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Research on nationalism, post-cold war changes that led to the proliferation of new identities and the ever interesting terrain of foreign policy have dominated the field of political science in general and international relations in particular for at least two decades. As the post-cold war political atmosphere has revealed itself, it has become apparent that the bipolar world that defined it is no longer a valid explanation for the future. Hence a quest for a new identity paradigm in an entirely transformed world of the new terrain of foreign policy has kept the scholars of political science busy in Turkey and at the international level. The search for alternative paradigms harvested original research that inquired into issues and areas that were untapped before. These have ranged from extensive discourse analysis of political texts to indicators of religiosity which depicted long forgotten dimensions of collective identity that leave behind and transcend the options of the previous era, i.e., being either part of the “communist” bloc or the “free” world.

The articles in this issue of the Boğaziçi Journal: Review of Social, Economic and Administrative Studies are from the proceedings of the 2nd Graduate Workshop of the Department of Political Science and International Relations. The articles that are included in this volume answer, evaluate and build on the aforementioned quest for alternative explanations to nationalism, identity-formation and foreign policy formulations in Turkey. This annual graduate conference began with the idea of bringing graduate students with a research focus on Turkish politics together under the same roof. The organization committee consisting of graduate students of the department, assisted by the department faculty, called for papers from a broad range of topics ranging from economic policy to political parties and from governance to democratization.

These articles demonstrate that questions inquiring into the causes and consequences of nationalism, the proliferation of new identities, and questions of change and continuity in foreign policy dominate and are at the center of political science research carried out in and about Turkey. The nine articles selected for publication in this issue were chosen along this thematic focus and each seeks to present outcomes of recent original research carried out in Turkey by graduate students. The first two articles by Eren Özialay-Şanlı and Alp Köksal consider the once heated but now calmed debate of Turkey’s
accession process to the European Union. The following articles by Ebru Eren-Webb, Sercan Gidişoğlu, Kerem Rızvanoğlu and Şermin Korkusuz offer insights about nationalism in Turkey and newly rising formulations of identity in Turkey, complemented by the article by Ilia Xypolia on Turkish Cypriot identity. The last three articles by Altay Atlı, Rahime Süleymanoğlu-Kürüm and Murat Güneylioğlu are on the recent developments in the foreign policy agenda of Turkey, a debate which is as interesting as it is heated and is expected to attract even more attention in the days to come.

The paper by Eren Özalay-Şanlı assesses the developments in current Turkish politics by comparing analytical frameworks offered by democratization and Europeanization theories concerning the recent reforms of education in Turkey. The author discusses the assumptions of Europeanization and democratization theories and then debates whether these theoretical approaches answer and are able to explain the education reforms in Turkey in the period after Turkey’s candidacy was announced in the 1999 Helsinki Summit of the European Union. Education policy is vital for the fact that it remains within almost complete supervision of nation states in an ever globalized world, and standardization of education policy would further integrate Europe as more policies enter the competence of the Union. However, as in every policy area, education is affected by international and transnational political influences as values of the new political order are reflected in the policy and content of education as well. Through an examination of recent education reforms in Turkey, the author analyzes the types of reforms that are debated in Turkey whose contents are informed by an amalgam of demands from European Union institutions. These are part of the accession negotiations and include societal demands channeled through civil society organizations and a pressing need from the market on the necessary skills to implant on the workforce. The findings show that the reforms meet the demands of the EU institutions and the needs of the business and market without any problems. However, societal claims remain unanswered as they clash with the fault lines of Turkish politics that have not gone through the necessary mentality change that Europeanization necessitates. The findings of the paper reveal that the norm diffusion model developed by the scholarship of Europeanization is more suitable to explain the democratization process and education reforms in Turkey than other models.

The paper by Alp Köksal is a thorough analysis of macro level indicators that are employed to compare Turkey and various EU member states in order to evaluate whether the offer of a strategic partnership is a sincere proposition by the current European decision makers or whether it is an example of double standards as is popularly perceived in Turkey. By using demographic, economic, political, security and societal indicators derived from Eurobarometer surveys, Eurostat and other sources to pursue a systematic comparison, the author tries to answer the question of whether Turkey is really different from the member states. His analysis consists of two groups, that of old member states which are politically and economically powerful and the newcomers of the Central and Eastern European enlargement which he assumes would present the most similar cases to Turkey. In conclusion, the study finds that the proposition of a “strategic partnership” is not necessarily born out of the bias of Europeans, as there are profound differences even with CEECs; thus valid grounds exist on the EU side for suggesting a special formula. The author suggests that although Turkey has gone through a remarkable transformation on its dedicated path towards full membership into the EU, Turkish authorities must ambitiously undertake further reforms for closing the gap that exists between Europe and Turkey, or privileged partnership will remain as a fair proposition.

Ebru Eren-Webb’s paper is a content analysis of the recent Eurasianist discourse in Turkey. Eurasianism has a long history in Turkish politics; however it has gained new momentum after the paradigm
changes with the end of the Cold War and the political vision of shifting foreign policy orientation of Turkey from being solely Western oriented to an intensified focus on its immediate neighborhood. By employing the analytical framework offered by critical geopolitics theory, the author compares the different perspectives of Eurasianism that are represented by the discourses of three journals (the nationalist Türk Yurdu, the socialist Teori, and the conservative democrat Türkiye Günlüğü) between 1990 and 2010. The author argues that the geopolitical visions of these three groups and the way they imagine the past help to explain their respective perspectives of Eurasia and how they place Turkey in these perspectives. In addition, the author’s findings lead her to conclude that the nationalist and socialist visions of Eurasianism did converge on each other because the Islamist circles in the Post-Cold War allied with the liberal groups and developed a “counter-memory” of the past that became an alternative to the Kemalist historiography, while nationalist and socialist geopolitical traditions remained faithful to the Kemalist narrative of the past. This article therefore is an attempt to analyze different nationalist perspectives which seek to reformulate an identity for Turkey in the post-Cold War period and legitimize different ideological currents by employing alternative and competing readings of the past.

The authors Sercan Gidişoğlu and Kerem Rızvanoğlu present another analysis of political discourse in Turkey, that of nationalist websites on the internet. The article is invaluable considering the ever increasing use of social media in Turkey as a way of individual political reaction and participation. The content and form of political practice, revealed reactions and calls for action that take place in the internet environment constitute another field of research for the scholars of Turkish nationalism and identity. In their analysis of the 121 websites which combine frameworks offered by political science and new media studies, the authors offer a typology of the network structure of what they define as “online Turkish nationalism.” This interdisciplinary typology not only promises to benefit those who would conduct further research on online nationalism, but those who research on other discursive nationalist representations as well. Based on their findings, the authors argue that Turkish nationalists use the Internet mainly in order to diffuse their ideology, to strengthen Turkish national identity and nationalist community structure and finally to build a dedicated virtual community. To realize these purposes, as the authors depict, Turkish nationalists benefit from various content categories. Findings also reveal that the visual layouts of the web sites provide opportunities for the reconstruction of a manipulated interaction oriented towards reinforcing the prevalent nationalist ideology.

The paper by Ilia Xypolia enriches the debate on Turkish identity and nationalism by adding the Turkish Cypriot dimension in the general comparative framework of the conference and is an attempt which would help overcome the neglect of the locality and the distinction of the Turkish Cypriot experience. In the academia too, the issues of Turkish Cypriot identity remain unproblematized although further research in this vein would reveal significant historical aspects of Turkish nationalism itself. This study questions the assumption that is usually taken for granted considering the Turkish Cypriot population (often also the case with Turkey) as a homogeneously secular community. The author argues that the secular identity of Turkish Cypriots is quite a recent development because the Turkish Cypriot community was not cohesive under the British rule during the interwar period of 1919-1939. The impact of the Republican reforms was not clear cut and led to a divide in the society between traditionalists and secularists as the British rule was siding with the traditionalists. This analysis presents an excellent case for the comparativists and historians of identity as it depicts the implication of Turkish nationalism without the presence of the Kemalist rule and where a societal competition of two opposing political ideas, one siding with the British rule, did actually take place,
unlike the single party ban of all opposition in Turkey in 1930s. The author argues that the 1930s was the crucial decade in the development of a Turkish Cypriot secular identity, as the internal conflict came to end after the Second World War with the victory of the secularists.

The paper by Şermin Korkusuz tackles the discourse of the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) concerning Turkey–EU relations in the period between 1990 and 2008. This was a time when the globalization process that Turkey was going through along with the EU accession process as well as the debates about transferring sovereignty to supranational organizations intensified. By identifying the prominent themes in the discourse of the MHP, which is assumed to be the radical nationalist and openly anti-West party in Turkey, the author argues that the position that the MHP holds with regards to the EU has changed over the time period analyzed in this paper. This change was mainly due to how the party perceived the European Community/Union in different periods. While the party perceived the Community as an economic organization earlier, the later perceptions of the party regarded the EU as a political union inheriting a corrupt civilization. Another interesting finding is that, although the MHP almost always had a negative opinion of the EC/EU, it never put the EU relations consideration completely aside. The article’s finding is significant in a way that even the radical nationalist party is responsive to the EU accession process and has not totally alienated itself from this perspective.

Addressing globalization literature, as did the previous article, Murat Güneylioğlu examines globalization’s effects on the changing nature of Turkey’s approach to the Middle East in general and towards Syria in particular. The author first draws attention to the 1990s when Turkish foreign policy was shaped by realist parameters as the country relied on an alliance with Israel and employed hard-power seeking deterrence and coercion. In the 2000s, with Syria’s signing of a counter-terrorism accord in 1998, the two states carried their relationship to high levels of collaboration in many realms, which the author argues was a late response to globalization’s challenge to traditional foreign policy formation. The author comments that the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government tried to utilize Turkey’s soft-power as complementary to hard-power and Turkey expressed its willingness to launch an economic integration with Syria, as the bilateral trade volume boosted and the two states lifted the visas and built common action plans. The author concludes that, with these efforts, Turkey tried to transform its material power into a structural one supported by non-state economic actors, and that Turkey also realized the need for a proactive policy as it launched a Syria-Israel mediation process with a regional peace-building vision, because the external acceptance of legality of foreign policy gained prominence in global information age. These efforts do not remain unquestioned as Turkey’s structural and soft-power has limitations in that its attractiveness is closely linked with a successful maintenance of Europeanization process. The aftermath of the “Arab Spring” will bring important insights on whether the optimistic stance adopted in this article regarding Turkey’s soft-power potential in the region will be actualized or not.

In his article on foreign economic policy, Altay Atlı takes up the issue of business associations and their impact on the foreign policy of Turkey. The article’s contribution is the analytical perspective of the so-called “Özal model” and its implications in foreign economic policy. The article considers not only the empirical relevance of the “Özal model” but also places the impact of this model within the larger context of the relevant literature on the businessmen associations’ impact on foreign policy as these act as an economic interest group. Whether and to what extent the current foreign economic policy under the current government is similar to the Özal model comprises the comparative aspect of this paper where the author presents a thorough analysis of the current foreign economic policy.
under the AKP. The analytical framework used by the author evaluates the foreign policy participation of business actors at three levels, i.e. structural, domestic, and the individual level. The framework proposed in the paper incorporates the factors of state capability, business power and issue salience as determinants of policy influence at the domestic level. Within this context, a typology of roles assumed by business associations is referred to in order to identify the different policy areas where the business is active. As a result, the paper finds that while there are similarities between the two periods in the sense that in both cases business actors are actively taking part in foreign policy issues, there are also significant divergences due to increased interdependence at the international level, and transformation of Turkish economy and ‘consolidation of democracy’ in Turkey.

The article by Rahime Süleymanoğlu-Kürüm examines the efforts of mediation and good offices, two methods identified by the United Nations as mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes as a new aspect of Turkish foreign policy. In questioning the argument that Turkish foreign policy is increasingly influenced by the EU accession process since the Helsinki Summit in 1999, the author argues that the changes in Turkish foreign policy can be better evaluated by using good offices and mediation efforts by the foreign policy actors as they reveal changing foreign policy norms and goals, instruments and style and procedures. Resting on the assumption that an increase in the intensity of good offices and mediation activities by the foreign policy actors of a particular country indicates a change in foreign policy towards a peaceful and normative approach, the author takes into account troika meetings within the context of good offices as they are intended to build confidence between the conflicting parties. In applying these assumptions to Turkey, the author analyzes the evolution of the Turkish mediation since 1987 when Turkey applied for the full membership in the EEC and evaluates the change in the intensity and quality of Turkish mediation as well as her acceptance as a mediator by the parties involved in regional conflicts. The data analyzed makes use of journal articles on the issue. Like the previous article, this one points to the Özal period as the beginning of these efforts, and the author concludes that the foreign policy mediation is possible when the actor’s domestic capacity is improved and policy makers gain confidence with both factors becoming more prominent under the subsequent AKP governments.
EVALUATING CURRENT TURKISH POLITICS IN LIGHT OF DEMOCRATIZATION AND EUROPEANIZATION THEORIES: THE CASE OF EDUCATION REFORMS

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ABSTRACT

This article traces the achievements of democratization and Europeanization in Turkey through debates about reforming education. After a discussion on Europeanization and democratization theories and on how well these theories explain the reform process in Turkey, the article delves into the question of how education norms that were developed during the European integration have affected domestic policy in Turkey. Education is a policy area left to the discretion of national governments within the European Union; therefore supranational legislation governing education does not exist. Education is not a problematic issue in the Turkish accession negotiations. Nevertheless, the pressing need for reform is stated in the annual progress reports when the practice of education in Turkey contradicts the norms of human rights as well as cultural and democratic rights. Recent education reforms and debates about future developments in education suggest important trajectories for understanding the current state of Turkey–EU relations and how far the mechanisms offered by the EU and other European institutions have worked for the further democratization of Turkey. The fact that some norms are accepted while others are rejected proves the instrumental impact of Europeanization in Turkey. The article finds the norm diffusion model accords with the rational institutionalist model of Europeanization in explaining education reforms in Turkey.

Keywords: Europeanization, democratization, rational choice institutionalism, norm diffusion, education reform.
This paper traces the achievements of democratization and Europeanization in Turkey through debates about reforming education. Turkey is going through rapid democratization and Europeanization which this article argues have been interdependent processes since the late 1980s. The candidacy status of the country to the European Union which was announced at the 1999 Helsinki Summit added a certain momentum to these efforts. The harmonization packages approved by the Turkish Grand National Assembly from 2002 to 2004 are examples of the direct impact of these processes. After a decade since Turkey’s candidacy status was announced, it is now time to assess the impact of these two processes on a domestic policy issue. This article tries to evaluate the reforms in the area of education with respect to democratization and Europeanization theories and to see how well these theories explain the recent reforms in Turkey.

Education is a policy area left to the discretion of national governments within the European Union, and therefore supranational legislation governing education does not exist as it does in other policy areas such as competition, economic and monetary policy and agriculture. However, there are norms about education that have been developed and practiced at the EU level. Education is not a problematic issue in the negotiation process for Turkey and there are no conditions imposed by the EU regarding education in order for the country to become a member of the European Union. Still, the facts that the content of education and the educational policy touch upon issues such as minority rights, human rights and religious freedoms make it a policy area that one can measure for the indirect impact of Europeanization on democratization reforms in Turkey.

Education policy and reform in Turkey could be studied under two major headings. The first is the technical improvement of education which includes increasing the percentage of schooling, providing access to technology to students and teachers, and improving the skills and competencies of teachers. The second major heading is the content of education which includes textbooks and curricula. This is where the policy of education is linked to issues of human rights, democracy and citizenship norms. This paper will touch upon the content of the social sciences and history classes. It is this connection between human rights and identities of minorities that makes the debates about the subjects of history, social sciences and religious education an issue of democratization and Europeanization for the Turkish case. Therefore in the initial sections of this paper, democratization and Europeanization theories will be introduced as two alternative explanations for assessing the domestic impact. The following section discusses how these theories account for domestic change in the case of Turkey in general. After a brief summary of the current state of education in Europe and education norms developed at the EU
level, the paper takes a closer look at the education policy in Turkey and at how this specific policy area has been transformed due to international influences in the last decade. In the conclusion the applicability of these theoretical explanations for education reform in Turkey is discussed.

European norms regarding education have emerged during the course of EU integration. Fostered mainly by the Council of Europe and its various projects on improving history education to promote democracy and human rights, the common European norms have been applied in the field of education in EU Member States (MS). As we will discuss in the next pages, they have become norms that Turkish civil society has been pressing for in the last decade. These non-governmental efforts are supported by financial instruments of the EU. Europeanization has therefore meant both a political and an economic trigger for domestic actors in Turkey on the road to substantive democracy.

LINKING DEMOCRATIZATION AND EUROPEANIZATION AT THE THEORETICAL LEVEL

One major independent variable in democratization studies has been international influence. The EU as an international actor influencing democratization has also emerged in this literature recently (Kubicek, 2003; Whitehead, 2001). Apart from the EU featuring as an independent variable in democratization studies, a distinct body of literature on Europeanization has developed in the last decade (Börzel, 1999; Cowles, Caporaso and Risse, 2001; Featherstone and Kazamias, 2001; Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003; Goetz and Hix, 2001).(1) The two bodies of literature identified above do not necessarily speak to one another although democratization of the new Member States has become a significant component of Europeanization since the introduction of the Copenhagen Criteria in 1993. For the examination of the case of education in Turkey, Europeanization and democratization literature which focus on the EU as an external influence will be studied together.

The EU’s role as an international influence was not given much attention in the 1980s. In a four volume study on democratic transition in the 1970s and 1980s, O’Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead (1986) argued that democratization occurred mainly because of the “domestic forces and calculations” and that the international influences were not the major cause. In their volume on the democratic transition from authoritarian rule in Southern Europe, the external actors, the European Economic Community (EEC) being the main one at the time, had a “marginal” and rather “indirect” role by rewarding the transition process. (O’Donnell et. al., 1986: 4-5). On the other hand, Huntington (1991) viewed the same transition differently. The author argued that the EEC enlargement and US foreign policy in the 1970s had an important role in the Southern European transition. In relation to the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and the opening up of the regimes in these countries, Huntington points to the significance of the Helsinki process initiated by the EEC in 1975.

Mechanisms of International Influences on Democratization, the EU as an International Influence

Along with Huntington (1991), many studies in democratization started taking international influences seriously in the early 1990s. This was when the mechanisms with which international actors used to influence democratization started appearing in the literature. In their study which adopted a comparative outlook at the Southern European, Latin American and Central and Eastern European
Countries’ (CEECs) experiences in democratization, Stepan and Linz (1996) identified three major categories of international influence which have affected democratization. These categories were foreign policy of a hegemon, *zeitgeist* and the diffusion of democratic norms. While they identified the international influences as having a minor effect in Latin American countries and an indirect one in Southern Europe, the authors argued that the diminishing hegemonic role of the Soviet Union in the satellite countries and the increasing role of the EU had been the most important variables in determining the democratization of the CEECs.

More recently, Whitehead (2001) has argued that such an international impact has been possible through three mechanisms: contagion, control, and consent. While contagion explains democratization through geographical proximity, control refers to the direct control of domestic institutions by democratic foreign powers. Consent is the voluntary transition of domestic actors to a democratic regime with a certain backup of the international actors. In the same book, Schmitter (2001) argued that conditionality was emerging as the main mechanism of international impact on democratization. Although initially applied by international organizations such as the IMF, and NATO, according to the author, the EU conditionality has been the most effective use of that mechanism in democratization because of the permanent nature of EU membership with its economic and social benefits and complex interdependence. Schmitter (2001) adds that democratization is not the result of commerce or the interconnectedness of economies but rather the communication among the Member States and the candidate countries when the impact of the EU is concerned.

As we are in what Schmitter (2001) called the “fourth wave” of democratization which was not produced by an event unlike the previous waves of the international norm diffusion, contagion has become the main mechanism of democratization. By contagion, the author did not refer to geographical proximity but instead to communicative interdependence. He argued that each successive case created more linkages with the formal non-governmental organizations. In this respect, it is more important to have interconnectedness among non-governmental actors and intelligentsia now compared to the value of intergovernmental channels of influence in the past. The international context that supports democratization has therefore become more regional rather than global or binational.

Along the same line with Schmitter (2001), Kubicek (2003) argued that the EU was transformed from being a trading bloc to that of a political union aspiring to be a regional power both in economic and political terms. The foreign relations of the EU have altered in this respect with a greater emphasis on democratization, human rights, pluralism and the rule of law enshrined in the European Council declarations, treaties and cooperation agreements with post-Communist countries. All these changes were embodied in the Copenhagen Criteria which stressed democratic institutions, the rule of law, and respect for and protection of minorities and human rights in addition to the economic criteria. The author argued that the mechanisms through which the EU as an international actor influenced democratization were convergence and conditionality. What was meant by convergence was the internationalization of norms at the domestic level by the persuasion of the EU, based on constructivist arguments, while conditionality was rather a rational actor model of politics based on the carrot and stick mechanism.

More recently, the ‘gravity model’ which was originally an international trade model, has been applied to the democratization impact of the EU in its more immediate relationships. The gravity model assumed that international trade would grow close to a strong trading center. Emerson and Noutcheva
(2005) argued that the same should apply to centers of democracy and their neighborhood; therefore the strong centers of democracy would foster the democratization of their neighborhood. Pointing to the two strong centers of democracy such as the United States and Europe, the former with a minor impact and the latter with a greater impact on democratization, the authors argued that the gravity model applied in the case of the EU due to political conditionality and socialization mechanisms of Europeanization, hence creating a strong correlation between Europeanization and democracy. With these mechanisms, the neighboring countries of the European Union became more democratic. The Europeanization process led some countries to become members of the European Union, while other countries, even though they did not become members, took important steps on the road to sustainable development and democracy. The authors further asserted that such a gravity force did not arise between the democratic North American and the mostly autocratic Latin American countries because of the lack of a catalyzing factor which would promote such democratization and diffusion of democratic norms.

