and technology. Within this framework, further agreements on cooperation in the fields of education and science were signed by the respective Ministers of Research (cf. "Deutschland und die Türkei," 2014). Today, as in the times of Wilhelm II, German politicians (such as Federal Minister of Education and Research Johanna Wanka) assert that education and research are of increasing importance for German-Turkish relations (cf. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, 2014).

The *German School Istanbul* (Deutsche Schule Istanbul) has thus always been of great political importance. As one of the first German schools abroad, it was founded in 1868 as the *German and Swiss Citizen School* (Deutsche und Schweizer Bürgerschule) for German trades and diplomats living in Istanbul (Wehr, 2009, p. 142). The school's language of instruction is German while 80% its students are Turkish citizens. The majority of the teaching staff (including the headmaster) is German citizens who are partly commissioned and paid by the German state (cf. Bundesverwaltungsamt, n.d., p. 7). Turkish students are intensively prepared for the *Abitur*, a general qualification for university entrance in Germany entitling them to study at German universities. Consequently, 35% of them are accepted to study at universities in Germany (cf.

Deutsche Schule Istanbul, 2015). The school is described by the former head of the of the Foreign Office's Cultural Department Lothar Wittmann as an example, which demonstrates that the promotion of German schools abroad is not only the oldest, but still one of the most important instruments of German foreign policy (Wittmann, 1993, p. 14). Wittmann states that the Turkish graduates of the school are closely linked to the German state and often acquire important positions in Turkish politics and society that shape the German-Turkish relationship (Wittmann, 1993, pp. 14-15).<sup>19</sup> Thus, he underlines that it is the school's mission to educate responsible young citizens who reinforce the German-Turkish relationship (ibid., p. 15). Here, it is made clear that the German schools in Turkey are still an important instrument in German foreign policy. They are valuable in influencing German-Turkish relations at the educational level to the former's advantage. The school's graduates are key factors in Germany's foreign policy interests since they acquire important positions in Turkish society and politics.

Further initiatives, such as the *German-Turkish Youth Bridge* (Deutsch-Türkische Jugendbrücke), also focus on young people. This initiative is aiming to promote the exchange of student between Germany and Turkey (cf. Auswärtiges Amt, 2014c). According to the initiative's statement, it is important to bring the youth of both nations together in the light of the close economic and

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<sup>19</sup> Among the graduates of German-speaking schools in Turkey are the Prime Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoğlu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Feridun Sinirlioğlu, the businessman Bülent Eczacıbaşı and the former Prime Ministers Necmettin Erbakan and Mesut Yılmaz.

cultural cooperation between Germany and Turkey (cf. Deutsch-Türkische Jugendbrücke, 2015). By 2018, 10,000 young people from both countries will be participating annually. This program is supported by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs (cf. Auswärtiges Amt, 2014c).

A “new chapter in the scientific relations between the two countries” (according to the German Federal President Joachim Joachim Gauck) was started in April 2014 with the opening of the *Turkish-German University* (Türkisch-Deutsche Universität) in Istanbul. According to the university’s statement, the goal in its foundation is to establish a close cooperation with German and Turkish companies and institutions (cf. Türkisch-Deutsche Universität, 2013). As stated in an article in the German newspaper *Der Spiegel*, the university is striving to become an elite university that educates workforce for German-Turkish companies (“Hochschule in Istanbul,” 2014). Turkey should further become a more attractive place to study for young Germans. Here, Turkey’s economic growth and its important geopolitical economic position are key to Germany’s ambitions, as stressed by the head of the Ministry of Education Volker Rieke (cf. Üing, 2014).