As we have seen, democratization studies have accepted the influence of the EU as an international actor starting with the 1990s. While there is no academic consensus on the impact of the EU in the Southern European transition to democracy, there is no doubt about the role of the EU in the transition of the CEECs to democracy. The EU influence was studied within the general mechanisms of previous international influences. More recently, distinction has been made with the EU impact and other international actors. Convergence, conditionality and gravity models have been used to explain the distinct impact of the EU on democratization.

Another change concerns what democracy and democratization have meant. Previously most democratization literature was about regime change, that of transition from non-democratic to democratic regimes: Recently, there has been more literature on the states that have been democratic for a long time but have been reluctant to bring their democracy to higher standards; to that of a substantive democracy. This is where Europeanization literature might be complemental to democratization literature.

**Europeanization Theories and the Mechanisms of EU Impact**

As the democratization theory is gradually accepting the EU as an independent or an intervening variable, studies of Europeanization in the new MSs and candidate countries gain a new momentum. Previously studied as European integration or institutional reform at the member state level, the new vein in literature, Europeanization, is defined as the “emergence and development at the European level of distinct structures of governance, that is of political, legal and social institutions” which lead to the creation of authoritative European rules (Cowles et al., 2001).

The Europeanization model proposed by Cowles, Caporaso and Risse (2001) is cited in almost all studies on Europeanization. Building on a historical institutionalist perspective, the authors argued that in order for Europeanization to occur, there must be some misfit between the national and the European level policies. When such misfit exists, whether or not Europeanization occurs depends on the level of adaptational pressure at the national level. In order for Europeanization to facilitate domestic change, the mediating factors should overcome the pressure arising out of the need between adaptation and resistant actors.
The authors argued that Europeanization not only affected formal structures but also the shaping of informal structures such as state identities and citizenship norms. In the same vein, Checkel (2001) and Risse (2001) pointed out the importance of norm diffusion as a mechanism of Europeanization. Checkel (2001) argued that the Council of Europe and EU treaties in the 1990s set important norms about the idea of European citizenship. These norms have been well diffused among the national actors in Germany which in turn have led to changing the legal status of German citizenship from an ethnic definition based on blood ties to a civic one based on being born in a given territory. Political actors at the national level were eager to bring citizenship norms to European standards. European norms were well diffused among and supported by other societal actors like the Church and civil society organizations. Europeanization occurred although domestic norms about German citizenship were historically well institutionalized because domestic actors were successful in overcoming the adaptational pressure.

This is where democratization and Europeanization literature are linked because both of them examine the so-called norm diffusion at the local level. Norm diffusion is important for the fact that it does not directly link to membership prospect; therefore one could talk of the diffusion of European norms in countries like Turkey and Ukraine where membership is not yet on the table, but, nevertheless, democratization proceeds.

In a later study Börzel and Risse (2003) differentiated between a rational institutionalist and a sociological institutionalist model to study the impact of Europeanization on domestic policy. While having similar assumptions about misfit and pressure, these two models differ in their conceptualization of mediating factors. Rational choice institutionalism suggests that with Europeanization, there is a new re-distribution of power at the domestic level and the actors who have the ability to exploit these opportunities facilitate the domestic change. On the other hand, the sociological (constructivist) model puts the emphasis on the process of persuasion, where “norm entrepreneurs” or “change agents” facilitate a socialization and collective learning process which leads to domestic change.

Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004) argued that the EU rule transfer at the local level is best explained by the external incentives model where the domestic status quo is altered by conditionality. The government is either targeted directly by intergovernmental bargaining or indirectly by empowerment of domestic actors. The authors argued that this model has been effective in the CEECs because of the credibility of EU conditionality. Therefore one could argue that the impact of the EU is better explained with conditionality when the membership prospect is on the table.

Sedelmeier (2006) argued that the EU’s impact on the frontrunners of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe like the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary in the adoption of liberal democratic norms was successful with the use of conditionality in issues like minority rights. However, in countries with a nationalistic and authoritarian leadership like Romania, Croatia and Slovakia the impact of the EU was minor. But once the liberal forces gained electoral support in these countries, the EU conditionality worked.

THE IMPACT OF EUROPEANIZATION IN THE FURTHER DEMOCRATIZATION OF TURKEY

Turkey has had a history of multi-party democracy since 1946. Although three military interventions in 1960, 1971 and 1980 distorted the functioning democracy, long term military dictatorships as in
the example of Southern Europe in the 1970s were not the case in Turkey. The difference in the experience with democratization is even more different when compared with the CEECs which were transition countries in the 1990s. Therefore the impact of Europeanization on democratization has not been as vast in Turkey as it has been in the CEECs in the 1990s and 2000s. However, Europeanization has been part of Turkish democratization for a longer period of time. Some coin Europe as a historical anchor for Turkey while others study Europe as one of the international institutional factors leading to democratization. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the EU has been an international actor that has affected domestic policy and institutions in Turkey to a great extent over the last decade because the EU accession has been one of the most important determinants of political reforms in Turkey.

Turkey falls within the gravity perimeter of the European Union, and recently democratization and Europeanization have come to identify the same process in the country. The two words are used almost interchangeably. In addition, government officials such as the Chief Negotiator Egemen Bağış (2010) put forward the argument that even if Turkey does not become a full member of the European Union in the near future, the reforms undertaken are important for the country because of the will to improve the Turkish democracy. Europeanization is presented as the right path of democratization with guaranteed success.

While the political will constantly reassures the public and the EU authorities about Turkey’s determined membership bid, the public support has been declining. Apart from the decline of public support, there is consensus that the reform process which had accelerated since Turkey’s candidacy, slowed down after 2005. Alpay (2008) argued that negative signals to Turkey coming from the EU’s soft power has diminished Turkey’s willingness to adopt European norms. Ulusoy (2009) claimed that uncertainty in Turkey - EU relations seriously affected the internal dynamism of the reform process and produced resistance to democratization.

Historically, “Europe” and “the West” have been identified as anchors beginning with the foundation of the Republic and have provided the ideals for the progress of the regime. Keyman (2007) argued that the central ideology during the foundation and early years until of the Republic had been modernization. While democratization determined the period between 1950 and 1980, globalization was the motto of 1980 to 2000 leaving Europeanization as the dominant ideology from 2000 onwards. The candidacy status of Turkey in 1999 has made Europeanization the dominant ideology embraced by many actors in the society.

Although this periodization is an accurate one, we have to distinguish between the understanding of democratization in the 1950s and that of today. Democratization in Turkey has been understood in terms of belonging to the Western alliance, the so called “free world” as a buffer zone between two ideological blocs. Today individual rights and freedoms form the major issue of democratization in Turkey. One of the main reasons is the EU conditionality itself. Until the 1999 Helsinki Summit, Turkish membership applications were rejected on the grounds that Turkey had a poor human rights and democracy record. A similar reasoning has been present in the progress reports. Hence, democratic conditionality has been applied with concerns that are not necessarily the democratization concerns of the political actors of a country. To give an example for Turkey, the democratization conditionality has not been related to the priorities of the political elite but rather to that of disadvantaged groups who were able to communicate their complaints to the EU decision makers (Alpay, 2004; Ulusoy, 2009).
As mentioned above, the Europeanization process of Turkey is traceable back to the Tanzimat Period almost 200 years ago (Ulusoy, 2009). The early periods of Europeanization were coupled with the intention of the political elite to reform the state. Up until the last decade, Europeanization had never meant democratization. At the moment, the EU accession process and the Europeanization of Turkey pose pressures for Turkey to democratize by focusing on the problems of subnational groups. The claims of these groups have been voiced through and backed up by the progress reports of the EU. Consequently, today democratization constitutes the essence of Europeanization in Turkey.

The difference between Turkey and that of the Central and Eastern European Countries is that the democratic conditionality applied to those countries meant that the adoption of the fundamental political principles of the EU, the norms of human rights and liberal democracy, in the accession period was mainly top down. However, in Turkey the democratization process could be traced back to the political transformation in the post-1980 period and has been, instead, bottom up. The way the democratization process has been equated with the Europeanization process is the fact that domestic actors that the author calls “subnational groups” are mobilized at the European level (Ulusoy, 2009).

If we test the Turkish case with the rationalist institutionalist model, we see that the benefits of the EU carrots are uncertain because of the open-ended negotiations and frozen chapters due to the Cyprus issue and the recently blocked chapters due to current French leadership’s opposition to the membership of Turkey. Therefore, a strong empowerment of domestic actors that would induce democratic change has not been possible. To test the domestic impact of the EU with conditionality or the rational choice institutionalist version of Europeanization provides a perspective which fails to recognize the democratization momentum in Turkey. The sociological institutionalist perspective which takes into account the diffusion of norms, social learning and lesson drawing mechanisms leads us to grasp the domestic impact of the EU better because those mechanisms have been spread over a longer period of time and do not come to a direct impass with political crises. This paper offers to test this explanation by focusing on education as a domestic policy area in Turkey which has gone through reforms in the name of democratization and Europeanization.

EUROPEANIZATION AND CHANGE IN EDUCATION NORMS

Education together with culture is one of the negotiation chapters in the accession process of candidate countries to the European Union. Although, as previously stated, it is not a common policy area and the impact of political conditionality in this area is limited to instances when issues of human rights, women’s rights and the rights of minorities are in question. These issues are raised in the annual progress reports of the commission and accession partnership documents with candidate countries. What is expected from the candidate country with the negotiations is the implementation of the acquis concerning education and the participation in community wide programs by establishing the necessary domestic institutions.

In addition, conditions are set for education in the progress reports prepared by the Commission when domestic policies are considered to be in conflict with human rights, identities of minorities and religious freedoms. In this regard, progress reports and accession partnership documents point to norms set by the European Court of Human Rights (EctHR) and the Council of Europe (CoE). Through these documents that determine the faith of the accession negotiations, the EctHR and CoE norms are reproduced. With this mechanism, EU institutions and accession documents use norms developed by non–EU European institutions in Strasbourg to foster integration.
Apart from accession documents, the political integration of the EU has facilitated common norms about education through treaty articles on citizenship, human rights and minorities. Greater emphasis was placed on the role of education with the Treaty of Lisbon when the EU set its goal of becoming a knowledge-based economy. The Treaty called for the improvement of education in order to meet the challenges of the global economy. As a response, the Union undertook the duty of contributing to the “quality of education by encouraging cooperation between member states” (Treaty of Lisbon, Article 165 (1)). Subsequent articles of the Treaty call for a European dimension in education through the “teaching and dissemination of languages of member states” (Article 165 (2)).

In addition, the Bologna process, started as an EU initiative and developed into a mission with a greater scope that reached up to 47 members, is another European project that has fostered integration and standardization of education within and in the immediate neighborhood of the EU. The process aims at standardizing university course credits, diplomas and degrees within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) while increasing the competitiveness of higher education in Europe (Bologna Declaration, 1999).

The content of secondary school education has been shaped during the course of the European integration as well. Although EU treaties do not refer directly to educational material and the content of education, this has been an important working area for the Council of Europe since its foundation in 1949. “Mutual understanding and confidence amongst the peoples of Europe” (CoE) has been one of the priorities of the Council, and it has worked “to incorporate the principles of human rights, democracy, tolerance and mutual respect, the rule of law and peaceful resolution of conflicts into the daily practice of teaching and learning.” Council activities are organized under cooperative programs, annual conferences and projects. The national ministries and other international organizations such as UNESCO are working partners with the Council of Europe in the area of education.

In line with the institutional norm setting at the EU level, history classes at school have been regarded as a starting point to overcome political conflicts and to foster mutual understanding between the peoples of Europe. Three different joint history projects have come to life in Europe, all intending to foster an idea of a common understanding of the past in order to overcome the biased, stereotyped national historiography. The first one of these projects was the German–French textbook project which was published and distributed in 2006 as a textbook written by a group of French and German historians. A similar cooperation of history and geography textbooks has existed between Germany and Poland since the mid-1990s. Another joint project about history textbooks is the joint teachers’ manual for the Balkan history published by the CDRSEE (Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe) in 2005. These volumes aim at counterbalancing nationalist ideologies and historiographies, avoiding a reproduction of stereotypes and promoting the idea of multiple interpretations of the past. All these projects were funded and supported by European institutions which aim at such a common understanding of the history of Europe, freed from stereotypes.

In light of the discussion above, we could argue that European educational norms have been developed over the years with respect to human rights, the protection of minority cultures and identities and a shared history of European people which could make a basis for a common European identity.
When the youth of Turkey are considered, education stands out as a key policy area. There are around 15 million students at the primary and secondary education institutions in Turkey (TCMEB 2006: 21) and half of Turkey’s 73 million population is under the age of 29 (TÜİK, 2010). Around 75% of these students are enrolled in public schools. The budget allocated to education totals about €14 billion. Public as well as private schools have to follow the curricula approved by the Ministry of Education and are subject to the same regulations as those of the public schools. The Ministry of Education is the central governing mechanism administering national education with duties ranging from the preparation of the curricula to the construction of schools.

**The Government’s Reform Agenda and Response to the EU Accession Process**

Education is a policy area where the impact of the EU in Turkey can be observed at different levels. At the governmental level, the requirements rising out of the negotiation chapter on dealing with education and culture have been met to a great extent as the country takes part in almost all community wide programs such as Erasmus, Socrates, Life Long Learning and Youth in Action. A national agency was established in 2002 to carry on the administration of these programs. Since then its capacity has been increased to enable it to deal with the increasing workload as the country takes part in a greater range of projects.

At the governmental level, there is growing concern over education because of the large number of young people in Turkey and the poor record of the country in the 2003 and 2006 PISA studies. The government’s reform plan is mainly about increasing and modernizing the capacity and educating its youth for the needs of the global economy and the job market. The major reform project in 2004 carried out by the Ministry of Education aimed at achieving these aims. This reform package included a change of curriculum as well, but it, too, was designed to meet the above stated aims of modernizing the material. As many authors argue, the curriculum reform was merely an injection of the neo-liberal discourse in education (Akkaymak, 2008; İnal, 2008). As a member of the history curriculum committee noted, improving the entrepreneurial capacity of the students was given utmost importance.

With the candidacy process, the Ministry of Education set up a commission responsible for the harmonization of the Turkish national education with the *acquis communautaire*. In a publication prepared by this commission, the education systems of Turkey and the MSs were analyzed in a comparative perspective (TCMEB 2006). The comments in this report by the Minister of Education Hüseyin Çelik, and the ministry’s general manager for foreign affairs are important in this respect. Çelik stated that education was a national policy area and that the national education in Turkey was generally compatible with that of the MSs. However, there were EU expectations which were presented in the annual progress reports with the note that the ministry had started to work to meet these expectations. Under the major six headings of reform identified by the Ministry, the first one was the improvement of primary and secondary school curricula. The other five headings were related to the improvement of physical and technological capacity, percentage of school attendance, teachers’ capacity and counseling facilities. The primary and secondary school curricula had been adjusted “to educate qualified, specialized good citizens, good people with the priority of meeting the demands of the global economy and job market” (TCMEB, 2006: 8). The adjusted programs have been in effect since 2005-2006.
In another statement, the reforms made with EU membership in mind were presented in line with a strategy to meet the challenges posed by the global economy. The “human capital” was seen as the key to competition in a global economy and the “criteria for being an honored and respected member of the European Union” (TCMEB 2006: 12). In this reform process, Turkey “benefits from both its own historical experiences and the experiences of the European Union in the policy area of education.”

As is apparent in these statements, both officials supported the idea that education has to be reformed for enhancing competition in the global economy and therefore adapting to the EU norms. There is not much reference to the problems in education to which the progress reports have drawn attention such as cultural rights which are related to the democratization process. These issues, which will be underlined below, have traditionally been viewed as a national matter and as “our characteristics and distinctions” (Aktar, 2001: 11), and reform in these issues has been slow although there is societal pressure.

**Societal Actors and their Stake in the EU Accession Process**

At the societal level, the subnational groups and the civil society organizations have identified civil rights calling for a liberalization of the education policy. The reform agenda pushed by the societal actors ranges from the right to education in one’s native language to the right to be exempt from mandatory religious education and to the abolition of the authoritarian and monist content of education.

One of the main issues is the right to education in one’s own religious belief proclaimed by the Alevis in Turkey. The religion class is mandatory for all Muslims from the 4th to the 12th grade. The content of the religion class, as in any other class, is determined by the Ministry of Education. The content of the religion class is determined in accordance with the Sunni, specifically the Hanefi, interpretation of Islam. From the state’s perspective, Alevis are Muslims who practice a heterodox version of Islam and hence there is no problem for children of these families taking this class. Alevis argue that this is against their freedom to learn their own religion and therefore they do not want to comply with the mandatory curriculum. In 2001, an Alevi parent’s demand to withdraw his child from the religion class was rejected by the representation of the Ministry of Education at the local level. This led the parent to take the matter to the local courts which decided that the class was mandatory. The case was then taken to the European Court of Human Rights in 2004. It ruled in 2007 that the religion class with its current content violated human rights. As a result, the classes were subject to a revision of the curriculum in 2006-2007, and a brief section on Alevism (Alevilik-Bektaşilik) was inserted in the curriculum. However, the revisions merely placed Alevism among the sufist interpretations of Islam.⁵ Alevi families still want their children to be exempt from the religion class.

Religion and education have recently been the concern of the European Commission as presented in the last Accession Partnership. In 2006, the Council decision took note of education in relation to several issues. The short term priorities involved women’s rights and promoting the role of women in society through education and participation in the labor market. Medium term priority was assigned to the improvement of the economy with the education of the younger generation and the necessity for Turkey to align itself with EU policies for the protection of cultural diversity (European Council, 2006). The 2008 Council decision on the other hand, handled the issue of religious education for non-Muslim minorities and the training of clergy as a short term priority by pointing to the ECHR (European Convention on Human Rights) and the rulings of the EctHR. This clause specifically identified the demands by the Greek Orthodox community for training its clergy which had been made...
impossible with the closure of the Halki theological school in 1971. Women’s education and education of the younger generation were repeated issues. (European Council, 2008).

The right to education in one’s native language has become a major component of the cultural and political rights demanded by the Kurdish population. Proclaimed by the parliamentary representatives of the Kurdish voters and intellectuals and supported by various EU declarations, the right to education in one’s native language was the major rights-based claim by the largest linguistic minority in Turkey in the democratization and Europeanization process. The right to learn the Kurdish language through private educational institutions which was introduced by the EU reform packages and the lifting of technical and psychological barriers in the public use of Kurdish language was found insufficient by many liberal civil society organizations and think tanks. Lately, TESEV’s recommendation report on a democratic constitution to solve the Kurdish question stressed that pre-school age children whose mother tongue was other than Turkish should receive state-sponsored pre-school education in Turkish as a foreign language in order to learn the Turkish language prior to schooling. (Kurban and Ensaroğlu, 2008). The report further argued that the aim of the Law on National Education should be changed and the ideological and monist understanding of education should be replaced by a pedagogical understanding.

History classes and the content of the history textbooks are another area where the Europeanization process has proved to be a lever to use to change the existing monist and ideological discourse of education. Since the 1990s, textbooks and especially history textbooks have been under close scrutiny by civil society organizations, especially the History Foundation, teachers’ groups, historians and academics from various university social science disciplines. These efforts were backed up by the pressures from TÜSİAD, the leading industrialists’ organization in Turkey. This grouping is an exemplary instance in which the rights activists of the 1990s have all been present. They have called for a more democratic Turkey which they think is possible through the protection of the minority and the cultural and religious rights and the liberalization of the nationalistic discourse. Since the significance of history and other social sciences textbooks is still high in nurturing a population, a change in their content is strongly advised by these groups. Their cause has largely been supported by international actors such as various European institutions and UNESCO.

The History Foundation in Turkey has been actively drawing attention to the need for a substantial change in the curriculum and textbooks. The presentations of the international conferences and symposia they have convened have been published by the foundation in various volumes (Tarih Eğitimi, 1998; Özbaran, 1995, 2008; Balkan History Textbooks, 2001 etc.). The History Foundation’s latest project about education has not been limited solely to the investigation of history textbooks and their low standards in history teaching but has included one under the general title of “Human Rights in School Textbooks” (2003 and 2009). The rhetoric of the EU norms and the Copenhagen criteria for membership in this title are immediately recognizable. The History Foundation, in its project funded by the European Union and the embassy of Finland in Turkey, is a clear-cut case of how the EU norms have become part of civil society claims on education.

In conducting a content analysis of primary and secondary school textbooks in Turkey with guidelines provided by international organizations such as UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the Georg-Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, the researchers note that 92% of the textbooks suffer
from abuses of Human Rights principles (Tüzün, 2009). The study also draws attention to the neglect by the state authorities in the previous studies of education material by the History Foundation and other civil society organizations. In a report on Turkey put out by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 2005, the authors argued that school textbooks have to be monitored by state authorities in close cooperation with civil society initiatives, and thereby point out another norm of EU governance that should be applied.

History classes provide an opportunity to foster the recognition of ethnic and religious pluralism, and are a step away from the monist discourse of Turkish nationalism that not only has dominated the history and social sciences but also education at large. When such a change in the curriculum occurs, then the other components of the education reform would become more meaningful and effective in completing Turkey’s democratization efforts. As mentioned above, minority rights and cultural and political freedoms have met hesitation from government officials. More reforms are carried out in technical modernization but the claims based on human rights are generally left out.

CONCLUSION

Looking at the education reform in Turkey, two key issues of Europeanization have been identified in this paper. One of them is the Europeanization understood in terms of reaching European standards at a technical level and fulfilling standards identified by the accession documents. The other key issue is the democratization prospect that Europeanization offers for the adoption of norms developed at the European level. The statements of the Ministry of Education officials and the reforms that have already been carried out reveal that the technical Europeanization, the one triggered by EU institutions in Brussels, is the primary goal of the political elite in Turkey who try to reform education to meet the needs of the global economy both at the national and at the EU level. As far as taking part in community-wide education programs and the Bologna process, the education policy in Turkey has evolved parallel to the European Union in this respect. It could be argued that Turkey’s education policy has been Europeanized to a large extent with the misfits between the two levels of policy being brought to a minimum.

On the other hand, when education policy and European norms on human, cultural and democratic rights are concerned, the reforms remain belated although the possibilities of reform in these issues are well identified by intellectuals, civil society organizations and what has been called the subnational groups. What these societal actors call for is the democratization of education beginning with the content. When the content of the classes in history calls for change, then the cultural uniqueness of Turkey is emphasized by the political elite. Therefore, we could argue that the second issue of internalizing the European norms of democracy, human rights and the protection of minorities, in other words the Strasbourg-centered Europeanization, has remained stagnant both because of the uncertainty of the EU conditionality and the nonperception of the need for reform in these issues. Although there is norm diffusion at the intellectual and pro-EU NGO level, these actors are not strong enough to persuade the political or state elite.

This paper has argued that the Europeanization and democratization processes that Turkey has gone through should be studied not only through a rationalist model of conditionality, meeting political and economic criteria and being accepted as an EU member. This mechanism alone fails to understand the Europeanization process since membership is not on the table and the incentives for fulfilling the criteria
are poor. A constructivist model where norm diffusion is the key mechanism of Europeanization, which seeks the answers over a longer period of time, is complementary to the first model and at times more useful in explaining the domestic impact of international influences.

Moreover, this article has argued that the Europeanization mechanisms could lead to a further democratization of the education policy in Turkey given the dynamism of intellectuals, civil society and subnational groups. This potential has been hampered by the uncertainty of the membership prospect. Further research should aim at two questions: a) whether EU norms will still have an impact in the future in domestic policy given the dynamic civil society and the old practices and mentalities, or b) whether this potential which exists today will vanish with a further slowing down of accession negotiations.

NOTES

1. One should note here that the Europeanization literature does not focus on Europeanization as a long term-process, which in countries like Turkey could be traced back to the 19th century. As Diez, Agnantopoulos and Kaliber (2005) rightly put it, what Europeanization deals with should actually be termed as EU-ization because Europeanization means another process which is much older than the EU. Nevertheless, the term “Europeanization” is employed throughout the paper to avoid complications and to link with the previous literature on Europeanization.

2. The author is grateful for a comment on an earlier version of this article made by Frank Schimmelfennig about the EU impact on substantive democracy.

3. The PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) is carried out by the OECD every three years in industrialized countries on 15-year-olds to assess students’ effectiveness in reasoning, analyzing and reflecting on what they learn at school and to measure their knowledge and skills.

4. This finding is part of a larger dissertation project, and therefore the author is not allowed to disclose names of the interviewees.

5. See for example the most recent textbook for the religion class: Akgül et al. (2009) *Ortaöğretim Din Kültürü ve Ahlaki Bilgisi Ders Kitabı 12. Sınıf*. At the heart of the problem is the recognition at the state level that Alevi are Muslims and hence religious services and education for the Alevi population already exist. On the side of the Alevi, the recognition as a Muslim sect is rejected because the community demands a separate status and hence separate religious services and education.

6. At the beginning of the academic year 2011-2012, the government amended the law on education. In amendments made in 1982 and which were kept during the 1990s, the aim of education in this law was stated as raising the “future generations committed to Atatürk’s reforms, Turkish nationalism, having internalized the national, moral, humanistic, spiritual and cultural characteristics of the Turkish nation.” The new Law on Education has omitted this sentence from the aims of education. While the new aims do not refer to democratic education with respect to human rights, the principles of a liberal economy and educating generations for the “needs of the
market” are among the founding principles of the new law. Although the new law on education demands further analysis, the immediate results point to the same discrepancy in Europeanization that is identified in this article.

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ABSTRACT

‘Privileged Partnership’ is a special status supported by a group of European leaders as an ultimate solution for Turkey’s integration into the European Union. Although its definition and content remains vague, privileged partnership is a third way of engagement which is something less than full membership and more than regular partnership. This article suggests that the most significant question in order to justify European intentions behind this proposal is to ask if Turkey is really that much different from existing EU member states so that a brand new status needs to be formulated for Turkish enlargement. The research will be based on a comparative study among Turkey and two groups of ‘dissimilar’ EU member states including new members from Central and Eastern Europe as well as founders of the European integration. A multidimensional and integrated framework will be used and a number of relevant indicators in demographic, political, economic, social and security aspects of Turkey and the selected EU members will be analyzed. Finally, the aim of this study is to clarify whether Turkey is substantially different from the ‘old’ as well as ‘new’ EU members and therefore ‘privileged partnership’ can be justified on rational grounds or whether the proposal of ‘privileged partnership’ is based on normative factors and it is an indicator of the EU’s bias against Turkey’s full membership due to cultural and religious differences.

Keywords: Turkey’s EU membership, privileged partnership, EU – Turkish relations, enlargement, European Union.

İMTİYAZLI ORTAKLIĞA KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR YAKLAŞIM: TÜRKİYE GERÇEKTEN FARKLI MI?

ÖZET

“İmtiyazlı Ortaklık,” Türkiye’nin Avrupa Birliği’ne katılım sürecinde ortaya atılan ve entegrasyon için nihai sonuç niteliği taşıyabilecek özel bir statüdür. Tanımı ve içeriği belirsiz olsa da AB üyeliğinden daha düşük faşat sıradan bir ortaklıkta daha yüksek derecede bütünleşme sağlayacağı düşünülebilir. Önemli olan soru, bugüne kadar AB’ye başvuran tüm ülkelere vaat edilen tam üyelik statüsü söz konusu aday Türkiye olduğunda neden özel bir ortaklık olarak değerlendirilir? Bu makalede sorgulanan anafikir, rasyonel değerlerle incelendiğinde Türkiye’nin gerçekten Avrupa Birliği ülkelerinden ve de özellikle yeni üyelerden, AB’ye tam üye değil de sadece bir ortak olabilecek derecede farklı olup

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olmadığı konusudur. Araştırma, iki gruba ayrılmış ‘farklı’ AB ülkelerinin Türkiye ile olduğu gibi kendi aralarında karşılaştırılması sonucunda imtiyazlı ortaklığın rasyonel bir dayanhya olup olmadığını açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Belirli AB iyi ve Türkiye’nin demografik, ekonomik, politik, sosyal ve güvenlik alanlarından seçilen ampirik göstergeleri çok boyutlu ve entegre bir çerçeve dahilinde karşılaştırılacak ve analiz edilecektir. Sonaça bu karşılaştırma Türkiye’yeye sunulan imtiyazlı ortaklık önerisinin arka planında rasyonel farklılıklardan oluşan bir temelin mi yoksa tamamen kültürel ve dini farklılıklar gibi normatif faktörlerin mi bulunduğu sorusunun cevaplanması yardımcı olacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Türkiye’nin Avrupa Birliği üyeliği, imtiyazlı ortaklık, AB – Türkiye ilişkileri, Avrupa Birliği'nin genişlemesi, Avrupa Birliği.

“Privileged Partnership” is a special status proposed for Turkish accession to the European Union, supported by a group of important European leaders and presented as an ultimate solution for Turkish integration. However, the content of such a special partnership remains vague and the question should be asked why a new model is offered by European authorities as an end result of the negotiations with Turkey, instead of aiming for full membership which has been offered to every other candidate in the European Union’s history. Turkey is a unique country in many aspects which makes comparison to other EU candidates or member states a difficult process. Nevertheless, European motives behind the formula of Turkey’s privileged partnership can be understood by conducting a systematic comparative research between Turkey and the present members of the European Union. This article suggests that the most significant question in order to justify European intentions regarding the proposal of privileged partnership is to ask if Turkey is really that much different from EU member states and especially from the new members from Central and Eastern Europe so that a brand new status needs to be formulated for Turkish enlargement.

On October 3, 2005, Turkey officially started open-ended negotiations for membership in the European Union which could result in the biggest enlargement of EU history. Turkey has so far accomplished a series of comprehensive legislative and constitutional reforms on its determined path towards becoming a part of Europe. Turkey’s relations with the EU have been a catalyst for the transformation of the Turkish economy, social policy, civil policy, legal system and political system with an aim to reach European standards for achieving full membership in the Union. However, Germany’s Christian Democrats have suggested a new model of ‘privileged partnership’ which would provide Turkey with free trade and closer integration in security and military affairs but not full membership. Besides granting membership or rejecting Turkey, privileged partnership is a third way of engagement for Turkey with the Union. The definition of privileged partnership remains unclear, but it is clearly something more than a partnership but less than a full membership. The characteristics of such a partnership are only theoretical and ambiguous as the privileged partnership status has not been practiced before and hardly defined by any party who proposed it so far. Although most Turks believe that privileged partnership simply intends to keep Turkey out of the Union, leaders of Germany, France, Austria and many Europeans affiliated with the Christian Democrat worldview believe that it is the only possible solution for Turkish integration.

Indeed, Turkey and the EU have their obvious socio-cultural and religious differences. A majority of Turkey’s inhabitants have a different religion from the rest of the EU members, Turkey has a large and relatively poor population and more importantly from a sociological perspective it has been the
historical “other” for the European identity for centuries. Even though the case of Turkey’s accession to the European Union is unique, Turkey’s uniqueness does not constitute a basis for a special status that could be an alternative to full membership as long as Turkey fulfills the EU membership conditionality (Aybet, 2006: 547). The Copenhagen Criteria is built on rational grounds and it suggests that any candidate country which has a geographic proximity with Europe can become a full EU member when it fulfills the conditionality. More importantly, all candidate states shall be treated equally as the principle of ‘pacta sunt servanda’ foresees that all agreements are to be honored and so does the European commitment to Turkey’s full membership, on equal grounds with the previous candidates. Therefore, the reasons for proposing a privileged partnership instead of full membership and the questions of double standards within the EU can be examined by comparing Turkey with the present European Union member states. In fact, the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) which have joined the EU on the last rounds of enlargements in 2004 and 2007 are known to have both a far limited experience of democracy and more volatile economies than Turkey. A systematic comparison of Turkey with CEECs will provide better grounds for judging the popular Turkish claim of double standards within the EU.

If privileged partnership is to be imposed by the EU as the only option to European integration for Turkey, it will raise questions about European bias against Turkey’s full membership because of ignoring Turkey’s progress in all spheres of conditionality especially in the last decade. The question is simple: why did the goal of full membership evolve into a new status of privileged partnership during the negotiations? Is Turkey really that much different from the European Union member states including the Central and Eastern European countries according to the rational membership criteria? If this is not so, Turkey’s privileged partnership rather than full membership to the EU can be justified. From a rationalist perspective, the EU would be right to propose for Turkey something other than full membership if Turkey is significantly different from other EU member states and lagging behind in fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria which the CEECs managed to achieve. Otherwise, arguments for double standards within the European Union based on cultural and religious differences between the two societies would prove to be correct, and the EU would lose great credibility in international affairs due to discriminating against Turkey on culturalist grounds. This study aims to bring answers to these specific questions by taking a comparative approach with an aim to either justify the European proposal of privileged partnership or conclude that Turkey is not radically different from other EU member states and therefore the European Union is biased against Turkey’s full membership.

METHODOLOGY

The following section will outline the methodology for this study. The most appropriate technique for the research question presented in this study is the comparative method in the form of a mid-scale cross-case analysis which entails both statistical data and theoretical narrative. The comparative method offers a broader range of information about the issues and allows the researcher to pose questions that data from a single country or single case study cannot answer. From a methodological point of view, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2002) indicate that the state of research on European enlargement studies is often of a limited and narrow scope. Enlargement literature demonstrates the limits of single-case studies that are mostly descriptive. Even if they are theory-oriented, there is a growing need for an enlargement of the research on ‘enlargement.’ In fact, an enlarged European Union can only be analyzed by conducting larger scale comparative studies on European enlargement (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2002). This study aims to provide a comparative analysis of Turkey and a number of
European Union members. Rather than a single case analysis, a multidimensional framework will be used, focusing mainly on an EU macro-polity level as well as candidate and membership politics and impacts of EU conditionality on both Europe and the applicant state Turkey. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses will be conducted which are a mixture common in comparative analysis. Thereby, instead of a single approach to causal analysis, a wide range of strategies of causal inference will be employed for capturing the bigger picture. Finally, cross-national research will be a valuable tool for comparing the EU members in order to understand diversity in the EU and how much Turkey is different from specific European states.

This research will involve simultaneous use of two different strategies developed for the comparative method. Both ‘most similar systems design’ and ‘most different system design’ will be used in two separate groups of EU member states in order to better observe the variance between Turkey and the EU at different levels as well as the differences among European Union member states so as to understand the established limits of toleration for full membership. The quantitative analysis will involve a total of thirteen EU member states divided in two groups in addition to Turkey and the EU average figures. The first group will consist of five and the second group will consist of eight European states. In the first group, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain will take place. These are the five largest states of the EU in terms of population and they are also the most politically influential states in the Council of the European Union according to the Treaty of Nice which gives member states voting powers on a direct population dependent condition. Indeed, prior to the adjustment in the composition of the European Commission which became effective by 1 November 2004, these five states were the only members to have two commissioners in the European Union’s executive body. Therefore, these larger and relatively older members of the Union are expected to have an important influence over the decision-making mechanisms of the EU regarding Turkey’s accession. The United Kingdom and Spain are known as the two influential states that favor Turkey’s full membership. On the contrary, the leaders of France and Germany have publicly announced their opposition to Turkey’s full membership to the European Union. In fact, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicolas Sarkozy are the two leading figures in European politics who most support the idea of the Union’s privileged partnership with Turkey. Finally, the EU members in the first group are expected to have a greater difference from Turkey considering that they are among the most developed states in the European Union.

On the other hand, EU members in the second group are expected to have somewhat similar characteristics to Turkey as they are newer entrants compared to the ones in the first group. Also, they are relatively smaller in population and therefore will have less influence in European politics according to the Council voting design. The second group consists of Romania and Bulgaria as the latest members of the EU in 2007, Poland as the largest of the 2004 entrants in addition to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia which are among the CEECs with a relatively low democratic heritage, Cyprus, a key political subject in Turkey – EU relations and finally Greece which is the neighbor as well as the historic rival of Turkey, often compared with Turkey in major EU related studies. After all, these states have experienced various problems during their individual paths to European integration, thus they are expected to be in a similar position to Turkey’s regarding the period of membership negotiations.

Turkey in comparison to the EU members in both groups will be evaluated in five subfields: political, economic, social, security and demographical dimensions of integration. Among the two possible outcomes of this study, a) if there is a convergence between the data on Turkey and the second group’s
data which is more apparent than the variance between the two groups, then the first scenario would support the argument of “double standards” in Europe, as privileged partnership would more likely to be proposed on the basis of cultural and religious differences. On the other hand, b) if there is reasonable convergence between the indicators of the first and the second group of EU members and an important divergence between Turkey’s data and the European states’ data in both groups, then one can rationalize why Turkey is treated specially by the Europeans as not a potential full member today.

The majority of secondary data to be used in the analysis are collected from the “Eurostat,” which is the source of official statistics on the European Union published by the EU Commission. In addition to Eurostat, data obtained from the European Union Commission’s “Eurobarometer,” “World Values Survey,” “International Monetary Fund Statistics,” “World Economic Forum,” “Idea: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance,” “Freedom House,” and “UNdata” are used to fill in the blanks and increase the validity of the secondary sources used as the major input to this study’s empirical analysis. Further information on the sources of data for each indicator and the years of the data collected is available in Appendix B.

ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section is organized in five subfields: Demographics, economics, politics, security and social dimensions of Turkey’s integration to the European Union in order to cover all aspects of Turkey-EU relations from a multidimensional comparative perspective; these together would provide better grounds for justifying the proposal of a privileged partnership to Turkey. The statistical data used in the narrative below is presented in Appendix A. Unless noted otherwise in the text, the years as well as the source of data for each indicator used in the tables is presented in Appendix B.

Demographics

Turkey is an exceptionally large country in comparison to other European Union member states regarding both population and surface area. The accession of Turkey will mean the largest enlargement in the EU history in terms of area. In fact, Turkey’s surface area of 783,562 km$^2$ is larger than the total size of the 2004 enlargement which resulted in accession of ten new member states, and the greatest enlargement in the EU history so far. These ten new member states had a total population of 74,722,000 people by that time, roughly equal to the population of Turkey today. By looking at the relatively high population growth rate of Turkey which is 1.31% per annum, Turkey is also expected to be the largest enlargement in terms of population at time of its future accession.

In the first group of most populated EU member states, France stands out as the largest country in land with 643,548 km$^2$, while the United Kingdom is the smallest country with its 244,820 km$^2$ surface which corresponds to less than one third of Turkey’s size. On the other hand, when population is considered, Germany is the largest country of the EU with its 82 million inhabitants. Although Spain has a large territory which makes up 11.4% of the EU land, its population is relatively low at 45,828,172 inhabitants that corresponds to 9.2% of total EU population. The United Kingdom is the most densely populated country in the first group where 12.3% of EU citizens live in a land of 5.5% of the Union. In the second group which consists of Greece, Cyprus, Poland and some of the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) including the latest members Romania and Bulgaria, Poland is the largest country both in population and in surface area of over 38 million inhabitants in 321,685 km$^2$, which corresponds to 7.6% of EU population living in 7.1% of the European Union land. On
the contrary Cyprus is predictably the smallest in both area and population with its 796,000 people living in an area of 9,250 km² which only make approximately 0.2% of the EU. It is noteworthy that the CEECs which joined the EU in 2004 are very small in size and population, having a land area around 1.5% and population below 1% of the EU per country. On the other hand, the 2007 entrants of Bulgaria and Romania are larger in size and population but their sum still makes less than half of Turkey’s population and surface area. At the end, Turkey has a population of 71,517,000 according to the records of the EU and this corresponds to 14.3% of the total European Union population which is 499,723,520 today. Therefore, before anything else, one can conclude that Turkey is a large country, a big bite to swallow for the European Union only in size without even considering economic, social and cultural factors.

Moreover, considering that decision-making mechanisms in certain intergovernmental policy areas at the European Union level are linearly correlated to the size of member states’ populations, Turkey with its large size will have more influence on European policy-making than less populated countries such as France and the UK, a situation which the great powers of the EU will never accept. Therefore, Turkey’s size in population has critical importance for the European Union’s internal power balance and it is more realistic to expect that Turkey may then never become a fully equal member in terms of decision-making powers parallel to its population. On the other hand, another important issue about Turkey’s size is EU’s structural funds and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). First of all, if Turkey becomes a member, such a large yet relatively poor country will require a lot of investment as well as additional structural fund allocation from the present EU members in order to close the gap between the standards of Turkey and the Union. Because budget allocation in most policy areas depends on the size of the member state, Turkey is most likely to receive the greatest amount from the European Union budget in many policy areas including the CAP, which alone accounts for almost half of the EU budget. After all, the large size and population of Turkey may seem like a burden to present EU members, and no state would agree to get that heavy weight on their shoulders unless Turkey really has important benefits to offer to the project of European integration.

Turkey’s population is growing even bigger and the data suggests that it will get ahead of Germans in several years; so by the time Turkey becomes a member it would be the most populated state in the European Union. Turkey’s annual population growth rate is 1.31%, which is considerably high compared to the European average of 0.131%. All countries included in this study have growth rates smaller than Turkey, while negative growth rates in members of both groups imply an actual decline of population in the EU including Germany and Italy in the first group. In fact, an important pattern that can be observed from the data is that populations in all CEECs are declining. The growth of Turkish population as the CEEC’s populations decline can become a comparative advantage in economy if the Turkish labor force can be utilized to produce a higher growth of GDP. Turkey has a labor force of over 24 million, which is comparable to the size of the labor force in Italy, Spain and France while the UK has a labor force of 31,200,000 and Germany has the largest labor force in the EU which consists of 43,600,000 people. According to the nature of its labor force, Turkey is similar to Poland and Romania, as a large part of its work force is officially employed in agriculture (Derviş et al., 2004). Although one quarter of Turkey’s labor force is still employed in agriculture today, the employment share in agriculture has declined radically since those days when half of Turkey’s total labor force was working in agriculture. Nevertheless, low labor utilization points to the unused potential of the Turkish economy. Of the German population, 53% is utilized as labor while the same percentage is only 33 in Turkey. Even a more critical point is that only one out of four women work in Turkey, whereas nearly 60% of women that live in EU countries contribute to the workforce (Eurostat, 2007). Therefore,
one can conclude that Turkey needs to further utilize its labor force and include more women in the workforce in order to take advantage of its large population for greater economic benefits.

On the other hand, when there is excess labor due to low utilization of the work force in a country, the issue of migration comes to mind. Turkey’s net migration rate is 1.588 per 1000 people which suggests that Turkey receives more immigrants than it sends to other countries. In the first group, only Germany has a negative migration rate while the ratio goes up to 6.367 immigrants per 1000 French citizens. In the second group of EU members that have relatively less developed economies, negative migration rates suggest that citizens of these countries migrate to other countries such as 4.627 out of every 1000 Lithuanian do. After all, the EU receives 1.879 migrants per 1000 Europeans and this ratio is similar to the net migration rate of Turkey. Many Europeans fear that if Turkey becomes a full member of the European Union, large numbers of Turkish labor will begin immigrating to the EU. Given the importance of the EU as an anchor in Turkish politics as well as economy today, it could be that migration might be even greater if the prospects of Turkish membership to the EU are lost (Erzan and Kirişci, 2004). The European experiences of Greek, Portuguese and Spanish integration to the Union indicate that a successful accession period with effective implementation of legislations and reforms have created high growth in domestic economies thus gradually eliminating migration from new member states into Western Europe (Erzan et al., 2004: 11).

Finally, the chances for immigration can even be approached as an opportunity for European countries to cope with the consequences of their aging populations (Vatanen, 2006). It is most likely that the full mobility of workers might only come twenty or more years after Turkish accession and by that time the European labor markets will be strongly affected by the aging population. Therefore, Europe might face labor shortages in the future looking at the current demographic trends, and migration might not be seen as such a harsh problem at that time. In addition to the large Turkish population and its relatively high growth rate, data suggest that population in Turkey is also very dynamic. The median age is 27.7, which means that the Turkish population is significantly young compared to the EU median age of 40.3. Once again, the dynamic and large population of Turkey could become an important advantage on its path towards EU membership, but it is critical that the young population be utilized in the labor force first.