There are also economic interests behind the establishment of university. During his state visit to Turkey, President Gauck emphasized that the newly-founded university could also contribute to strengthening the close economic ties between Germany and Turkey (“Hochschule in Istanbul”, 2014). The university is to train professionals who are needed in both countries. These graduates are



not least of interest for the 5000 German companies in Turkey. These companies have subsidiaries in Turkey and have already made major investments. As can be read on the website of the German Ministry of Education and Research, these companies have already made significant investments in research and development (cf. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, n.d.). They are benefiting from the country's economic growth and are in need for qualified personnel (Schlötzer, 2010). These companies need managers, lawyers and engineers who are familiar with both cultures and systems (cf. Seibert, 2011). In this context, it is understandable why the university puts an emphasis on natural sciences, such as engineering. In accordance with Germany's economic interests in the Turkey, the close cooperation with German and Turkish companies is another priority for the university (cf. "Istanbul: TDU," 2013).

### **3.4.3. The Collective Memory of German-Turkish Educational Cooperation**

The historical cooperation (or rather the German initiative) in the field of education during the Wilhelminian era was mainly shaped by imperialistic ambitions. The German Kaiserreich strove to raise the education and knowledge standards of the "sick" Ottoman Empire to its own level. Its imperialistic ambitions involved the strategy of gaining (political) influence in the Ottoman Empire through the field of education. At the same time, the German rulers were keen to weaken British and French cultural influences in the Ottoman Empire. In this light, the collective memory of German education policy in the Ottoman

Empire is characterized by the Kaiserreich's superior position that was utilized to gain political influence in the politically and military weakened Turkish Empire.

In regard to the collective memory, the imbalance that has been traced in Germany's political, economic and military relations with Turkey can also be found in the field of education. While the German government continues to pursue a political strategy with German educational institutions in Turkey, these institutions have a high standing in the Turkish society. Hence, Turkish parents are willing to pay high school fees anticipating that their children will have better career opportunities later on. The intentions of the German government remain essentially the same. Like in the Wilhelminian era, it intends to educate Germanophile young adults in these institutions because, until the present day, the graduates hold important positions in the sector of politics, economy and culture in the Turkish Republic. Since these former students ideally established a close bond with Germany through their education, they contribute to the country's relationship with Germany as a whole (cf. Cuntz, 2011). Thus, it can be summarized that the German endeavors in the field of education in the modern Turkish Republic are still driven by political and economic interests. Since this framework remains the same, it can be assumed that the image of the Ottoman's inferior position in the field of education continues to be upheld in the collective memory of German society.

This imbalance in the collective memory was revealed in the German public's reaction to Erdoğan's demand for the establishment of Turkish schools and universities in Germany. Although the former Prime Minister referred to the fact that there are several German educational institutions in Turkey, his claim was strongly refused and assessed as a negative development in the integration process of Turkish immigrants in Germany (cf. "Kritik an Erdogans Ruf," 2010; "Merkel kontra Erdogan," 2010). Yet, this example not only demonstrated the imbalance in their relationship that is based in the collective memory of the German public, but also the increasingly offensive manner through which the government of modern Turkey is aiming to overthrow this asymmetry that is grounded in the German collective memory. Thus, remarks like this led to political tensions and wide discussions in the German public (i.e. media) during the last years (cf. Esser and Raiser, 2008; Schülbe, 2010).

#### **4. COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN GERMAN-TURKISH POLITICAL RELATIONS**

In the previous chapter Halbwachs' memory theory has been applied to analyze the different areas of German-Turkish relations since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this chapter Germany's political relations with Turkey (understood as a combination of their foreign political relations as well as their military, economic and educational cooperation) will be summarized and analyzed as a whole.

Hitherto, it has become evident that the relations in the outlined fields of politics, economy, military and education are marked by a long-lasting cooperation that is interlinked with different advantages for both sides ever since. Yet, the relations between the two countries are also characterized by an evident imbalance. The superior position of Germany in the political field that is reflected in its dismissive EU politics towards Turkey today can also be seen in their military and economic relations. In the field of military and economics Turkey is still largely dependent on the German Republic. Capital investments, trade and arms exports are indispensable for the country's economy and military force. In the German public an image of Turkey as "backward" and "undemocratic" prevails that is particularly evident the public debate on Turkey's accession to the European Union (cf. Walter, 2008, pp. 55-56).