**Economics**

Turkish economy undertook important reforms in recent years to fulfill the Copenhagen economic criteria. Although Turkey is a large country in size as well as population, its current GDP is 437,252 billion Euros, which is substantially lower than the GDP of all large countries in the first group. Germany has the highest GDP of 2,404,000 billion Euros which stands for 19.8% of European Union’s total economic output of 12,168,498 billion, while Turkey’s GDP is only 3.6% of the GDP of the EU. In the second group, Turkey’s economy is significantly larger than all others. Considering that Turkey is a lot bigger than these states in size and population, this does not mean that Turkish economy is more efficient. However, it is true that Turkey is a more important economy than EU members in the second group due to its market size and potential.

After the recent global economic crisis, the GDP growth rate of almost every country displays negative figures. Although all of the economies in the first group reflect negative growth, Turkey’s rate of -5.8% means that Turkish economy has shrunk more than any other economy in this group in 2009.
Because of the fast and remarkable economic growth Turkey managed to achieve in the last decade, the impact of this high negative growth rate was less noticeable in the positive economic environment in Turkey. On the other hand, economies in the second group indicate mixed growth rates for the same year. Cyprus and Greece, before the recent financial crisis, have smaller negative values close to zero, which is better than the most developed economies in the first group; while Poland has a positive GDP growth rate. Contrarily, the newest two members of the EU, Bulgaria and Romania, indicate larger negative growth compared to Turkey, whereas the economies of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have shrunk much more as their growth rates increased to -18%. Turkey’s -5.8 GDP growth is worse than the EU average of -4.1 for 2009 but the Turkish economy is still more stable compared to the economies of the latest EU members. Finally, it must be highlighted that the GDP growth of Turkey in 2010 is measured as 9.0%, which is significantly higher than any other country in the European Union and a great success for Turkey considering that the average GDP growth rate for the EU was 1.9% for the year 2010 (Eurostat).

The GDP per capita income in Turkey is $10,479, which is significantly low compared to larger European economies in the first group. Among the countries included in this study France has the highest GDP per capita income at $46,037, while only the latest members, Romania and Bulgaria, have per capita incomes lower than the Turkish average. The rest of the countries in the second group all have higher per capita incomes in comparison to Turkey, although their GDP per capita is substantially lower than members in the first group. When these nominal values are adjusted to purchasing power standards, data indicates that Germans are the wealthiest with a GDP per capita which is 12% higher than the European Union average while Bulgarian GDP per capita stands for only 39.8% of the average European income. Turkey’s GDP per capita corresponds to 43.2% of European standards, which means that an average European is more than two times wealthier than his or her Turkish equivalent.

Even though Turkey can only meet Bulgarian or Romanian standards in per capita income within the European Union, a rapid convergence of GDP per capita might be possible in theory due to Turkey’s young labor force, considering that the proportion of the working age in Europe is not rising (Derviş et al., 2004: 103). Therefore, it can be argued that Turkey’s biggest potential advantage in economy could be activated with a better utilization of its human resources. On the contrary, unemployment in Turkey is relatively high at 13.1% while unemployment in the EU is 9.5%. Among the countries in the first group, all have unemployment rates below 10% except Spain which indicates enormous unemployment at 19.4%, even higher than all CEECs except Latvia. In the second group, Romania and Bulgaria have unemployment rates comparable to the EU members in the first group; but Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania suffer from higher unemployment than Turkey’s 13.1% (Eurostat, 2009). Although the unemployment rate in Turkey is at 9.1% today according to the Turkish Statistical Institute Report No: 214 (TUIK, 2011), it does not seem to converge with the European norms regardless of efforts made in line with Turkey’s undergoing economic transformation.

Labor productivity per person employed is among the structural indicators chosen by the European Commission for measuring efficiency of an economy. If GDP in ‘purchasing power standards’ per person employed relative to the EU average is taken as 100%, the productivity of a Turkish worker is measured to be 60.3% of an average European worker in 2009, and 62.3% in 2010 according to Eurostat. As one might easily guess, all countries in the first group have over 100% labor productivity, the French worker being the most productive with 115.2% of EU average (2010). However, in the
second group the picture is rather different, especially in the CEECs which have labor productivity below the Turkish level. Although Greek labor in 2010 was productive at a rate of 95.9%, Bulgarian workers were the least productive with their 41.5% ratio, while Turkey was almost equal to Poland in this indicator. Therefore, if Turkish workers are to compete with their European counterparts, Turkey must upgrade the way it produces skills in its labor force. Indeed, statistics suggest that high level of labor productivity is already attained in the small modern sector of the Turkish economy which can create a great opportunity for rapid growth (Derviş et al., 2004: 106-110).

On the contrary, the adoption of the EU legislation on employment is likely to put a burden on both Turkish corporations and workers that will need to adapt to a new competitive environment. It should be noted that the informal economy in Turkey is quite large compared to European countries and the productivity of this large part of the Turkish economy remains off the record in the Eurostat statistics above. Turkey is also known to have many other problems with labor law and practice such as the longest working hours, 52.2 hours in Turkey vs. 40.4 hours in EU according to Eurostat 2011, highest number of work accidents, considerable high number of workers without social security, a high dismissal rate from a job without a justified reason and lowest rate of collective labor bargaining. Although Turkey has already started to change its institutional structure for employment and social affairs to harmonize with the EU in accordance with the European directives, further reforms are obviously needed in the labor law and other related regulations to fully comply with the EU acquis communautaire (Özler and Taymaz, 2005).

Total investment in the Turkish economy equals 15.9% of Turkey’s GDP which is relatively low when compared to the EU average of 19.2%. Total investment in Turkey is only higher than the United Kingdom, close to Greece and lower than all other countries in this study. Interestingly, while larger and developed economies stay around 20%, CEECs have higher investment rates up to 30.7% in Romania and 27.2% in Bulgaria which indicate efforts for economic transformation in the latest members of the EU. Therefore, Turkey should follow the CEECs in investment strategies as it desperately needs to attain a higher investment rate to fill the gap between Turkish and European economic standards. Turkey has a relatively low government deficit of 2.2% of its GDP when compared to EU members in both groups: the UK has a 5% deficit while Greece has a deficit of 9.8% (2008). On the other hand, Bulgaria has a budget surplus of 1.8% while Germany does not have a budget surplus or deficit. The average European public debt ratio is 61.5% and Spain has the largest debt equal to 105.8% of the country’s GDP. Interestingly, CEECs have substantially lower debts around 10% and Estonia’s public debt is only 4.8% of its GDP. Considering that larger European economies have higher public debts, Turkey’s 39.5% is almost identical to Spain’s ratio. On the contrary, Turkey has a much larger foreign debt compared to the new EU members. Indeed, the record of Poland which underwent turbulent periods over the last decade with deep structural change seems positively stable when compared to the unstable economy of Turkey’s past (Derviş et al., 2004: 66-67).

Many established economies such as the United States are known for their long-lasting trade deficits. In the first group of European states, Germany as an important global exporter has a trade surplus of 177,530 million Euros while all other countries in both groups have trade deficits parallel to the size of their economies. The UK has a trade deficit of 117,800 million Euros; whereas the trade balance of the EU is also a negative figure of -258,480 million. Turkey has a trade deficit of 48,974 million Euros, similar to the deficit of Greece. Turkey is more advanced than most of the new EU member states in trade integration as the Customs Union arrangement between Turkey and the EU has been
functioning as a technical success since 1995, long before CEECs signed an accession agreement with the European Union (Gros, 2004). The EU membership will have little impact on Turkey in terms of trade integration because most of the major steps have already been taken (Francois, 2005: 123). Indeed, Turkey is the first country in the European integration project which joined the Customs Union without being a full member of the EU (Yılmaz, 2002: 107).

Low inflation is an important component of EU conditionality and it has long been a problem for Turkish economy. Although inflation in Turkey is down to 6.3%, which is incredibly low for a country that experienced inflation rates above 100% in the last fifteen years, it is still high compared to EU norms. The average inflation rate in EU is only 1% while France, Germany and Italy in the first group have inflation below this level and Spain has negative inflation. Turkish inflation is only comparable to Romania and Lithuania in the second group; which indeed have lower inflation rates at 5.6% and 4.2% respectively. High inflation in Turkey is often associated with economic instability and this may be perceived as a threat by European economists because absorbing such a large-scale yet poor and unstable economy may trigger economical instability in Europe, a risk which the Europeans would never accept taking at time of a global economic crisis.

Finally, macroeconomic challenges for Turkey remain substantial. In order to fulfill the Copenhagen economic criteria for becoming a full member of the European Union, Turkey must still attain macroeconomic stability, adopt the EU’s ‘Common Agricultural Policy’ and liberalize its services and network industries. Turkey needs to reduce its annual inflation rate to about 3%, meanwhile attaining sustainability of the current account in trade balance, achieving stable growth in real income and decreasing the unemployment rate to European standards (Ersel and Togan, 2005: 19). If foreign investment inflows can be increased with correct policies of the Turkish government, it would both contribute to employment creation and further improve debt dynamics. (Airaudo et al., 2004: 17-19). The Customs Union can be widened by incorporating areas such as services and agriculture, and deepened by refining arrangements for overcoming its shortcomings (Ülgen and Zahariadis, 2004: 29-30). The widening of the Customs Union would allow progressively freer trade of services, therefore it could provide substantial economic benefits to both Turkey and the European Union (Derviş et al., 2004: 109).

While the process of European Union integration proved to have the potential for fundamentally transforming the Turkish economy, Turkey should not wait for the external force from the EU for implementation of economic reforms but it must resolve the sources of past instabilities on its own (Winkler, 2005). After all, improving social policy and labor rights is central to accomplishing further economic progress in Turkey because better utilized, higher-skilled, more productive and efficient labor can only be attained in an environment where social policy and employment rights are well founded. In fact, Chapter 19 of the Turkey-EU negotiations framework which includes social policy, employment rights, anti-discrimination and equal opportunities for women and men has not yet been opened five years after the screening was completed in 2006. This is due to high incompatibility and considerable adjustment costs needed in order to adapt the social conditions at work in Turkey to standards of Europe as well as the European Union acquis.

Politics

The idea of Turkey’s privileged partnership with the EU can be associated with the Christian Democrats, who are against Turkey’s full membership in the Union. According to a news article in
Die Welt, Angela Merkel wrote a letter to EU Commissioners, chairmen of other center and right wing political parties and leaders of all EU member state governments in which she argued that Turkey’s privileged partnership was a better option than its full membership in the Union (17 September, 2004). Indeed, former chairman of the Christian Social Union (CSU) Edmund Stoiber once stated that “there must be a limit to European Union enlargement which is not the Turkey-Iraq borders” (Financial Times, 16 May, 2002). Former president of the European Parliament (2007-2009), former chairman of the largest political block in the European Parliament, European People’s Party (1999-2007), and also a member of CDU, Hans-Gert Pöttering expressed his opinion on Turkish integration and advocated a ‘strategic partnership’ of Turkey by adding that “Turkish full membership would be a mistake for the EU” at the time of his Parliament presidency (Zaman, 28 May, 2009).

Today, Merkel’s greatest supporter for advocating a privileged partnership for Turkey is France’s President Nicolas Sarkozy, who used to be the leader of Union for a Popular Movement, also affiliated with Christian Democrats. France and Germany have traditionally been the two rivals for leadership in European integration but when it comes to Turkey’s candidacy they unite their powers against Turkey’s full membership. Although it is a Mediterranean country, Berlusconi administration in Italy was also associated with Christian Democrats and therefore less likely to support Turkey’s full membership. On the other hand, political power in the United Kingdom and Spain are not with Christian Democrats. Indeed, the UK and Spain have traditionally supported Turkey’s accession to the European Union. The UK’s official line has always been to favor further enlargement over deepening of the EU to prevent the Union from growing too powerful at the expense of national sovereignty. Although the Conservative Party assumed power after the Socialists in 2010, the current Prime Minister of the UK, David Cameron, disbanded the Party’s ties with Christian Democrats of other European states and left the European People’s Party in the European Parliament, leading the formation of European Conservatives and Reformists as a new parliamentary group. On the other hand, Spain as a Mediterranean state supports Turkey as it sees the full membership of Turkey as a potential balance against the twelve countries that joined the Union in the last two rounds of enlargements. In the second group, Greece has manifested goodwill toward Turkey’s full membership, apparently hoping to resolve a number of outstanding issues with Ankara through a supportive role including the issue of divided Cyprus. On the contrary, Cyprus opposes Turkey’s full membership even though its influence in the EU as well as its ability to act independently from Greece seems to be limited. With the exception of Estonia which is ruled by the Reform Party affiliated with European liberal democrats, the rest of the states in the second group including CEECs are ruled by political parties with Christian Democrat affiliations, which means they are more likely to support the idea of Turkey’s privileged partnership from an ideological point of view. After all, the party of the Christian Democrats named the European People’s Party has 266 of 735 seats in the European Parliament and it is the largest group in the House.

Outcomes of a comparative analysis of Turkey and EU members regarding the political criteria of membership conditionality support the proposal by Christian Democrats. The quality of Turkish democracy has always been an issue in the long history of EU-Turkey relations. Since the European Union has evolved into more of a political union in recent decades, the stability and eminence of democracy in Turkey emerged as the key obstacles for Turkey’s EU membership. Meanwhile, with an aim to become a member of the Union, Turkey has experienced massive efforts of democratization especially during the last ten years. The Turkish Parliament has made a number of important legal and constitutional changes to upgrade Turkish democracy in accordance with European standards (Aydın and Keyman, 2004). However, indicators of democracy in this study illustrate that the quality of Turkish democracy is still substantially below European standards.
Turkey’s score on the Freedom House democracy index is 5.7, while the closest value to Turkey among the countries in the first group is Italy’s 7.73, which is not near at all considering that other countries in the first group all have values above 8 while no country in this study including the CEECs have a democracy index below 7. Furthermore, Turkey is clearly lagging behind in political rights and civil liberties according to the evaluation of Freedom House. All EU members in the first group have top scores in political rights and civil liberties with exception of Italy’s score of 2 in civil liberties, and the two latest members Bulgaria and Romania have the lowest score of 2 on a scale of 7 in both categories. Unfortunately, civil liberties and political rights in Turkey are rated both at three out of seven, which suggests that there is a great difference even between Turkey and Romania, and as large as the difference between Bulgaria and France. Moreover, the Freedom in the World Report 2009 indicates further problems over Turkey’s democratic rule by placing Turkey in the “partly free” category rather than “free” which all European Union member states belong to.

A critical aspect of democratization in Turkey involves the changing role of the Turkish military. The military’s political role in the past was regarded as a major obstacle to the consolidation of democracy in Turkey (Güney and Karatekelioğlu, 2005: 451). The Turkish military has traditionally been the guardian of the regime, the protector of the political status-quo which often blocked intensive reforms with an aim to maintain the stability of the system. Its intervention in the Turkish political arena in form of coup d’états in 1960, 1971 and 1980 and a softer intervention in 1997 demonstrate that the military has been one of the most important actors in Turkish politics. In fact, Greece experienced a coup in 1967 followed by a military regime for seven years. This did not create a problem for EU membership, as Greece became a full member in 1981, shortly after the country turned back to democratic rule. However, the impact of military influence on Turkish politics is deeply rooted and has existed longer than it did in Greece. The political reforms undertaken for supporting the EU accession process have downscaled the Turkish military’s influence on politics only in recent years (Narbone and Tocci, 2007).

Turkey has a significantly higher government involvement in religion (GIR) value of 47.1 while the European Union average is 19.57. In the first group, the UK and Spain have the highest GIR around 27, while in Italy this value goes down to 13. In the second group, Bulgaria gets relatively close to Turkey with 36.72 while GIR in Estonia is only 3.52. Therefore, there is no visible pattern among CEECs in terms of GIR activity, but Turkey stands out from the crowd with its exceptionally high government involvement in religion. On the contrary, if voter turnout is considered as an indicator of democratic activity, Turkey’s 84.16% turnout in 2007 parliamentary elections is higher than all of the most developed European democracies in the first group and substantially higher than the European average of 71.21%. However, one should not overlook the fact that there is a penalty fee in Turkey for not going to polls. Furthermore, Turkish experience in the past military dictatorships that obliged everyone to vote in elections may very well have an influence on the high voter turnout in Turkey today. In the second group, only Cyprus and Lithuania have greater voter turnouts than Turkey, but considering that their populations are incomparably smaller in size, the voter turnout in a country as large as Turkey is noteworthy.

Eurobarometer suggests that none of the EU members included in this study trust their national governments more than the Turks do. Only 32 out of 100 Europeans trust their national governments while 57% of Turkish people have trust in their government. On the contrary, the level of trust goes...
down to 21% in a developed democracy such as the United Kingdom while only 10 out of 100 Latvians trust in their government. Nevertheless, when it comes to trust in the EU, Turkish opinion is more skeptical. An important political barrier for Turkey’s integration to the EU is the lack of deep commitment to EU membership of powerful circles within Turkey, due to inherent suspicion that the kind of reforms demanded by the Union would lead to a disintegration of the Turkish state (Öniş, 2004: 511). As the West had once attempted to break up the Ottoman Empire, this interpretation and fears of Turks are referred to as the “the Sèvres Syndrome” (Çarkoğlu and Kırcı, 2003). Cosmopolitan processes of democratization motivated by a transnational actor such as the European Union are commonly perceived by Turkey’s political elites as a threat to national sovereignty. As a result, the increasingly uncertain political environment harms Turkey’s reforms and the integration process to the EU. However, in the age of globalization Turkey is more dependent upon the global processes that are perceived as a threat to national sovereignty. In fact, in this regard, a transformation of the Turkish political structure to reach the EU standards and norms offer the means by which Turkey can safeguard national integrity in today’s international conjuncture (Rumford, 2003: 389).

Democratic transformation driven by EU conditionality created a more politically stable and internationally robust Turkey. Recent reforms created the possibility of making Turkish modernity more liberal, plural and multicultural by transforming Turkish democracy into a more consolidated, substantial and deepened mode of governance (Aydın and Keyman, 2004: 13). Therefore, it is correct to argue that the prospects of full membership to the European Union has played a key role in transforming Turkey’s state-centric polity into a more democratic, stable and pluralist one especially in the post-Helsinki period (Keyman and Öniş, 2004: 27). On the other hand, Turkey’s success in implementing structural reforms for consolidation of democracy critically depends on the EU’s treatment of Turkey as a potential full member (Baban and Keyman, 2008). Indeed, many believe that the Europeans often failed to demonstrate unambiguous commitment in support of Turkish membership based on mainly cultural and historical reasons (Öniş, 2004). When CEECs such as Bulgaria and Romania, which do not have more stable democracies or a superior democratic culture in comparison to Turkey, were accepted as full members to the Union, the credibility of the EU as an unbiased organization was damaged and Turkey’s motivation for further reforms to become a member of the European Union was hurt especially at the public level (Müftüler-Baç, 2000: 177).

After all, Turkey is going through a dynamic and consolidated process of modernization and democratization at an increased pace with an ambition to become a full member of the European Union. Although significant progress has been achieved, Turkey still has much political transformation to undertake before it can meet the standards of Europe. While the dispute with Armenians, conflict with Kurds and the problem with Cyprus have long been present in the Turkish political context, the possibility of Turkey’s EU membership has made both their significance and resolution more severe (Göçek, 2008: 90). It is understandable that the Europeans might not want to transfer these century-old problems into their own jurisdiction with Turkey’s EU membership (Beriker and Eralp, 2005: 175). Turkey’s bad human rights record as well as the protection of minorities in Turkey should be improved as a critical political condition (Türkmen, 2002). Turkey still has to further consolidate its democracy and improve its human rights record in order to meet the requirements of the Copenhagen political criteria (Baban and Keyman, 2008: 118). The political dimension of Turkey’s integration in the European Union had always been problematic since the beginning of Turkey-EU relations and it continues to create barriers on Turkey’s path to EU membership.
Security

Transformation of the European Union in the areas of security and foreign policy has become increasingly vital for the Union’s future to triumph as a powerful global actor in world affairs at the age of globalization. Turkey which has the second largest armed forces in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is therefore a valuable asset to Europeans if they seek to become a global actor with an active defense strategy. Besides its military capabilities, Turkey’s geopolitical position is critically important, linking Europe with the Balkans, the Middle East and Central Asia. Consequently, Turkey stands at the crossroads of important energy, transportation and community networks and it plays a key role in balancing powers in the region. In addition to an enhanced military power, Turkish accession would increase the credibility of the EU as a foreign policy actor in the global arena (Emerson and Tocci, 2004: 8).

The Turkish military consists of 1,042,700 troops and it is larger than the military of any EU member state. Turkey is followed by France’s 779,450 troops and Germany’s 683,150 troops. Data indicates that larger European states have larger militaries, at the same time wealthier states tend to look after more troops. In the second group, Greece has the largest military; whereas more populated countries such as Poland and Romania have relatively smaller militaries. Latvia has the smallest military which consists of 22,750 troops. From this picture, one can understand that Turkey has important military power and spends more resources for its security, compared to the European standards, considering that only wealthy European states with higher populations have large militaries which remain significantly small in comparison to the Turkish military. Indeed, the data on military expenditure as a percentage of national GDP confirms the suggestions above.

Turkey allocates 5.3% of its GDP to military expenses, notably higher than the European Union average of 1.7%. In the first group, France and the UK spend the most on their military by allocating 2.6% and 2.4% of their GDP respectively, while Spain only allocates 1.2%. In the second group, Greece gets close to Turkey with 4.3% of GDP allocation whereas CEECs spend below 2% of their GDPs, except Bulgaria which allocated 2.6% of GDP on military spending. On the contrary, when the budgets of European militaries are evaluated, all countries in the first group except Spain seem to have a larger military budget than Turkey’s. This is simply because these more developed economies have higher GDPs when compared to Turkey thus they can allocate more resources as a lower percentage of their GDP. While the budget of Turkish military is $30.936 billion, the United Kingdom spends $57.67 billion on its military. Nevertheless, this does not change the fact that military power is a priority for Turkey considering the size and the allocation of resources on military expenditure. Among the EU members in the second group, none of them have a military budget comparable to Turkey’s size. All CEECs except Romania have military budgets below $1 billion. Finally, the total budget allocated for national militaries of the European Union member states reaches $257.467 billion.

There is a strong relationship between the quality of Turkey’s integration process into the EU and the quality of the Europeans’ security feeling (Oğuzlu, 2003). Turkey became a member of NATO in 1952 whereas France, the United Kingdom and Italy were among the founders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization together with the United States in 1949. Although France quit full participation in NATO in 1966, it returned as an equal member in 2009. Germany joined NATO a few years after Turkey did, and Spain joined NATO in 1982. In the second group, Greece joined NATO at the same time with Turkey in 1952; Poland in 1999, while the remainder of the states have joined NATO in
2004 when they became members of the EU. Indeed, all the CEECs with the exception of Yugoslavia (including today’s Slovenia) were participants in the Warsaw Pact, an alternative military alliance to NATO created under the leadership of the Soviet Union in 1955. Turkey was an important ally to the founders of European Union from the perspective of history at a time when some among today’s European Union members were enemies to the European integration.

Although it lost important bargaining power after the Cold War ended, Turkey’s chances of being included within the EU have increased from a Western security perspective in the post-September 11 era (Oğuzlu, 2003: 295-297). Turkey’s strategic importance has become increasingly valuable for the European Union again, particularly as issues relating to Syria, Iran, Afghanistan and Iraq came forward in recent years (Heisbourg, 2003). Meanwhile, the European Union’s failure to effectively respond to the conflicts in Kosovo and the Balkans in the 1990s turned the attention of Europeans towards larger geopolitical considerations in the region (Eralp, 2000: 52). From the European point of view, Turkey offers a number of specific potential assets for helping the EU address major security concerns such as weapons of mass destruction, global terrorism and illegal trafficking of drugs and people, and ranging from the concrete realities of location and logistics to matters of culture and ideology and the search for a harmony in the greater region rather than promoting a clash of civilizations (Emerson and Tocci, 2004: 4). The calculations of the potential benefits of Turkey’s inclusion in the European Security and Defense Policy and the costs entailed by its exclusion is expected to have an enormous impact on the EU’s policies towards Turkey (Müftüler-Baç, 2000: 489). After all, the proposal of a privileged partnership for Turkey is against the main EU foreign policy goal of building up its soft power beyond the Union’s current borders in order to become a global actor.

From a geostrategic perspective, Turkey is geographically located at the center of Europe, the Middle East, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Eurasian regions. Turkey is a key regional actor and it controls the strategically important straits which connect the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Moreover, the countries surrounding Turkey supply 60% of the natural gas and petroleum demand of Europe, thus the role of Turkey is crucial in terms of providing stability in the regions including the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Caucasus (Şen, 2004: 5). Oil and gas pipelines from Iraq, Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia make Turkey an energy hub for a Europe dependent on external energy reserves. It is ironic that Cyprus is forcing the Union to block the opening of the Energy chapter in the accession negotiations while Turkey has the potential to become a key EU energy partner if the EU is ready to commit funding for new projects and consistency to its relationships with Turkey.

Turkey’s EU accession stands to be of comparable importance for the EU’s emerging foreign and security policy to the 2004 enlargement of the ten new member states put together, if not greater (Derviş et al., 2004: 63). However, it would be unrealistic to expect that the EU would accept that Turkey would be treated equally with the most influential members at the decision-making process in European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). However, it is critically necessary to formulate a design to include Turkey at the decision-making stage because Turkey seems determined to demand autonomous decision capacity in order to participate in ESDP. If the EU can devise such a formula there is much to win from cooperation for both sides (Houben and Tocci, 2001: 7-11). Turkey and the European Union have to realize that their interests in the Middle East are indeed highly convergent: Stability.
Nevertheless, there are also issues of concern against Turkey’s membership from the EU perspective. First of all, if Turkey becomes a part of Europe, so will the problems of the Middle East. One of the most important challenges faced by the Europeans with Turkish integration concerns the ability of the Union to control its external borders in a geography which it has not encountered before (Emerson and Tocci, 2004: 8). The European Union will gain an undeniably important strategic ally in security affairs; however it will also gain important problems considering that the EU will be neighbors with Iraq, Iran and Syria, often thought of by Europeans as fundamentalist Islamic threats to the West. Therefore, it is understandable if Europeans would not want to move their borders next to the nuclear threat of Iran or the chaotic regime in Iraq.

Finally, the fact that Turkey has traditionally been perceived as more of an ally with the United States rather than with Europe will continue to create problems in foreign policy coordination between Turkey and the EU. It is for sure that the Europeans will not want to have “an American spy” in their common foreign and security decision making levels; on the other hand the United States would not want to decrease the level of cooperation with Turkey at the expense of Turkey’s harmonization of foreign policy with an emerging global actor such as the European Union. Moreover, the transatlantic alliance and the relations between NATO, the European Union and the United States need to be carefully revised if Turkey is to become a full member to the European Union (Mason and Penksa, 2003). After all, Turkey is a bridge between the Eastern and the Western worlds, with an important military power and extensive experience in the political affairs of the geopolitically critical regions of the Middle East, the Balkans, Caucasus and even Central Asia; therefore it will be an important asset for the EU to enhance its credibility as well as being a diplomatic, political, military and soft power in the region that would become a powerful actor in the international sphere.

Social

Turkey’s integration in the European Union goes beyond demographic, economic, political or security factors: Turkey’s accession to the EU is also about integration of two culturally distinct societies. Religious difference has always been an issue between Turkey and Europe from a socio-historical perspective, and the cultural difference was frequently pointed out by mainly right wing European politicians (Keyder, 2006: 72-79). The EU is perceived to be a “Christian Club” and the recent Christian Democrat governments in the European states amplified these arguments by proposing a privileged partnership to Turkey instead of equal membership. Christianity has long been an important component of the European identity since the Middle Ages. Even if it is not a pre-condition of accession to the EU according to the Copenhagen Criteria, religion is still a critical determinant of Europeanness at the social level today. Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, former French President (1974-1981) admitted his fear that Turkey’s EU membership would be ‘the end of Europe’ (BBC News, 8 November, 2002). Although the former French President aimed to highlight the socio-historic differences between the two sides, this approach discriminates against Turkey on cultural and religious grounds, which is contradictory to the Treaties of the European Union, and therefore cannot be a part to the rational membership conditionality of the EU.

Indeed, Giscard d’Estaing is the first person to pronounce ‘privileged partnership’ (une relation privilégiée) for Turkey with the European Union in an interview given to the French journal Géopolitique in 2000 (Lannes, 2000). Today’s President of France Nicholas Sarkozy has openly expressed his opposition to Turkey’s full EU membership due to cultural as well as geographical grounds, although he has been cautious in mentioning religious differences in order to avoid fueling
the problems France has been experiencing with its Muslim minorities in recent years. Indeed, there is a substantial Muslim immigrant population living in many parts of Europe, but none of the states included in this study has a Muslim majority. Even though the prospective membership of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the EU may change this fact before the negotiations with Turkey comes to an end, the significance of Turkey’s geostrategic position and scale of population is not comparable to Bosnia. Nevertheless, when shaping cultural relationships with Turkey, it is important for the Europeans to acknowledge that Islam is among European religions today, and therefore it must be recognized not as an outsider or a threat to European identity but rather a domestic and minority European religion which is already an integral part of the European identity (Karlsson, 2004).

Considering the religious composition of the population of EU member states, Roman Catholics are the largest group in the European Union, followed by Protestants, Orthodox, Evangelicals and Anglican Protestants. In the first group of EU member states, Germany has the smallest religious majority of 35.7% that can be associated with a single denomination, which suggests that it has high religious diversity. In fact, there is a difference between a culturally religious society with little religious diversity such as Spain, and a diverse society housing small yet intensely religious groups such as Germany. One must not overlook the fact that the idea of privileged partnership by a group was originally proposed by German Christian Democrats. On the contrary, 99% of the Spanish society consists of Roman Catholics but Spain still supports Turkey. In the second group, Latvia and Estonia have the highest religious diversity rates while more than 90% of Greek people are Orthodox. The latest countries to join the EU in 2004 have various different religious backgrounds and belong to different denominations within Christianity so there is not a visible pattern in European enlargement. Although Roman Catholic societies may seem to have less religious diversity, Latvia has the highest level of diversity yet a majority of Roman Catholics. Finally, Turkey has a majority religion of 80% Sunni Muslims, which is relatively high with still some degree of religious diversity at least on paper (Fox, 2008). According to the ‘Religion, Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life Survey’ report presented in 2007 by Konda, a leading research and consultancy, 99% of the Turkish population are Muslim, among which 82% are Sunni-Hanefi and 5.73% belong to the Alevi-Shi denomination. Although the Alevi Muslims represent the largest religious minority group in Turkey, they are not officially recognized by the State Department of Religious Affairs and are referred to as simply Muslims, belonging to the same large group of Sunni Muslims. Therefore, one cannot speak of religious pluralism in practice in Turkey at least until the ‘Cemevleri,’ worship places for Alevi Muslims, are officially recognized.

The level of religiosity is as important as the religion itself. Although personal beliefs are always hard to measure, results from the World Values Survey suggest that 82.6% of Turkish people label themselves as religious, while Italy is the only country with 88% religiosity which is higher than Turkey in the first group. Only 42.9% of Germans tag themselves as religious; Poland and Romania appear to have the most religious societies with 94.6% and 93.4% respectively. When all religious indicators are combined, one can conclude that Germany at large is the least religious country with a high degree of religious diversity which has a majority of 35.7% Evangelical Christians. On the other hand, the Polish are the most religious society dominated by 92.2% Roman Catholics; but these religion indicators are unsuccessful in explaining the political motivations behind the proposal of a privileged partnership to Turkey.

Education is a critical tool for the modernization of the Turkish society to reach the European standards, therefore it is an important aspect of Turkey’s integration in the EU. The data on education indicates that the average school expectancy from a Turkish citizen is 12.5 years, compared to the 17.2 years of
average European school expectancy. Therefore, there is a significant gap between Turkish society’s level of education and the Europeans’. Furthermore, this is not the average schooling of Turkish population but the expectation from students who are going to school today, which means the actual level of education in Turkey is more likely to be even lower. In the first group of EU states, school expectancy is around 17 years while in the second group Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have the highest expectancy around 18 years which means that the relatively less developed states that entered the EU in 2004 have higher expectations for schooling in order to close the gap with the more developed parts of Europe.

On the other hand, Romania and Bulgaria have school expectancy below 16 years and Cyprus at 14.8 years which is as near as it gets to school expectancy in Turkey. Nevertheless, data also indicates that Cyprus allocated the highest GDP portion, 7.02%, to education compared to other European states. The average GDP allocation in the EU member countries is 5.04% while this percentage is only 2.86 in Turkey. In other words, Turkey allocates the minimum percentage of GDP to education among the states included in this study. While the Turkish government spends 21,011 million Euros on education, Germany spends 99,395 million Euros which explains why Germany has more skilled labor, better economic credentials and political influence within the EU. Furthermore, Turkey has a very young population which means there are more students in Turkey than in Germany, and Turkey still spends one fifth of what Germany spends on a predictably larger number of students. Moreover, France and the UK also spend more than 90 billion Euros on education while even Poland with its GDP lower than Turkey and almost half of Turkey’s population spends more than Turkey on educating its citizens. Finally, Turkey clearly lags behind in terms of education when compared to the CEECs which allocate higher percentage of their GDP’s to educating their future generations (Derviş et al., 2004: 66-67).

Women rights and gender relations determine an important aspect of social norms and the gender gap score indicates the inequality between male and females in a society. According to the World Economic Forum ‘The Global Gender Gap Report 2009’ overall scores, Turkey’s score of 0.5828 is severely lower than any other state included in this study. In the first group, Germany stands out with 7.449 while Italy has the lowest score which is 0.6798. In the second group, Latvia has the highest score which is 0.7416 and all other CEECs have relatively high scores above 0.7 except Romania. Greece, often referred to as having a similar societal structure to Turkey, has a score of 0.7345. Therefore, one may conclude that Turkey has to resolve problems with gender relations in society before it can even get close to European social norms.

When the data on health and the standard of living is evaluated, Turkey lags behind the European standards for one more time. Unfortunately, Turkey’s infant mortality rate suggests that 16 out of 1000 live births die in the first years of their lives and this is drastically below the EU standards. The average infant mortality rate in European Union member states is 4.7; Germany and Spain in the first group in addition to Greece in the second group have infant mortality of 3.5 per 1000 live births (2008). This ratio goes up to 11 and 8.6 in the latest European Union members of Romania and Bulgaria respectively. Nevertheless, having the highest infant mortality rate, the value of life in Turkey is still relatively low even if there has been a significant improvement of 50% decline in this specific indicator during the last decade.

Environment is another important subject in the European agenda for Turkey’s accession. Greenhouse Gas Emissions can provide an idea of how much importance is given to the environment in different countries. The European average score is 90.7, while Germany has the lowest gas emission with 77.6
and Spain has the highest score with 152.6 in the first group. On the contrary, CEECs in the second group have very low greenhouse gas emission scores all at 50s, Latvia having the lowest score of 46.6. Unfortunately, Turkey has a score of 219.1, which is approximately two and a half times of the European average, and more than four times the average of the CEECs.

Although Turkey’s European Union candidacy since 1999 has stimulated political and legal reforms, it also intensified the “Europeanization” process in Turkey. Indeed, Turkey’s Europeanization is greatly motivated by its prospect of full membership in the Union (Müftüler-Baç, 2005: 16). However, various indicators confirm that there are critical differences between the Turkish and European societies and it will take time for these sharp social differences to fade away even if Turkey chooses to accept European cultural norms. On the contrary, it would be wrong to state that Christian Europe has a homogenous culture and Turkey’s difference should not be seen only as a liability, but as a strength for diversity and multiculturalism in Europe (Kirişci, 2008). Indeed, Turkey’s full membership in the Union would have an important transformative impact on the structures of EU in terms of determining European identity and post national forms of a European public sphere in globalized world. Today, one of the most important debates in Europe is the construction of a multicultural cosmopolitan European identity. If Turkey became a member of the EU, Europeans would be able to defy all the accusations suggesting that the EU is a Christian Club. Basically, even the prospects of Turkey’s membership require Europe to rethink its borders and identity (Baban and Keyman, 2008: 110).

**PUBLIC OPINIONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Public opinion in Europe is against further enlargement of the Union. Although 43% of Europeans support further enlargement, 46% are against it (European Commission, 2009). In the first group, Germans are the most cautious of further enlargement as 66% of the society does not want to see newcomers and only a 27% favors a wider EU. Spain is the only country in the first group which supports further enlargement. However, in the second group all EU members with the exception of Greece clearly support enlargement of the EU. Highest support comes from Romania and Poland where over 65% is for enlargement and only around 15% is against it. Therefore, there is an obvious trend in the CEECs to support further new members joining the EU. Besides the fact that they may feel marginalized as newcomers, these countries are also relatively poor and therefore they might support other poor countries’ EU membership to create a competitive advantage for economic purposes. On the other hand, richer countries such as Germany and France would not want to see ‘another poor country’ joining the EU due to economic interests. Finally, a smaller Union is easier to control and influence, according to converging national interests than is an EU with more new members.

When the Europeans are asked specifically about the accession of Turkey, 61% believe that cultural differences between the two societies are too high; 66% have a fear of possible immigration from Turkey, 77% point out Turkey’s troubled economy and a towering 85% believe that Turkey has problems with human rights, while only 33% of Europeans think that membership of Turkey can help Europe enhance its security and defense (European Commission, 2006). Terrorism in Turkey also rose as a major concern for the Europeans according to the latest Eurobarometer SD 75 (European Commission, 2011). On the other hand, Turkey’s accession might symbolize for the southern states a different meaning to counterbalance northern enlargement in order for the Union to have more of a Mediterranean orientation in power balance. This argument is supported by public opinion in the Southern European countries which show relatively higher support for Turkey’s membership compared to Northern European countries (Keyder, 2006: 79). Although the public opinion in all EU
member states included in this study unanimously indicate that there are serious problems regarding Turkey’s economy and human rights, Germans in the first group and Greeks in the second group appeared to be the most unsympathetic to Turkey’s EU membership. The United Kingdom with 68% trust supports Turkey on security matters. Ironically, only 64% of Turks responded that Turkey has the potential to enhance Europe’s security (European Commission, 2006).

The general feeling in the Turkish public towards the European Union’s privileged partnership proposal is that such a partnership is biased to grant greater benefits to the EU than it would grant to Turkey because these privileges would bring only marginal economic and security benefits to a country that is already a part of the Customs Union and NATO. Europeans often overlook the fact that a privileged partnership already exists between Europe and Turkey (Gros, 2004), or that in embracing the ‘privileged partnership’ language, they are possibly looking for a sophisticated way to say that they prefer the status quo. According to the recent data from Eurobarometer SD 75 (European Commission, 2011), there is a slight majority in Turkey that support EU membership, as 41% of respondents think that membership would be a good thing for Turkey whereas 29% think that it would be bad for their country. Forty-eight percent say that EU membership would benefit Turkey while the opposite opinion has grown during the last year and reached 38%. Meanwhile, there has been a significant decline of 12% for the optimism in Turkey. After all, distrust in EU institutions continues to prevail as the highest in Turkey with 63% of Turkish people not trusting the EU.

Turkey’s initial attitude is highly negative to any form of partnership with the European Union because, after all the progress made and all the transformations achieved by the Turkish state on the way to European Union membership, any scenario short of full membership is not expected to be welcome in Turkey (Müftüler-Baç, 2000: 500). The end result aimed at by negotiations with Turkey must be full membership and no other objective can meet the challenge that Europe and Turkey have been facing together (Derviş et al., 2004: 109). After all, the European Union can tolerate Poland’s inefficient agriculture sector, Bulgaria or Romania’s weak democratic culture, Cyprus’s geographical position next to the troubled Middle East or Greece’s distressed economy. If the Europeans were to insist on the objectivity of their membership conditionality then maybe the EU has the capacity to actually tolerate Turkey as a full member rather than a privileged partner.

However, a general skepticism towards a Muslim country that has an entirely different social background as well as historical bad memories may cause a negative feeling towards Turkey’s full membership at the public level in Europe. Turkey’s poor economy, weak democratic credentials, unresolved Cyprus question in addition to Armenian and Kurdish disputes and issues of disrespect for human rights and minorities do not help Turkey gain support from the Europeans either. On the other hand, no one could deny that Turkey’s geostrategic position and military power is of great significance. Indeed, the military appears to be an important asset of Turkey regarding its relations with the European Union. Membership of Turkey could have a considerable impact on the EU’s security and defense policies as well as its foreign policy objectives and the presence of the Turkish military could become an important asset for Europeans to achieve Common Foreign and Security Policy goals.

After all, Turkey is a big country with a large and relatively poor population which has a cultural and religious background that differs from the existing EU member states. Turkey’s young population is expected to grow in the coming years while the EU’s population is expected to decline and the Europeans are facing the problem of aging population. Although supporters of Turkish accession
propose that Turkey’s dynamic and large young population will be an asset for the EU, they overlook the fact that Turkish population is unutilized, a relatively high proportion of the young people in Turkey are unemployed, a great share of Turkey’s labor force works in agriculture, Turkish labor force is unskilled, and is significantly less productive yet drastically small compared to the size of Turkey’s population in comparison to its European counterparts. From an economics perspective, Turkey is poor but its economy has a potential of high growth thanks to its young population which Turkey has been unsuccessful in educating and utilizing in the labor force. Besides, investments in Turkey are low compared to the European levels and this further blocks the potential of Turkish economy to maintain stability and experience a rapid growth to fill in the gap between Turkey and the EU.

Furthermore, education emerges as a crucial weakness of Turkey. In addition to the fact that Turkey’s population is severely uneducated when compared to the Europeans, it is even more embarrassing for Turkey that it allocates the least percentage of its resources to education. In fact, Germans spend almost five times more money on education than Turkey does, and it is Turkey that has a larger young population and that seeks to close the education gap existing between the two sides. In other words, data suggests that the education gap between Turkey and the EU cannot possibly be narrowed unless government spending in Turkey prioritizes education and radically changes the allocation of resources for schooling. Turkey allocates a vast amount of its resources for military expenses, more than three times the European average to maintain the power and the prestige of its military. However, if Turkey aims to reach the European standards through sustainable transformation in economic and social spheres, it might be wise to consider allocating more funds to education rather than funding the armed forces above European standards. An uneducated labor force is unskilled and less productive, thus Turkey’s young and large population will become a disadvantage for Turkey in its relations to the European Union, even though it has a potential to become an asset in theory.

In terms of economics, inflation is a problem which Turkey has managed to handle in a successful way in recent years. Nevertheless, Turkish economy is still unstable and the inflation rate is high when compared to the European economies, and Turkey needs to resolve this problem before it can fulfill the Copenhagen Criteria. Other than economic conditions, the membership conditionality stresses democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; the evaluation of indicators included in this research shows that they are still very problematic in Turkey. Indicators of democracy, political rights, civil liberties, gender relations, standard of living, government involvement in religion and protection of environment all unanimously suggest that Turkey cannot meet the European standards and even the standards of Central and Eastern European countries. Contrary to the common belief, Turkey is indeed backwards in all of these policy areas which set the basis for the European conditionality of Copenhagen Criteria, in comparison to the CEECs that qualified for the European Union membership in the last two rounds of enlargements.