The previous research has further shown that the political relations between the Ottoman Empire and the German Reich and their cooperation in different areas have been mainly shaped during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries,

mainly through Kaiser Wilhelm II's foreign policy. The political relations during this time period were characterized by power politics and imperialistically driven ambitions of the Kaiserreich. It has been demonstrated that the cultural and economic penetration of the Ottoman Empire were main objects of German foreign policy in the Ottoman Empire. In this process the German rulers did not deal with equal "partners". The inferiority of the politically and militarily weakened Ottoman Empire was imminent. Thus, the Kaiserreich was able to enforce its military, economic and political interest in the Ottoman Empire before the onset of the war.

We recall that Halbwachs presumes a collective memory that holds together a group or society and creates a consensus in its understanding and interpretation of the past. The collective memory is constructed within the present framework with events and developments that are considered to be important by the group. If one follows Halbwachs' assumptions, the collective memory of the German society has been mainly shaped during the mentioned period. Even if particular views on the Ottoman Empire might vary within the society, an integrative view of the "sick man of Europe" can be seen as reconstructed by the collective memory of German-Turkish relations that is based on the developments in this formative period. This assumption shall be explained further in the following.

#### **4.1. The Collective Memory of German Society**

In the history of present Turkey a new era has been initiated by the end of the Ottoman Empire and Kemal Atatürk's (1881-1938) Cultural Revolution. The establishment of the Turkish Republic has introduced a new form of government and substantial reforms. It is subject to discussion if this transition process presents a sharp break or rather a continuum in the country's history (cf. Türk, 2010, p. 111). In any case, the political system of today's Turkey as a democratic constitutional republic differs fundamentally from the Ottoman Empire. However, political developments in Turkey are often compared to the history of the Ottoman Empire by the German public (in this case the media) (cf. Ermagan, 2010, S. 111; Kalnoky and Toprak, 2012). The term "neo-Ottomanism" has established itself as a critical description of Turkish foreign policy in the German-speaking scholarship and media landscape (cf. Demirel 2013). While this term is disclaimed by the former foreign minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and other Turkish politicians, it is widely used in German media reports (cf. Lerch, 2011; Kalnoky and Toprak, 2012; Krüger, 2011).

This comparison of political developments with the history of Turkey can be explained through the existence of the past-oriented collective memory of German society. It indicates that the attitude and assessment of Germany's relationship with Turkey is reconstructed through the framework of past relations and developments. As we recall, Halbwachs distinguishes the collective memory from history. According to him, the collective memory does not perform the task to provide a wide and differentiated image of the past. Rather it

limits itself to these parts of the past that can be maintained by the group or society. It connects these parts of the past and presents them as given and true. In this sense, the past from the viewpoint of the collective is neither objective nor stable. In this theoretical framework, the collective memory does not incorporate the totality of the historical and current relations and developments between the two states. Rather it limits itself to important parts of the past. The narrative of Turkey from the viewpoint of German collective memory is therefore one-dimensional. It does not incorporate the whole range and variety of information and does not claim objectivity. The modern political constitution of Turkey is therefore confronted with the narrative of German collective memory that reconstructs itself through past political relations with the Ottoman Empire. This collective memory is upheld through communication, which is nowadays passed on by (among others) the media.