In conclusion, results of this comparative study suggest that Europeans do not have to be biased against Turkey or impose double standards when proposing a privileged partnership to Turkey rather than full membership because Turkey is indeed different from current members of the EU according to a set of rational indicators. There are some differences among the EU members in separate groups especially in terms of economic development. Although the CEECs have a limited experience of democracy in their pasts, data suggests that their democratic credentials are stronger than the quality of Turkish democracy today. Turkey appears to lag behind the EU members in the second group more than they fall behind the EU members in the first group. Furthermore, data indicates that there are considerable efforts from the CEECs to catch up while Turkey’s progress has been only partial. Finally, the CEECs
have even better qualifications than members in the first group in parts of the social criteria, while Turkey is out of the European league.

Although it is clear from the European public opinion that the majority of Europeans do not want to see Turkey as a full member of the EU, this does not have to be based on irrational reactions relying on cultural or religious grounds. As this study points out, Turkey is indeed radically different from the established European Union states in the first group as well as the new EU members from Central and Eastern Europe in the second group on a number of objective indicators. Finally, this article does not evaluate the question of whether the Europeans led by the Christian Democrats are biased against Turkey’s membership due to cultural or historic reasons, but it suggests solely that there are rational grounds other than irrational or sentimental factors for proposing Turkey for a privileged partnership from the European perspective. Even if it is true that Europeans are prejudiced against Turkey’s accession, the results of this study indicate that Turkey is much behind the European standards especially in social and political conditionality, and therefore in fulfilling the Copenhagen Criteria to achieve full membership to the Union. Hence, before talking about European bias and historical prejudices, Turkey must ambitiously continue its transformation and undertake further reforms to become a full fledged democracy which would automatically render it also eligible for joining the European Union as a full member on equal grounds. On the contrary, if Turkey remains “unequal” to European member states as the empiric data suggests it is in various fields today, then the “unequal” European proposition of a privileged partnership is worth considering for Turkey. When the current progress of Turkey towards EU membership is acknowledged, by ignoring the offer of a privileged partnership Turkey would take the risk of abandoning its long European dream, while the EU must be ready for the consequences of losing an important ally with a key geo-strategic position which would basically harm both sides on a great scale in the 21st Century’s globalized world.

Today, at a point which Turkey has lost its momentum for further reforms, there are two possible outcomes in the future of Turkey-EU relations. Turkey should continue its transformation with an increased pace for closing the actual gap that exists between European and Turkish standards, without putting forward arguments for European bias or double standards, or should accept privileged partnership as a fair and viable solution as well as an end result of Turkey’s long history of European integration.

REFERENCES


### Demographic Indicators:

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### Economical Indicators:

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APPENDIX B

Online Data Sources and Printed Press References:

European Commission Eurostat:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/

European Commission Public Opinion - Eurobarometer:
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

United Nations Statistics Department – UNdata:
http://data.un.org/

International Monetary Fund Data and Statistics:
http://www.imf.org/external/data.htm

United States of America Central Intelligence Agency - The World Factbook:

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA):
http://www.idea.int/vt/

World Values Survey:
http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/

http://www.freedomhouse.org/

The Economist Intelligence Unit’s Index of Democracy 2008:
http://graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy%20Index%202008.pdf

World Economic Forum - The Global Gender Gap Record 2009:


BBC News:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/

Die Welt – German Daily Newspaper:
http://www.welt.de

Zaman - Turkish Daily Newspaper:
http://www.todayszaman.com

Financial Times:
http://www.ft.com
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<td>International IDEA</td>
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<td><strong>Security Indicators:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Military Size</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Individually Collected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military Budget (in Billions of USD)</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Individually Collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Expenditure (% of GDP)</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>The World Factbook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Members of NATO since</td>
<td>201</td>
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<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Source</td>
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<td><strong>Social Indicators:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Religion:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Majority of Religion (as %)</td>
<td>1990-2002</td>
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<td>Level of Religiosity</td>
<td>2005-2007</td>
<td>World Values Survey</td>
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<td><strong>Education:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>School Expectancy (in years)</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Eurostat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Public Expenditure on education (EUR PPS million)</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Eurostat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Expenditure on Education (as % of GDP)</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Eurostat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender Gap Score (Higher the better)</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>World Economic Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health and standard of living:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality Rate (per 1000 live births)</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Eurostat</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Environment:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Lower the better)</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Eurostat</td>
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<td><strong>Public Opinion:</strong></td>
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<td>For further enlargement of the EU (as %)</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Eurobarometer (71)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Against further enlargement of EU (as %)</td>
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<td>Eurobarometer (71)</td>
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<td>On Turkey’s Membership (as %)</td>
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<td>Cultural differences too strong</td>
<td>2006</td>
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<td>Eurobarometer (66)</td>
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<td>Defense</td>
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ABSTRACT

This study argues that there are two prominent Eurasianist discourses in Turkey, the Kemalist and the Ottomanist, and that these traditions draw on three geopolitical traditions: the nationalist, the socialist, and the Islamist. The contents of three representative journals (the nationalist Türk Yurdu, the socialist Teori, and the conservative democrat Türkiye Günlüğü) are analyzed, investigating their issues published between 1990 and 2010, in order to seek answers to three main questions: First, what distinguishes these three types of geopolitical traditions? Second, did the nationalist and socialist Eurasianist views in recent years converge on each other, thereby forming the Ulusalcı view, while the Islamist Eurasianists became the new opposing pole? Third, insofar as the answer to the second question is yes, why did this realignment take place? In response to the first question, this study shows that the geopolitical visions of these three groups and the way they imagine the past help to explain their respective perspectives of Eurasia and how they place Turkey in these perspectives. In response to the second question, again this research shows that the nationalist and socialist visions of Eurasianism did indeed converge on each other. The research then maintains that this happened because the Islamist circles in the Post-Cold War allied with the liberal groups and developed a “counter-memory” of the past that became an alternative to the Kemalist historiography, while the nationalist and socialist geopolitical traditions remained faithful to the Kemalist narrative of the past.

Keywords: Turkish Eurasianism, Ulusalcılık, critical geopolitics, collective memory, Post-Cold War Turkish politics, historiographical dispute, Turkish geopolitical tradition.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma Türkiye’de milliyetiçi, sosyalist ve İslamcı jeopolitik gelenek üzerinden şekillenen biri Kemalist diğeri ise Osmanlıçı olmak üzere öne çıkan iki Avrasyacı söylem olduğu iddiasıdadır. Bu üç geleneği temsil eden üç süreli yayanın (milliyetiçi Türk Yurdu, sosyalist Teori ve İslamcı Türkiye

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Anahtar kelimeler: Türkiye Avrasyaçılığı, Ulusalcılık, eleştirel jeopolitik, kollektif hafıza, Soğuk Savaş sonrası Türk siyaseti, tarih yazımı tartışmaları, Türk jeopolitik geleneği.

A basic Google search with the key words of Eurasia and Eurasianism (Avrasya- Avrasyacılık) in Turkish, provides a wide range of results about how these terms are perceived in academia and the media. One writer from an Ankara-based think tank describes Eurasianism as a dream, which is far from realization. Nevertheless, he still realizes Eurasianism’s role in Turkish politics as an important bridge between the radical left and the radical right. He defines Eurasianism as “both socialism and nationalism; both rejection of the Western hegemony and centralizing Eurasia’s place in world politics” (Berkan, 2009). According to this view, Eurasianism appeared to be the antidote of the West in Turkish politics. Berkan (2009) asserts that Ulusalcılık means Eurasianism, which has also appeared under the name Kızıl Elma (Red Apple) Coalition. Socialist İlhan (2004) sees it as a common hope for Russia and Turkey, while liberal Berkan criticizes Eurasianist groups claiming that they use geopolitics as a so-called “scientific approach” in justifying their “anti-democratic” claims. While some see Ulusalcılık and Eurasianism as almost the same thing (Üşümezsoy and Doğan, 2008), others add the so-called “Ergenekon terrorist organization” to these two and blame Eurasianists by being outmoded and anti-democratic groups embedded in the deep state tradition of Turkish politics (Çandar, 2008; Korkmaz, 2010).

Another commentator, Çomak (2011) from the nationalist Eurasianist wing, defined Eurasianism as the meeting point of anti-EU groups who would never come together under normal conditions. Çomak questions, accordingly, whether a term which is defined differently by different people can play a unifying role or not. Another nationalist figure, the head of the Türk Ocakları (Turkish Homes), Kavuncu (in Yıldız, 2009), shows hesitation in approaching Eurasianism which he sees as a wrong route for Turkists to follow; they should rather work for a unification of Turkey with Turkistan. However, he still underlines a potential pragmatism in cooperating with Russia in Eurasia if the two countries’ interests overlap.
On the other hand, some nationalists have already embraced Eurasianism as a potential foreign policy option for Turkey (Eslen, 2008; Külebi, 2006; Özdağ, 2004; Taşçı, 2010; and Yeniçeri, 2004, 2010). Some of these nationalists describe Eurasianism as an option insufficiently considered for Turkish foreign policy (Külebi, 2006), while others see it as a historical fact (Yeniçeri, 2010), a geopolitical necessity (Bulut, 2010; Eslen, 2008) and an emergency for Turks. Some, on the other hand, see Eurasianism as a more important goal for Turkey than democracy (Eslen, 2010). Finally, there are comments about Eurasia from liberal business organizations like the Marmara Grubu Vakfı (Marmara Group Foundation) which organizes business meetings with Eurasian countries and has the slogan of “the Future is Eurasia!” (Süver, 2008).

These dense discussions prove one thing if nothing else, that in Turkish politics Eurasianism has triggered a lot of interest. People from a wide range of the political spectrum wrote about it, even though some of them do not have faith in it. This study will refer to data collected from three journals which represent three geopolitical traditions, socialism, nationalism and Islamism, from which these discussions are mainly triggered. This study combines content analysis with qualitative data collected from the three journals: the nationalist (Ulusalcı today) Türk Yurdu (Turkish Homeland), the socialist (also Ulusalçı today) Teori (Theory) and the Islamist-liberal (conservative democrat today) Türkiye Günlüğü (Diary of Turkey).

**Content Analysis: Theories and Terminology**

This study refers to theories as well as past research in selecting its variables. The aim is to test hypotheses and find quantitative data confirming that the chosen variables are statistically important (Neuendorf, 2002: 168). This research looks for a relationship between the representation of history and geopolitical discourse for the related three geopolitical traditions in Turkey. The content analysis is made of key ideas, key reference points (thinkers, events and journals), and key subjects from the three journals.

The goal of this study is twofold: first it aims to describe different categories of Turkish Eurasianism, benefiting from the tools of critical geopolitics theory. Second, its purpose is to deconstruct the reasons which lay behind the overlapping and clashing discourses among the three geopolitical traditions. There are two main steps in the data analysis: descriptive and explanatory. The descriptive part uses the critical geopolitical theory’s analytical tools. The explanatory part, on the other hand, makes use of the social representation/collective memory studies, because this study claims that what defines these groups’ borders are their clashing/overlapping representations of the past. Accordingly, these groups’ collective memories in relation to Turkish history will be analyzed to scrutinize the causal mechanism behind their geopolitical discourse dynamics.

By using the constructivist as well as the rationalist tools of critical geopolitics for descriptive purposes, this study expects to understand who the Turkish Eurasianists are, how they can be categorized, and why there is more than one Turkish Eurasianism. As a second step, it adapts collective memory studies for explanatory purposes in finding out the hidden causal mechanism behind polarization and rapprochement dynamics among Eurasianist groups’ geopolitical discourses. It explores how Eurasianists perceive each other and themselves. Accordingly, this research aims to contribute to the relevant literature via a content analysis supported by qualitative data on who the Turkish Eurasianists are, how different they are from each other and why.
Critical Geopolitics Theory

Stone (2004: 9) underlines the idea that traditional geopolitical discourse has almost a monopoly in Turkish politics, both in academia and in practice. Constructivist models are rarely adapted to political studies. Vague terms like “Turkish national interest” are highly common without concrete definitions but in shifting contexts (Stone, 2004: 10). About Eurasianist discourses in Turkey, Stone says, “Eurasia is a porous conception, then and remains ensnared within shifting geographer or ideological positions.” This study agrees with this idea and that is why it benefits from the tools of the critical geopolitics theory which provides the opportunity for the researcher to conduct a constructivist analysis on traditional geopolitical discourses as in the case of the Turkish intellectual tradition.

Critical geopolitics sees classical geopolitics as a pseudoscience and it provides the tools to critically analyze traditional geopolitical discourses and the geopoliticians who develop these discourses. Turkish Eurasianists are geopoliticians in this sense (See Bilgin, 2005, 2007, 2007b, 2008). That is why the key concepts that critical geopolitics scholars provide will be this research’s key concepts in supporting the descriptive hypothesis which is that there are two key Eurasianist groups in the contemporary Turkish intellectual arena: the Kemalist Eurasianists coming from nationalist and socialist (or the so named Ulusalcı- geopolitical traditions) and the Ottomanist Eurasianists coming from Islamist geopolitical tradition—in today’s terms the conservative democrats).

Traditional Geopolitical Way of Narration: The Case of Turkish Eurasianism

The geopolitical type of narration has two main characteristics: it is declarative (this is how the world “is””) and it is imperative (this is what “we” must do). The “is” shows commitment to unchanging objectivity of truth, while the “we” shows the geographically bounded community and its cultural/political version of truth. Sacralization and historical narrativization are the two tools used by traditional geopoliticians in influencing their followers. These criteria were observed frequently in all three journals. With minor differences from one journal to the others, all were proven usually to be declarative and imperative in their discourses in major amounts. This data proved that it was a suitable choice to work with the critical geopolitics theory in categorizing the Turkish geopoliticians of Eurasianism.

As mentioned before, the primary goal of this study is to test two main arguments: one descriptive and one explanatory. Accordingly, as primary resources, three journals were scanned representing three main geopolitical traditions in Turkey: Türkiye Günlüğü, which represents the Islamists (today’s conservative democrats), Teori, which is the official journal of today’s ulusalci socialist Worker’s Party and finally Türk Yurdu, which is today’s ulusalci nationalist right wing journal. Because of the fact that Turkish Eurasianism is a post-Cold War phenomenon, only post-Cold War volumes of these journals published between the years of 1990 to 2010 were scanned. Not all the published volumes between these years were read. Rather, some were eliminated via an index scanning of all volumes published in these 20 years. Accordingly, only the relevant articles were read; they were on the following topics:

1. Ideologies in Turkey
2. Turkish history (Ottoman and Republican)
3. Geopolitics
4. Eurasia/ Eurasianism
5. Ottomanism
After the eliminations according to these criteria, there were 113 articles remaining from Türkiye Günlüğü, 109 from Türk Yurdu and 81 from Teori of different lengths ranging from one to twelve pages. On average the articles were between five to ten pages each.

This study claims that there are two distinctive geopolitical discourses of Turkish Eurasianism: Kemalist and Ottomanist. In addition, it purports that Kemalists and Eurasianists come from two separate geopolitical traditions: socialist and nationalist. This might sound like a bold claim, because these two traditions used to be the clashing parties of a virtual civil war during the Cold War years in Turkey. Accordingly, this study will try to deconstruct the change and persistence dynamics in the construction of today’s new and unexpected polarization among Turkish Eurasianists.

**Collective Memory/ Social Representation Theories**

Epistemic realism is a concept explaining how the rationale of threat construction via specific foreign policy discourses and practices works in international relations (Campbell, 1992: 1). Epistemic realism sanctions in two analytical forms: i) narrativization of historiography in which things have a self-evident quality that allows them to speak for themselves and ii) logic of explanation whose purpose is to identify these self-evident facts and material causes for them. In this analysis, all three geopolitical traditions carry these two criteria.

Collective or social memory means a remembering process, of not only what we have experienced during our life time, but what we have also thought via history teachings, both as parts of our ancestral past (Laszio and Liu, 2007). On the other hand, autobiographical memory is memory of those events that we ourselves experience, and historical memory is the one that reaches us only through historical records. History is the remembered past to which we no longer have an “organic” relation, while collective memory is the active past that forms our identities. Historical memory can be organic or dead: we can celebrate things that we have not directly experienced, as in the case of all three geopolitical traditions.

Another helpful definition is the “mnemonic communities” which are groups who remember what they have not directly experienced, but what they are told via generational story lines about a shared past. In the Turkish Eurasianist case the socialist and nationalist Eurasianists are expected to be the mnemonic communities who share the Kemalist historiography as their primary source of information about the past. On the other hand, the conservative democrat Eurasianists are expected to play the role of a counter memory which is not satisfied with the Kemalist understanding of Turkish history and works to reimagine it as a social and political counter-force. Kemalist groups seem to be defensive, while the Islamist Eurasianist group seems to be offensive in this fight over a collective memory of the Turkish society.

Construction of collective identities via national heroes, golden ages, myths or suffering, point out one fact about the characteristics of social identity: it is a field of ongoing debate, just like the battle of Kemalist historiography vs. Islamist historiography. History provides “narratives of origins” (Hilton
and Liu, 2005: 3), which work as quasi-legal charters establishing rules, norms, moral codes, and do’s and don’ts. Accordingly, this study focuses on the perceptions of history of the three groups to understand the mechanisms of change and persistence among and within them. This is because representations of history are contested when it comes to applying them to current events. Social representations of history may be hegemonic (consensual through society), emancipated (different versions in different parts of society) and polemical (conflicting across different groups) (Hilton and Liu, 2005:6). In the case of Turkish Eurasians, Islamists and Kemalists are expected to clash over polemical representations of history while the nationalist and socialist Eurasians seem to share a hegemonic representation.

In preparing the content analysis in line with this theory, all the three journal writers’ imaginations of and the ways they narrativize Turkish history were investigated. How hegemonic, emancipated and polemical different groups’ storylines are and how this reflects to their categorization as conflicting and overlapping geopolitical groups constitutes an important part of this analysis. This is because this kind of data gives important clues about the causal mechanism lying on the grounds of the group dynamics among Turkish Eurasians.

**How the Representation of the Past can Change and Persist**

To define malleability and persistence of collective memories, presentism is a helpful theory which puts forward alternative ways in which images of the past change over time. It is also an instrumentalist theory aiming to deconstruct how groups use the past for present purposes and holds that the past is generally a useful resource for expressing and justifying current interests (Olick And Robbins,1998). Within presentism, it is possible to emphasize the instrumental or semantic dimensions of memory...

For the instrumental dimension, memory entrepreneurship is a manipulation of the past for particular purposes, while for the semantic dimension; selective memory is an inevitable consequence of how we interpret the world.

Instrumental persistence happens when actors intentionally seek to maintain a particular version of the past; while cultural persistence refers to a particular past which is perpetuated because it remains relevant to later cultural formations. More general images are more likely to adapt to new contexts than more specific ones. For instrumental change to occur, actors intentionally change an image of the past for particular reasons in the present, though we cannot always predict the results of our efforts; and finally cultural change happens when a particular past no longer fits with present understandings or otherwise loses relevance for the present (See Table 1)

My expectation is that cultural change happened for the socialist and nationalist Eurasianists in Turkey. The ending of the Cold War made these old ideologies irrelevant in various terms. For socialists, communism lost its power as an alternative way of life and political ideal after the demise of the Soviet Union. However, the Workers Party, which is the institution publishing the socialist *Teori* journal, is still a political party which wants to get votes of people. That is why they had to change their discourse so that it would fit the current conjuncture. A similar situation is applicable to the nationalist geopoliticians of Eurasianism. They lost their anti-communist position after the disappearance of the Soviet Union as an enemy. To prevent themselves from becoming irrelevant, cultural change also
occurred for nationalist Eurasianists. Cultural change for both of these groups is also accompanied by instrumental change. Both groups have direct or indirect political aims that shape the policy decisions about Turkey’s future.

### Table 1

#### Dynamics of Persistence and Change in the Image of the Past

(Olick and Robbins 1998:129)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persistence</th>
<th>Instrumental</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>Inertial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-conscious orthodoxy, conservatism, heritage movements</td>
<td>Continued relevance, canon</td>
<td>Habit, routine, repetition, custom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Instrumental</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>Inertial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revisionism, memory entrepreneurship, redress movements, legitimation, invented tradition</td>
<td>Irrelevance, paradigm change, discovery of new facts</td>
<td>Decay, atrophy, saturation, accidental loss, death</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the macro level, with the ending of the Cold War, Turkey’s foreign policy perspective changed dramatically. The politicians realized that it is not necessarily an inseparable part of the West: the idea that Turkey’s national interests might not always fit with the interests of the West was confirmed by various incidents. On the other hand, Turkey’s newly founded relations with the Central Asian countries brought some disillusionment about these countries specifically and about the East in general. As a result, nationalist and socialist Eurasianists tended to rely on anti-Westernism while looking for some ways to integrate Turkey into alternative alliances. For these two groups, Eurasianism worked as a roof under which they meet via cultural and instrumental changes (Cengiz and Ersanli, 2000; Ersanli, 2001; Marlene, 2008).

Cultural and instrumental persistence occurred for the conservative group whose sub-national identity became even more relevant in the post-modern context of localization. Conservatives became more relevant in the post Cold War’s postmodernist world where hegemonic state discourse is challenged by sub-national forces everywhere in the world (Mamadouh, 1998). As a counter memory, this research claims that Islamists met on the ground of change and democracy with the liberals of Turkey and constructed the Ottomanist Eurasianism alternative. In instrumental terms, they also became powerful with the success of the AKP government which confirmed the wisdom of persistence in terms of a social representation of history.
Expectations about Data Findings

Before starting the content analysis, the expectations were that the nationalist and socialist Eurasianist journals’ ideas would overlap to a major degree, especially on the issues of how Republican and Ottoman history is imagined, how Kemalism is defined and accordingly how ideal domestic and foreign policies are constructed in these discourses. The nationalist and socialist Eurasianists were expected to be faithful to Kemalist historiography and to describe Kemalism in anti-imperialist and anti-Western terms. Conversely, the Islamist Eurasianist group was expected to use the terms of Kemalism and Westernism interchangeably while opposing Kemalist historiography which they claim tried to delete the Ottoman and Muslim history of Turks from the collective memory of the society. As a result of these conflicting views of history, Kemalist Eurasianists were expected to have different political and social expectations from Ottomanist Eurasianists in terms of domestic and foreign policy.

In addition, the common reference points of nationalist and socialist geopoliticians were expected to be more frequent than their common reference points with the Islamist Eurasianists. The idea that these reference points matter comes from the constructivist theory of collective memory studies. The theory claims that in social and political life what matters is interpretation. There is no reality waiting out there to be discovered: interpretations make up our realities. That is why the basis of the different groups’ “realities” lie behind their conflicting interpretations, for instance as in the case of Turkish Eurasianism’s discordant imaginations of the past. One way to find out where these conflicting interpretations originate from is to look at these groups’ main reference points.

As already mentioned, the explanatory hypothesis was that the reason behind the rapprochement of nationalist and socialist Eurasianists is their shared vision of Turkish history. In terms of Republican history, the nationalist and socialist Eurasianists were expected to have similar perspectives which are usually positive even if sometimes critical. On the other hand, Islamist Eurasianists were expected to express a tension regarding the Republican historiography which would reflect their negative perception of Kemalism. In terms of Ottoman historiography, the nationalist and socialist Eurasianists were again expected to have similar negative views, in contrast to the glorification of the empire by the Islamist Eurasianists. Finally, in regards to the data showing the three groups’ perspective of each other, an increasing approach from nationalist and socialist geopolitical traditions towards each other were expected in the Post- Cold period. This study contends that socialists and nationalists changed their perceptions in an evolving manner in a way that their interpretations of reality merged in time. On the other hand, nationalist and socialist groups were expected to have negative perception of the conservative democrat Eurasianists and vice versa.

Content Analysis Results

The sites of the production of geopolitics are diverse: they are both high (a national security memorandum), and low (a headline of newspaper), visual and discursive, traditional (religious motives) and postmodern (internet). They ask questions like: “What is the path for national greatness for a state?,” “How can a state grow?,” “How can a state be reformed in a way that it does not lose its greatness?” Accordingly, in the descriptive analysis, answers for the following questions from all three journals were searched in order to categorize them accordingly:
1. What is Turkey’s national interest? What kind of a future are you working for?
2. What should change/stay the same for a better future of Turkey?
3. Where is your Eurasia? What countries are parts of it? Who are not Eurasian? Who are the enemies/opposites/Others of Eurasia?
4. What is the criterion of being Eurasian? (geographical, cultural, historical, traditional, civilizational, etc.) What should Turkey’s approach be to Eurasia? (foreign policy recommendations)
5. What is the place of Turkey in Eurasia?
6. Are Turkish citizens also Eurasian? What is the cultural and political identity of Turks?
7. What is the importance of Eurasia for world politics? What is the importance of Turkey for world politics?

In answering these questions this research referred to key ideas that were noted down from each article. For the Türkiye Günlüğü journal there were 371, from Teori 276 and from Türk Yurdu 445 key ideas. The answers given to the nine questions by the journal writers vary, but some key tendencies of each journal towards addressing these questions can be determined. The aim is to find out whether the socialist and nationalist Eurasianist journals show any common approach to these questions, and whether the conservative Eurasianists’ perspective creates an alternative to them.

Conservative democrat Eurasianists see Turkey’s national interest in changing towards a more democratic, multicultural, and liberal state. The Özal type conservative liberalism and Ottoman type multinational, multicultural unity seem to be reference points of this group in domestic politics as a remedy. They also see Neo-Ottomanism as a way to democratize and form more effective relations in the international arena. They want to reorganize the state structure accordingly.

On the other hand, socialist Eurasianists ask for a “proletarian Republic” which values equality, democracy, independence, freedom, secularism and enlightenment. However, democracy does not seem to be a priority for this group as a national interest of Turkey. These socialists also value patriotism. They think secularism brings freedom of speech and that is why it should be protected. Even though they are internationalist, they seem to have become more statist in time. One of their key terms is anti-imperialism because they firmly believe that both the domestic and international problems of Turkey are traceable to the interests of the Western imperialists.

Similarly, the nationalist Eurasianist group is under the effect of the Sevres syndrome in interpreting both the domestic and international problems of Turkey. Nationalist Eurasianists think that Turkey is at the center of world politics and they are the only ones who realize this fact. That’s why, they think, both the West and its domestic “supporters” are against the nationalists. These supporters of the West are the liberals and the Islamist Eurasianists. Nationalist Eurasianists, like the Socialist Eurasianists, value patriotism as well as the state. They have no problem with secularism and in general with the Kemalist doctrine, even though they do not praise it as much as the socialist ones do.

When it comes to the idea of change, conservative democrat Eurasianists are strong supporters of it. They think that Turkish historiography should get revised in a way that it is more at peace with the Ottoman history. They do not like the Kemalist doctrine which they do not find democratic enough. Conservative democrat Eurasianists ask for a synthesis of the periphery and the center via further democratization: “Turkey is looking for a synthesis to combine Turk and Kurt, periphery and center,
Islam and modernity via liberalism rather than authoritarianism: Turkey looks for Özal” (Göle, 1993: 24). They think nationalist and socialist Eurasianists are into conspiracy theories which make Turkey waste time: “It is pathetical to search for the West behind all of our problems” (Göle, 1993: 26).

On the other hand, socialist Eurasianists define democratization as freeing proletariat from its ties with its exploiters (Perinçek, 1994: 8). They think that the Republican reforms did not get completed, rather they were manipulated, and that is why Turkey struggles with many problems today. To overcome this, Turkey should return to being guided in light of the Republican revolution. Turks and Kurds should also form a fraternity which will lead to a fraternity of Turkey with the Eurasian countries: “Our fraternity can be a model for the world and we will solve the problems in the Chaos Geography” (Perinçek, 1994: 5). The nationalist Eurasianists’ approach to the Kurdish issue is different: they think Kurds are tricked by the West, so this is a fake problem created by imperialists: “The state accepted Kurds as Turks and never discriminated against them” (Türkdoğan, 1991: 2), “There is a possibility that Kurds came from a Turkish origin” (Köseoğlu, 1995: 5), “Imperialists want to do today what they did with the Montroe Treaty yesterday by using Kurds” (Onat, 2006: 60). One other important national interest for nationalist Eurasianists is for Turkey to realize its strength and cooperate with Russia and China to be a Eurasian power. Socialist and nationalist Eurasianists’ ideas overlap here, too: regionalization in Eurasia promotes a better future for Turkey.

The following table (See Table 2) summarizes the results of the descriptive questionnaire about the political expectations of the three geopolitical traditions. In line with the discussion, this summary also confirms that in terms of domestic politics expectations, the Islamist tradition draws a highly alternative line to the nationalist and socialist Eurasianists, which overlap frequently, as expected.

### Table 2

**Clashing/Overlapping Political Expectations of the Three Geopolitical Traditions**

| **Islamists** | Change towards a more democratic, multicultural, liberal state  
Özalian type of Neo-Ottomanism  
Kemalist historiography should be revised  
Distaste with conspiracy theories |
| **Socialists** | Democracy is not the priority (Negative connotation)  
Kemalist historiography should remain  
Patriotism, statism, anti-imperialism, anti-Westernism  
Sevres syndrome |
| **Nationalists** | Democracy is not the priority (Negative connotation)  
Turkey as the center of world politics  
Inner and outer enemies, anti-Westernism, anti-liberalism, patriotism, statism, secularism, (peace with) Kemalist doctrine  
Sevres syndrome |
Eurasia for conservative democrat Eurasianists means the geography of the former Ottoman Empire, namely the Middle East. For socialist Eurasianists, on the other hand, it is a wide area which includes Russia, China, India, Central Asia, Iran, Middle East and even Latin America and Africa. Socialist Eurasianists see all the countries except the Western ones as potential allies for Turkey in Eurasia. They refer to various alternative regionalism ideas for Turkey like Mustafa Öztürk’s Southwest Asia (Turkey, Syria, and Iran), Anıl Çeçen’s Central States Union (Turkey, Syria, Iran, Azerbaijan) Doğu Perinçek’s Big Asia Union (Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Azerbaijan), or Hakan Albayrak’s Turkey-Syria Union to include some concrete overlapping plans for Turkey’s future foreign policy direction.

For nationalist Eurasianists, Eurasia is primarily the so called “Turkistan,” they add all the areas where Turks live, and finally Russia is included in their vague definition of Eurasia. “The new world order of Turkism” and “the sun country” are some alternative names nationalist Eurasianists offer for a new Turkish future ideal. Ambiguity in defining where Eurasia is seems to be common to all three groups. For the socialist and nationalist Eurasianists, though, there is an overlapping mistrust of the West, which they think has only bad intentions towards Turkey and Eurasia. On the other hand, this ambiguity can be interpreted as a natural result of instrumental reasoning: a not well defined Eurasia is more practical for political purposes than a well defined one.

When it comes to Turkey’s role and importance in the region, all the three groups seem to have a similar perspective in terms of referring to history. However the histories they refer to are not the same. Conservative democrat Eurasianists see Turkey’s historical role in reference to the Ottoman Empire, and they think having an active role in the region is both a right and a duty for Turkey. Socialist Eurasianists also refer to history but to the Republican revolutionary history instead of the Ottoman one. They focus on the anti imperialist unity of the Eurasian countries against the West, of which Turkey has to be a part because of its revolutionary past. Nationalist Eurasianists also refer to history, but they go beyond the Ottoman history and refer to the previous existence of Turks in the region. In addition to the other two groups, nationalist Eurasianists also underline the ethnic, linguistic and cultural commonness of Turkey with Eurasian countries, making regionalization in Eurasia a sociological, historical and political necessity.

Among the three, only socialist Eurasianists openly claim that Turks are Eurasians. To conservative democrat Eurasianists, Turks are Ottomans (a reference to religion) and for nationalist Eurasianists Turks are Turks (a reference to ethnicity). Conservatives state that Eurasia can work as an alternative civilization for the countries such as Turkey that do not belong to one civilization only. They show their difference from socialists by asserting that countries like Iran, Russia, Turkey and China cannot be considered as exploited or underdeveloped: their history of self modernization makes them special.

For socialist Eurasianists, definitions of Eurasia should be considered on two levels, security and necessities. Socialist Eurasianists see regionalization in Eurasia as the unique pragmatic option for Turkey and the entire exploited world. This group embraces Eurasianism both as an identity for Turks and as a pragmatic option. Nationalist Eurasianists’ view of Eurasianism, on the other hand, is only a means to reach their ultimate goal of uniting with the Central Asian Turkic countries. They even claim that calling these societies “Turkic” is discriminatory because they are as Turkish as the Turks in Turkey.
For conservative democrat Eurasianists, Eurasia is the former Ottoman lands because Turkey needs to regain its historic honorable role. However, for nationalists and socialist Eurasianists, Eurasia means even more: it is the global key point in which all the big states have interests. They refer to its rich energy resources as well as its glorious history and highly developed culture as the reasons why it is the center of the world.

Socialist Eurasianists define this area as the “Chaos Geography.” To them Turkey and Russia, which have cooperated during the Bolshevik and Republican Revolutions, should come together again for the sake of guiding a long term wide ranging regionalization in Eurasia. On the other hand, nationalist Eurasianists state their plans of using television, sports and art as potential means for integrating the Turkic countries. Turkey, to them, needs to be the most critical power behind this integration. Similarly, socialist Eurasianists recommend that Eurasian countries construct common Eurasian media sources. They need to learn each other’s language and build Eurasian universities. This is the only way to fight the American propaganda that sets Eurasians against one another. The following table summarizes the overlapping/clashing geopolitical visions of the three traditions, again confirming this study’s expectations about the overlapping visions of nationalist and socialist Eurasianists which are countered by the alternative vision of the Islamist Eurasianists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Islamists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eurasia:</strong> ex-Ottoman geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turkey’s role:</strong> Historical responsibility coming from Ottoman history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Identity:</strong> Ottomanism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socialists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eurasia:</strong> non-Western exploited world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turkey’s role:</strong> Historically shared leadership with Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Identity:</strong> Social Eurasianism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationalists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eurasia:</strong> Central Asia (and Russia, if necessary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turkey’s role:</strong> Historical and cultural leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Identity:</strong> Turkism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3**  
Which Eurasia does Turkey Belong to:  
Three Geopolitical Traditions, Three Eurasias

Data on Causal Mechanism

As its second hypothesis, this study discusses how three Eurasian geopolitical traditions differed in the past and shows that geopolitical perspectives of nationalist and socialist Eurasianists (*Uluslararası* of today) have grown closer to each other in recent years, while Islamist Eurasianists (conservative democrats today) have become the new opposing pole. Why did this alignment take place? This research argues that the political elites of these three ideological camps self-consciously construct these geopolitical discourses. These discourses help them to serve their political aims, but the ensuing historiographical disputes and competing collective memory constructions create conflict among
them. In the last two decades, the right and left wing have approached each other under the names of Kızılelma Koalisyonu (Red Apple Coalition), Kuva-i Milliye Birliği or Ulusalçılık (Patriotism), while the conservative democratic circles stay out of these rapprochements. Attila İlhan’s works on constructing an alternative history line of Eurasianism as well as the Workers Party which led international conferences and produced publications have been effective in bringing nationalist and socialist Eurasianists together; they also have contributed to the increasing popularity of Eurasianism in Turkey.

An example of this cooperation is the series of books published under the leadership of Attila İlhan named Bir Millet Uyanıyor, 2005-2007 (“A Nation Awakening”) In this series, famous thinkers from the socialist Eurasianism circle such as Ataol Behramoğlu, Mehmet Perinçek, Erol Manisalı, Vural Savaş and Sina Akşin, and writers from the nationalist wing such as Sadi Somuncuoğlu, Arslan Bulut, Suat İlhan and Ümit Özdağ came together and contributed to it. These ulusalçılı people came together with the aim of protecting the Turkish Republic (Bilgi Publishing House, 2005: 6). No matter what their divided views are, they state that they should come together to wake up the society and let it know about the dangers to its sovereignty and independence.

These writers perceive the nation being in a war with the West that some of the people are still not aware of: “the US and Europe are in an economic recession period. In such periods world wars are started by the West. They want to prevent the Shanghai Union to get stronger and that is why they want to create hostilities in Eurasia. This is going to be a new global crusade. We should prevent this” (Bulut, 2005: 6). Four of the twenty books in this series are devoted specifically to the issue of Turkish Eurasianism.

**Key Ideas on Republican Historiography and Kemalism**

The following six area and pie charts show the three groups’ key ideas on the Republican history. How these ideas evolved in time in the post-Cold War period can be read in the area charts, while the pie charts show these three journal writers’ approach to the Republican history in terms of number of the articles written on that issue and the percentage of positive, negative and neutral perspectives related to that issue. Positive key ideas on the Republican history can also be read as a positive approach to the Kemalist foundational principles of Turkey, Republican historiography, Turkish Independence War, treaties signed after it, reforms made between the years of 1923-1938, and all other relevant political developments during the Republican foundation.
The two charts numbered 1. and 2. belong to the conservative democrat Türkiye Günlüğü journal. In both charts the dark grey, which represents negative ideas, outweigh the others. The area chart shows that from the 1990s to 2000, there are only a couple of positive views about Republican history, while after 2000 there are no positive views at all.\(^1\) In Türkiye Günlüğü, 75% of ideas on the Republican history are negative, while only 9% are positive. For the nationalist Eurasianist Türk Yurdu and socialist Eurasianist Teori, on the other hand, there is a different perspective towards the Republican history, Republican elite and their reforms (See Charts 3, 4, 5 and 6).

In Teori, the outweighing color is medium grey which represents positive views about the Republican history. Even though there are some negative and neutral views in the early 90s, we see them almost totally disappear with passing time. However, as said before, what mainly matters for this study are the pie chart results. This is also because what is needed to be compared in terms of time is the Cold War period with the post-Cold War one. Even though there is no available data from pre-1990, the situation during the Cold War years among these three groups is well known today: the conservative and nationalist Eurasianists were in the right wing and they were in an intense fight with the socialist Eurasianists, which used to include today’s liberals also. However, in the post-Cold War period, these categorizations changed dramatically. This study shares data devoted to pinpointing this change.

In Teori 77% and in Türk Yurdu, 58% of views about the Republican history are positive: for Teori only 8% and for Türk Yurdu only 14% of the views are negative. Compared to the Türkiye Günlüğü, there is an obvious similarity among socialist and nationalist Eurasianists in terms of having a positive approach to the Republican historiography. Looking at the area chart of Türk Yurdu, this research
maintains that the nationalist Eurasianist writers’ ideas on the Republican history have become more positive in time and the negativity in their perceptions has decreased.

Key Ideas on Ottoman History

It was expected that, while the nationalist and socialist Eurasianists have become closer in terms of their positive approach to the Republican history, they also share a negative approach towards the Ottoman history. On the other hand, the conservative democrat Eurasianists were expected to remember Ottoman history in mostly positive terms, distinguishing them from the two Ulusalcı groups. Here are the relevant data and the interpretations of it:

At variance from what was expected, the conservative democratic Eurasianist group seems to be approaching Ottoman history in a more neutral way (50%) than a positive way (35%) (See Chart 7). Their disagreement with the Republican historiography, which they claim ignored and deleted the Ottoman past from the social memory of the society, does not necessarily reflect in the data as an over-exaggerated glorification of the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the socialist Eurasianist Teori group seems to have some problems with Ottoman history, to the extent that 90 percent of the 20 key ideas about Ottoman Empire are negative (See Chart 10).
There is another surprising result on the side of Türk Yurdu. Their approach to the Ottoman Empire seems to be even more positive than the conservative Türkiye Günlüğü: 62% of key ideas are positive (See Chart 12). However, nationalist Eurasianists are also more critical of Ottoman history, with 24% negative views compared to the 15% of the conservatives. Important additional information to keep in mind, though, is the fact that Türkiye Günlüğü talks more about the empire history (40 key ideas) than the other two: Teori (20) and Türk Yurdu (21). Accordingly, the data from the three journals’ approach to the Ottoman Empire does not necessarily confirm this study’s prior expectations about a visible overlap between the nationalist and socialist Eurasianists.
Key Ideas of the Three Journals about Each Other

Another type of data shared below, which shows each group’s perspectives about the other two groups, shows some overlap among the two ulusalcı groups in terms of their negative perception of the conservative democrat Eurasianists.

As expected, both Teori with 93% and Türk Yurdu with 75% have overwhelmingly negative views on the conservative democrat Eurasianists (See Charts 17 and 23). For Teori, this negative perception has been stable for twenty years, as the Chart 13 shows, but for Türk Yurdu the negativity seems to have increased with time. While in the 90s there were still some positive thoughts about them, in the 2000s these positive perceptions seem to have disappeared (See Chart 23). This is important information because over time it shows a change among the nationalist Eurasianists’ view about the conservatives.

Qualitative data suggest that this growing negativity is caused by the idea that conservatives cooperate with the West if they are not cheated by it, and they started to support the Western as well as liberal views that come from abroad. Unfortunately there is no quantitative data available to support this claim but qualitative data shows this direction. Accordingly, notice the following quotations from some of the writers of the nationalist Eurasianist Türk Yurdu that clarify this study’s claim: “Marxists, Neo-Marxists and political Islamists converge on the idea of being bothered by Turks to exist in this geography and wanting to replace Turkish Republic’s main principles with their own intentions for ten years. They see Turkish nationalism as their enemy. They come together via newspapers and TV and share their ideas through the means of media.” (Türk Yurdu Editor, 2007). “These groups that are bothered by our existence in this geography have a long history” (Ercilasun, 2007). “There are three main categories of the supporters of the West, 1) the ones who do not feel Turkish, 2) the ones with weak personality and 3) the youth who fall into internationalist ideologies.” “The Westernism of the Ottoman years evolved into the Marxism of the Cold War, which then evolved into liberalism after the end of the Cold War. They became supporters of the Kurds, the Armenians, the EU and the Alevis.” (Hocaoğlu, 2007: 76) “After 28 February, the anti-EU Islamists became pro-EU in order to fight against the state” (Bayram, 2007: 77). “These groups did not intentionally come together but they are brought together by the global market which has vital interests in Turkey” (Yeniçeri, 2007: 79). “The main aim since Sevres is the same: to separate Turkey into religious and ethnic parts. Yesterday’s İngiliz Muhipleri Cemiyeti is today’s liberal groups… Islam Teali Cemiyeti was using Islam to demand protection from England. Today’s usage of Islam is the same and has nothing to do with the real Islam… These groups are brought together by the plans of the superpowers.” “Second Republicans and Islamists want to create a memoryless, historyless society. Nationalists are the main powers against them. That is why they hate nationalists… These groups misunderstood both liberalism and Islam … They are slaves of the West and we have to cooperate against these Neo-Ottomanist traitors” (Kodaman, 2007: 83). “Islamists paradoxically cooperate with the liberals because of the common foreign resources they have. They are traitors because they work against their own state” (Atasoy, 2007: 88).

When it comes to how the nationalist and socialist Eurasianists see each other, Teori has 50% positive and 33% negative views on nationalists (See Chart 21). Looking solely at this data might make one think that it is not positive enough to conclude that there is a rapprochement between the socialist Eurasianists and the nationalist Eurasianists. At this point, Chart 20 helps us see the increasingly positive perception of socialist Eurasianists about nationalist Eurasianists starting around the year 1993 and continuing through the 2000s, while the negative views disappear in time.
In addition, the qualitative data gives us some satisfactory clues about the instrumental and pragmatic change mechanism among the socialist group which advises its members to embrace nationalist symbols and philosophy to gain the support and trust of the society. These instrumentally motivated discussions among the socialist Eurasianists confirm this study’s expectation driven from the presentist theory. Revisionism in this group’s geopolitical discourse happens in a way that they legitimize change via memory entrepreneurship to adapt to the changing conjuncture:

Workers Party has to be supporter of national symbols against imperialism; we cannot leave this duty to the reactionary forces… These symbols and feelings must be taken away from the reactionaries and should be given to the society as weapons… One cannot have a future without having a past… We have to refer to our history positively so that we can give the courage to the society for another revolution to happen. They would not trust people who are against everything they respect and who are critical of all the past achievements that they are proud of… Nations with a glorious history are more likely to accomplish a lot in the future. Islamists and fascists are using history as their main weapon. We should embrace these values and not let them use them against the people… Our internationalist red flag is of course always will be prior to us but we should also consider people with attachment to national symbols… I do not tell you to sing the Ottoman army anthem but the national anthem because Ottoman one does not have any progressive side but the role of the national anthem in the Liberation War is obvious (Güntekin, 1994: 15-19 and 31).