Another point of Halbwachs' theory that has to be mentioned in this context is the necessity of unity of the collective memory within the group or society. According to Halbwachs, the group strives to create a homogeneous and consistent image of the past by eliminating differences. Thus, even though individual opinions can differ, there is a basic setting of collective memory. This aspect can be included in the analysis of Germany's relationship with Turkey. In the German public and political sphere there seems to be a consensus with regard to the Turkish Republic that can be explained through the reconstructed united image of the collective memory. This consensus becomes visible in the country's debate on Turkey's accession to the European Union. Like with no

other acceding country, the negotiations with Turkey have provoked a continuing debate in the German political and public sphere. The political-cultural counter-arguments impute Turkey to be insufficiently western-democratic oriented and industrially behind (cf. Walter, 2008, pp. 55-56). As Kramer (2003, p. 6) concludes in his study, these arguments lack enough empirical and theoretical foundation to be cited against Turkey's accession. Nevertheless, a survey conducted in 2012 shows that 69 percent of German citizens disapprove of the country's accession to the EU (cf. "Deutsche mehrheitlich gegen EU-Beitritt", 2014). Besides, the currently governing CDU party is one of the most vehement opponents of its membership. In the light of Germany's ongoing close economic and military cooperation with Turkey, this paradoxical rejection by Germany's public indicates the influence of the collective memory that creates a consensus of how Germany's relationship with Turkey is assessed and interpreted today. The collective memory creates a narrative of the two countries' relationship that is upheld by education, publications and especially the media.

#### **4.2. The Collective Memory in Regard to Current German-Turkish Political Relations**

Halbwachs theory can be useful to analyze the current political relationship between the two nations. The mentioned necessity of unity of the collective memory implies that there is an inherent attempt to match current developments with familiar content. In this way, the final interpretation of



current developments ultimately relies on the collective memory within a society. This reliance on the collective memory is reflected in Turkey's political presentation in the German public. On one hand, there the Turkish Republic is portrayed as a dynamic country with democratic reforms and a fast growing economy. On the other hand, its image is stamped by the history of the Ottoman Empire (as has been mentioned above). Despite Turkey's recent economic growth and democratic development, the country's image seems to be reconstructed through the framework of the past. In this light, Turkey is often confronted with its past by the German public and politicians.<sup>20</sup>

Due to Turkey's large economic growth since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this 200-year-old imbalance of power in political German-Turkish relations has shifted. The Turkish government's growing self-confidence on the international political and economic level, has led to demand to be recognized as an equal partner. This change becomes increasingly visible. Hence, the Turkish government has lately reacted harshly to criticism by German politicians, such as the recent state visit of Federal President Gauck in April 2014. Turkey has further become conscious of its own position towards the EU. During his state visit in Berlin in early 2014, former Prime Minister Erdoğan made clear „that it is the EU which needs Turkey and not Turkey which needs the EU” (Brown and Rinke, 2014). These demands on the part of the Turkish representatives

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<sup>20</sup> This is manifested in the ongoing debate about the controversial Armenian issue that was addressed by the German President Gauck in April 2015 as well as other German politicians and was widely discussed in the German media (cf. "Pressekompass," 2015).

challenge the traditional structure of German-Turkish political relations and mark a change in the historical distribution of roles. As the Cagaptay (2013) writes in a *New York Times* article: “After all, today’s Turkey is no longer the ‘sick man of Europe’”.

To sum up, the continuing reconstruction of the collective memory is upheld by the frequent and ongoing contact between the two nations. It is not static but rather dynamic, depending on the framework of the present group or society. Here also lies the main challenge for Germany’s future relations with Turkey. Although there seems to be a change in German-Turkish relations with Turkey aiming to end the traditional distribution of roles, the German public and political sphere is still informed by the reconstructed narrative of its collective memory. It continues to view Turkey as a non-equal partner politically, while economic and military cooperation is maintained to the advantage of the domestic German economy. This development implicates risk and challenges that will be further outlined in the following conclusion.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

The results of this research present a dichotomy in Germany’s political relations with Turkey. On one side, the German government sustains a traditionally strong political relationship with the Republic of Turkey that is maintained through continuous political dialogues and state visits. Turkey is recognized as a traditional strategic partner in regard to military and economic

interest. On the other side, the German government holds on to a historical hierarchical structure in this relationship. Turkey is not recognized as an equal partner, which becomes visible in Germany's current position on Turkey's accession to the EU.

In regard to the hypothesis, it can be summarized that the self-serving power politics of the German Reich have shaped the political relationship of Germany towards Turkey until the present day. These imperialistic ambitions have led to a continuing political relationship that is characterized by a strong cooperation and a hierarchical structure at the same time – both of which are reflected in all of the three analyzed fields of military, economy and education. This structure not only contains Germany's continuing economic and military superiority but a historically-based superior attitude towards Turkey. Although the instruments of this paradigm have changed over time, the paradigm itself has remained (cf. Bağ, 2013).

In the German public an image of Turkey as an Islamic, backward oriented country is often upheld. In line with this image, arguments against Turkey's accession to the EU point out that Turkey is not part of the European community of values and its culture (cf. Kramer, 2003, pp. 10ff.). The establishment of the Republic and the democratic secular modern Turkey are viewed with skepticism by the German public (ibid.). As Kramer (2003, p. 11) emphasized, this pattern is centuries old and has determined the European powers' (among them the German Kaiserreich) relationship with the Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

This attitude, this research has argued, is founded in the collective memory of German society. The collective memory, which shapes the reconstruction and interpretation of Germany's current political relationship with Turkey, is based on memories of past developments and events. As has been outlined, this historic political relationship already was characterized by Germany's imperialistic ambitions that centered on economic and military interests. This past relationship is reconstructed and reinterpreted today within the current framework of German society. Thereby it also influences Germany's present view of Turkey. As a result Germany's government still assesses Turkey as a "privileged partner", while intense cooperation in the fields of the economy, military and education are promoted.

However, Germany's "superior" position in the fields of politics, military and economy seems challenged by the Turkish government. The reasons behind this development are various. Among other things, Turkey's government seems to have gained a new self-confidence due to the country's economic growth in the last decade. It strives for a position of power in the Middle East and demands to be recognized as an equal partner by Western governments. On the part of Germany, this development evokes the fear of losing influence in Turkey. Thus, the Turkish government is frequently accused of striving to re-establish the Ottoman Empire's power position in the Middle East region (cf. Kálnoky, 2014). Although, the Turkish Republic presents itself as a democratic secular state, this fact still is faced with skepticism in the German public (cf. Kramer, 2003, pp. 11ff.).

In regard to future developments, it seems that the traditional political relationship and the historical power relations between Turkey and Germany will change. This development brings new challenges. Thus, Germany's public image of Turkey has to be adapted in the upcoming years to maintain and strengthen its relations towards the country. At present, the relationship seems to be in an alternating state. Although, economic and trade relations between Germany and Turkey are growing, the latter is increasingly turning towards alternative partners. This is demonstrated in considerations of the Turkish to join the "Shanghai Five", its attempts to improve diplomatic relations with Iran and its endeavor to increase economic relations ("Iran und Türkei," 2015; Seibert, 2013).

Although Germany's superiority in the outlined fields will remain in the upcoming years, Turkey seems to be aiming to emancipate itself from restrictive exterior influence and strengthen its position as a sovereign state. This is demonstrated in the Turkish governments' endeavor to be one of the top ten largest economies by the year 2023 ("Türkei will 2023," 2013). Germany plays an important part in this context. Unlike other European governments, Germany has historically close relations with the Turkish Republic. The bilateral relations with Turkey range from military cooperation and economic trade to education and the exchange of Turkish "guest workers". Today, the German government is confronted with the challenge to recognize Turkey as an equal partner. The Turkish government itself has to react responsibly to national and international developments. It has to prove its democratic and secular values in regard to its

accession to the EU. Further, the Turkish government must address legitimate German and European criticism in a constructive and credible manner.

Further research in this area should start at this point and critically analyze the German-Turkish history and two nations' present relationship. Future research in the disciplines of cultural and political science should investigate if and how the European (especially the German) image of Turkey can change and develop. Political research should address the issue of how future cooperation between Germany and Turkey can evolve and how the two nations' relationship is possible within the framework of a privileged EU partnership.

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