Investigating the nationalist Eurasianists’ ideas about leftists, there is some supporting data for this study’s hypothesis (See Charts 21 and 23). Even though the 64% negative views of nationalist Eurasianists about leftists might not seem promising at first, the increase in their positive views from 1993 to 2005 can be interpreted as critical also. Here again, the qualitative data says more than the quantitative ones. Qualitative data suggest that the rapprochement from nationalist Eurasianists to leftists is mainly constructed and developed by some specific individuals among the nationalist Eurasianists such as Arslan Bulut and Özcan Yeniçeri from Yeniçağ, the famous nationalist Ümit Özdağ, who opened many think tanks in Turkey and Ali Külebi, another think tank founder. There is another important fact about Ali Külebi. He worked as the director of the think tank TUSAM (Turkey National Security Strategic Analysis Center), which used to publish the weekly journal Strateji on foreign policy analyses for Turkey. This journal was distributed by the socialist newspaper Cumhuriyet. TUSAM is a good example of the practical institutionalization of the socialist-nationalist Eurasianist alliance.(2)

Even though the number of these leader figures from the nationalist Eurasianist circle is not great, their effectiveness is enough to shape the perceptions of the whole group. They are active figures who produce a lot and reach the masses through TV programs, newspapers and books. The TV channel called Eurasia TV (Avrasya TV) has been the leading meeting point for famous figures from both right and left wing ulusalcıs who share their ideas with each other and with the masses via various political discussion programs. Ulusalcı cooperation is triggered even more by figures like Attila İlhan and Doğu Perinçek. The book Türkçü- Devrimci Diyalogu Doğu Perinçek ve Attila İlhan ile Söyleşi (Türkçü- Devrimci Diyalogu “Turkist- Revolutionist Dialogue Talks with Attila İlhan and
Doğu Perinçek”) written by the nationalist Arslan Bulut is a good example of the Ulusalçı ally where nationalist and socialist Eurasianists seem to have come together with the help of a perception of a common enemy. Even though there are still some issues where they have non-matching ideas, like the Kurdish issue and the situation of Turkic people in China, they seem to focus on cooperation more than competition. This book is a good example of these attempts: “We have to reconsider our terminology and redefine our values and goals in light of the changing conjuncture and guidance of our leader: Atatürk’s ideals. Our common reference points are the sacred existence of Turks and Turkey, its independence and sovereignty… We should work together for the leadership of Turkey in this region: for ourselves, for the region and for humanity’s sake” (Bulut, 1998: 9).

On the Neo-Ottomanist Challenge of the Kemalist Turkey

According to Çolak (2006: 587), recently the perception about Ottomans in Turkey has dramatically changed and a new focus on the tolerant (instead of reactionary) and refined (instead of cruel) sides of the empire have been emphasized. This new perception has been reflected on Turkish architecture, media, art, fashion, popular culture and most important of all the daily politics. This new phenomenon started with Turgut Özal’s initiative. He and his supporters tried to invoke a collective cultural memory via constructing a nostalgic narrative of Turkey’s Ottoman past. Çolak defines this attempt as a deliberate one to recreate the present in an intense competition with the Kemalist elite groups.

Neo-Ottomanism as an idea that first came about in the 1950s with the Democrat Party, which gave more space than the previous government to the religious/Ottoman past of the Turks both in public life and education. Özal was the one who institutionalized these ideas politically as a new form of collective memory, foreign policy and social contract (Çolak, 2006: 591-592). Özal, in formulating his doctrine, was in close cooperation with the journal Türkiye Günlüğü, which became the voice of Neo-Ottomanist ideas. The Ottomanist doctrine is institutionalized via the writings of people like Cengiz Çandar and Mehmet Altan (Çolak, 2006: 593). This is why Türkiye Günlüğü was chosen as the representative of the Ottomanist Eurasianist group in this content analysis.

After the Özal period, the Welfare Party continued using Neo-Ottomanism as their official ideology. In particular, some mayors from this political party worked on reviving Ottoman arts, calligraphy, food and architectural forms and they sought ways of integrating the Ottoman past into the daily life of the Turkish society. Alternative commemorations appeared with reference to the Ottoman and Islamic culture and history. By 1994, Istanbul’s mayor of the Welfare Party began to organize a set of commemorations of this type (Çolak, 2006: 596).

These attempts of the Neo-Ottomanists made Kemalists feel threatened. Accordingly, in the second half of the 1990s Kemalists also started to reemphasize Kemalist memory and the Republican past. This is the time when competing pasts and memories of the two groups became an intense topic in Turkish daily politics. One Kemalist writer from Hürriyet newspaper wrote about Ottoman pluralism where he blamed it as not being suitable for today’s politics because it was a primitive doctrine which could not adapt to the developments of modern times (İnce, 2002 in Çolak, 2006: 598). The Kemalist remembrance process was heightened in 1990s via the efforts by groups like the Society for Atatürkist Thought and the Society to Support Contemporary Life. They organized rallies, conferences, concerts and balls to remember the Republican past and to forge stronger ties between Kemalists to compete more strongly against the Neo-Ottomanists.
This is the time when the term “ulusalci” suddenly became a widely accepted social term. As an answer to the question of why Ulusalcılık has blossomed into such a potent political force today, Uslu (2008: 81) claims the fundamental causes are the overwhelming and ongoing success of the AKP and the fast reform process that AKP has started with the cooperation of the EU.

To Uslu (2008: 87), even though Ulusalcıs are not represented by a single political party, there are some groups and organizations which can be considered as ulusalci: Kuva-i Milliye Hareketi (Nationalist Forces Movement), Vatansever Kuvvetler Güç Birliği Hareketi (Patriotic Forces United Movement), Büyük Hukuçular Birliği (Great Movement of Jurists), Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği (Atatürkist Though Foundation), Yeniçağ (New Age) Newspaper, Türk Solu (Turkish Left), İleri (Forward), Turkish Workers Party and its journals, Eurasia Television Channel, and Cumhuriyet (Republic) Newspaper.

CONCLUSION

Similar in analysis to Çolak and Uslu, this study followed a constructivist route in examining the dynamics of Turkish ideological groups which, in this study, turned into geopolitical traditions. One hypothesis was that the nationalist and socialist Eurasianists can be considered Kemalist in that they are at peace with the Kemalist historical construction of Turkey. However, the conservative Eurasianists have a counter memory which tends to challenge this state-led Turkish historiography by hoping to redefine it in a way that it glorifies Ottoman history as much as the Republican history. Their definition of Eurasia’s borders is also shaped by their historical narratives which make their perception of history the main explanatory variable for this study.

The content analysis provided some support for these expectations the researcher had before starting the analysis, while sometimes not reflecting what was hoped for, as explained before. This study made use of the tools of collective memory studies in investigating the dynamic relationship between socialist, nationalist and Islamist geopolitical traditions which make up the Kemalist and Ottomanist Eurasianist geopolitical discourses. Before starting the content analysis, it was expected that there would be two different representations of national history and that these conflicting representations shaped their collective memory. Accordingly, representation of history takes a central role in how these groups define themselves, their goals and expectations. This is where conservative circles differ from the socialist Eurasianists and nationalist Eurasianists who more or less stay faithful to the state-led version of history, while the conservatives embrace an alternative version of historical imagination.

In addition, qualitative data showed that the representation of the West in the positioning of nationalist and socialist geopolitical discourses also played an important role in uniting them against the conservative democratic Eurasianist coalition of liberals and Islamists. Ulusalcıs see this coalition as a natural continuation of the Western imperialism inside of Turkey. This common enemy perception seems to be playing an influential role in integrating the key ideas of nationalist and socialist Eurasianists with each other.

NOTES

1. The fact that there is no data between the years of 2000-2003 and after 2005 does not say much to us because it is probably because of the editors and journal owners’ choice on which topic to write for each volume. The non-existence of data as well as the increases and decreases are probably
related to this very fact about journal writing. Journals do not necessarily follow the daily politics of the country but rather writers share ideas on topics chosen by editors and journal owners. This situation can be seen as a limitation of journal-based archive scanning. Another limitation in this study’s data selection was that the researcher, who is the author, did not read all articles published between these years, which would be the ideal case. However, in this study’s case, the author only read the relevant articles which were chosen by going through indexes and reading article names. The author hopes that the data set available is representative enough. This is why the pie chart results are more critical than the area charts for the purposes of this study, even though some area chart results contribute a lot to the falsification process.

2. The writer of this study has worked at TUSAM as an intern for one month from June to July 2008.

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NATIONALISM ON THE INTERNET: A DISCURSIVE ANALYSIS 
OF THE TURKISH CASE

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this research is to capture a comprehensive picture of the overtly Turkish nationalist sites that define themselves as nationalist on the Internet and to demonstrate their extent as well as different appearances. Therefore, this research aims to answer first, what role the Internet is playing on the formation and reproduction of collective identity and community for nationalist groups; and second, in doing that, what kind of content is presented in nationalistic web sites through which tools and visual layout design aspects. The study attempts to provide a qualitative discursive analysis of Turkish nationalist web sites through the main features they present. A total of 118 web sites are included in the analysis. The study proposes a concrete typology of the network structure of online Turkish nationalism. It also concludes that Turkish nationalists mainly use the Internet in order to diffuse their ideology, to strengthen Turkish national identity and nationalist community structure and finally to build a dedicated virtual community. In order to realize this purpose, Turkish nationalists benefit from various content categories. Findings also reveal that the visual layouts of the web sites provide opportunities for the reconstruction of a manipulated interaction oriented around the imposed nationalist ideology.

Keywords: nationalism, Turkish Nationalism, Internet, discourse, content, design.

INTERNETTE MİLLİYETÇİLİK: TÜRKİYE ÖRNEĞİNİN SÖYLEMSEL ANALİZİ

ÖZET

Bu araştırmının amacı, internet üzerinde kendisini açıkça milliyetiçili olarak tanımlayan Türk milliyetiçili sitelerinin hem içeriğin hem de biçim düzeyinde bütünliyli bir resmini sunmaktır. Bu anlama araştırmaya, öncelikle milliyetiçili gruplar için kollektif kimliği ve topluluğun oluşumunda ve yeniden üretiminde internetin rolünü ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Buna ek olarak söz konusu süreçte milliyetiçili sitelerde sunulan içeriğin mihalyeti ve bu içeriğin hangi araçlar ve görsel tasarım elemanları aracılığıyla sunulduğu incelenmektedir. Çalışma, sundukları unsurlar üzerinden Türk milliyetiçili sitelerinin niteliksel bir söylemsel analizini içermektedir. Analiz kapsamında 118 web sitesi yer almaktadır. Çalışmanın

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The Internet has become one of the major venues of the modern world in which virtual and real actors anonymously or explicitly interact. Although being a virtual venue, it theoretically presents unlimited global access independent of time and space, making it especially attractive to all kinds of groups that aim to reach mass populations. Therefore, nationalists or extremists all around the world try to use the Internet to realize their purposes. The subject of this study is the examination of the Turkish nationalist web sites on the Internet. The main aim of this research is to capture a comprehensive picture of the overtly nationalist sites that define themselves as nationalist on the Internet and to demonstrate their extent as well as their different appearances. Therefore, this research will try to answer first, what role the Internet is playing on the formation and reproduction of collective identity and community for nationalist groups; and second, in doing that, what kind of content is presented in nationalistic web sites through which tools and visual layout design aspects. It is hypothesized that through the use of specific content categories and tools, the Internet serves to reproduce nationalist discourses and values, thus strengthening national allegiances. Finally, it is assumed that the design of these web sites is manipulated in such a way as to facilitate this purpose.

A significant number of articles emphasizing the democratic and deliberative enhancing capacities of the Web have been published during the last decade (see Anderson et al., 2003; Dalhgren, 2000 and 2005; Quintelier and Vissers, 2008; Tambini, 1999; Tian and Wu, 2007). In this context, studying the nationalist sites might be particularly important in demonstrating that the Internet does not solely and automatically serve to promote deliberation, democracy and unity in a given society. Studying nationalism in the Turkish context is also significant because nationalism has been the predominant and hegemonic ideology for a long time in Turkish political culture; it may even be claimed to be the most dominant ideology throughout the political history of the Turkish Republic. There is an ample literature on Diaspora nationalisms on the Internet, but nationalistic discourses coming from groups belonging to the host nation and their content as well as social functions constitute a scholarly untapped area of study despite their great importance. In addition, this study can be defined as the first attempt to construct a typology of Turkish cyber-nationalism and to present an in-depth overview of Turkish nationalist web sites. As another original contribution to relevant literature, this study also tries to combine a political science perspective with that of new media studies. Departing from a typology of Turkish nationalist web sites derived from an in-depth analysis of the network structure of Turkish cyber-nationalism, this study aims to present findings through a qualitative content analysis of Turkish nationalist web sites in correlation with the functions (tools) presented in them. In addition, the aspect of the design of visual layout will be briefly examined.

This paper focuses on Turkish nationalist web sites as a virtual public sphere, and aims to analyze the mechanisms through which nationalism as a discourse is produced and reproduced by its participants. Therefore, it chooses deliberately a sample composed primarily of web sites that call themselves...
nationalistic and leaves aside other popular common web sites such as Facebook or Twitter or the sites that are either implicitly or covertly nationalistic. Regarding the time issue, it should be noted that it is very difficult to measure the change in these sites over time due to the very fast changing and growing nature of the net. Nevertheless, it is observed that the essential content in these sites, ideological and rhetorical, does not change a lot over time. It is only the contextual elements that occur for short periods depending on the political context; they then disappear but the main rhetorical constituents remain in place. In the first place, the relevant literature about nationalism on the Internet including hate sites and extremist groups will be reviewed. Secondly, methodological issues such as the frame of analysis as well as sampling and analyzing methods will be mentioned. Then a typology of Turkish cyber-nationalism will be offered before concluding with their presentation and a discussion of the results.

NATIONALISM AND/ON THE INTERNET

Many important researchers assume throughout almost all their scholarly work that we are living in a global information society and that it is worth noting that the Internet has become one of the leading elements of it. As the Internet has no physical territory, one of its defining features is that it is place dissolving and place generating; it is de-territorialized and de-territorializing at the same time (Diamandaki, 2003, italics original). Hence, digital nations and virtual ethnicities are “novel mediated localities; non-geographical yet communicatively integrated social spaces, which give meaning to their inhabitants” (Diamandaki, 2003: 14). Unlike offline nationalisms, it is more difficult for online nationalisms to be territorially identified. Therefore, in order to better comprehend the nature of online nationalism it might be more useful to employ Anderson’s (1983) conception of “structural (and non-geographical or historical) nationalism” (in Diamandaki’s terms, 2003, parenthesis in original) which conceives nations and nationalisms as imagined communities. It will not be wrong to assume that the public sphere is migrating from the bounded, geographical territorialities of the past to the diffuse and immaterial networks of communication and media flows (Diamandaki, 2003: 6).

We can mention two main approaches regarding the relation between the Internet and nationalism: the global village idea which assumes primarily that the Internet serves to undermine the importance of national allegiances in favor of a more globalized identity vs. the approach claiming that the Internet is used to strengthen national identities. This second approach is mostly referred in the literature as the dark side of the Internet. This second approach illustrating the dark side claims that the Internet is used as a vehicle to strengthen national identity and to organize nationalist groups within different territories (Bakker, 2001; Diamandaki, 2003; Eriksen, 2007; Miller and Slater, 2000). One very striking finding among recent research on the Internet use demonstrates that the Internet can be very efficient in reproducing national identities in order to unite dispersed communities across vast distances; thus it strengthens rather than weakens national identities (Miller and Slater, 2000). According to Piet Bakker (2001), unlike the idea that the Internet weakens nation-states and we are heading towards a global village, nationalism is flourishing; the most important sign of this new nationalism is the spread of online activities. In addition, Diamandaki (2003) supposes that virtual ethnicities constitute counter-arguments for the global village thesis, and, contrary to what is supposed by this latter, the Internet opens up new spaces for identity discourse. Accordingly, the same features (the global scope, relatively low cost and decentralized openness of the medium) that seem to undermine national identity – as argued by global village theorists – also serve to reproduce or even strengthen it. Along the same line of reasoning, Eriksen concludes that with the spread of information and communication technologies, notably of the Internet, nationalism is becoming stronger and that, especially, diasporic nationalisms are those most expressed on the Internet.
The biggest contribution in terms of volume stems from the studies of diasporic (including also ethnic and separatist) nationalisms, especially in the Chinese case (see. Anyefru, 2008; Chan, 2005; Gladney, 2005; Liu, 2006) but also in other diasporic communities (Curtis, 2005; Eriksen, 2007; McLelland, 2008; Parker and Song, 2006; Rızvanoğlu and Güney, 2009; Shanadi, 2007; Uimonen, 2001). The main reason behind the fact that diasporic communities so often become subjects of scholarly attention might be found in their ceaseless attempts to create an image of the homeland as against their respective host societies and either to make their voice heard by these latter or simply to create a visual sharing center of common identities. This makes them quite visible and active on the net. The main idea presented by the quasi-totality of this Diaspora literature contains the argument that nationalist identities are reproduced and strengthened by Diasporas through the Internet. Eriksen (2007) does not prefer to make a distinction that is labeled as either diasporic or non-diasporic nationalisms; rather he describes four types of Internet nationalism: (1) state-supported (Chile), (2) surrogate (Afrikaner), (3) pre-independence (Kurdish), (4) multiculturalist (Moroccan-Dutch). A fifth type can be exemplified as oppositional, with the example of the expatriate Laotians’ movement against their government in which they used their own language (Uimonen, 2001).

Liu (2006) describes an additional type as ‘cyber-nationalism’ with the example of China’s popular nationalism on the Internet. The cyber-nationalism, Liu argues, “not only challenges the state monopoly over domestic nationalist discursive production, but also opens up new possibilities for using the people’s ‘public discursive right’” (Liu, 2006: 1). Another attempt at categorization comes from Diamandaki (2003) who classifies online communities under two categories, namely diasporic and non-diasporic, and their sub-categories. Accordingly, diasporic communities involve nations or national groups without a State, expatriate/immigrant communities of existing Nation-States and finally communities of dissidents who have fled totalitarian regimes. In contrast, non-diasporic communities are composed of nations with a State, regional ethnicities within a Nation, and lastly marginalized or threatened identities of indigenous and tribal populations. Our sample corresponds exactly to the first branch of the second category mentioned here, namely non-diasporic communities belonging to the sub-group of “nations with a State.” Diamandaki observes that this type of web sites transmits messages of self-assertion and of hate for the national ‘Others’ or gratification of the national or racial ‘Us.’ Our data from the Turkish case is also consistent with this observation. “Turkish nationalism on the Internet deepens along the lines of hostility of the ‘Others’” (Güngör, 2007: 5).

Besides nationalist – either diasporic or non-diasporic – web sites, there is also a rich literature on the Internet usage of hate groups or extremists such as racists and neo-Nazis as well as other extreme-right or left organizations. As phrased by Donelan (2004: 22); “hate now has a new and powerful way to get into our homes…the Internet.” Studying the hate sites on a world wide scale, Gerstenfeld et al. (2003: 32) listed them under ten categories depending on the nature of the message conveyed; Ku Klux Klan, Militia, Skinhead, Neo-Nazi, Christian Identity, Posse Comitatus, Holocaust Denial, White Nationalist, Other, None. Constructing a network of extremists – both on national and international scales – through linking with other extremists appears to be a very important preoccupation for these web sites. Hence, through a social network analysis Burris, Smith and Strahm (2000) found evidence that the Internet helps extremist groups build an international virtual extremist community (over two thirds of the links are to international sites). Another curious characteristic of these groups appearing in Gerstenfeld et al.’s research is the infrequent overt support of violence and fairly frequent claims that those groups were unbiased, not racist, and not hate groups. Meanwhile, most of the time nationalists do not hesitate proudly to cite their ideology on the net.
While analyzing the racism on the web, Rajagopal and Bojin (2002) broadly detected five types of hate messages: civilized messages, humorous and light-hearted quips, simple and persuasive appeals, claims of self-preservation, and product advertisement. The respective corresponding rhetorical forms these messages take are educational narrative, stealth images and dialogue, coded metaphor, survival discourse, and marketing rhetoric. Regarding the racist content on the net, Lynn Thiesmeyer (1999) underscores some main features of these web sites such as constant self-definition, identification of various threats, enemies and conspiracy theories, emphasis on a collapsed order, etc. She also adds that many features of quite old rituals are repeated in the forum pages of these sites, including constant repetition, group solidarity, use of arbitrary symbols, the threat of punishment, verbal fetishization of violent and sacrificial death, highly subjective interpretive methods that reject opposition a priori, and hieratic visual and verbal discourse (idem: 118). Both studies reveal that, in nationalist websites, it is very difficult to separate the content from online rhetoric since there is a mutual relationship between them. Content is defined by the rhetoric.

Recently, a research similar to ours was conducted by Caiani and Parenti (2009) concerning the case of Italian right-wing extremist web sites. They employed a social network analysis of web linkage among approximately 100 organizations combined with a formalized content analysis. They argued that there was an increase not only in the number of right-wing organizations present on the net but also in their usage of the Internet for several different purposes such as “diffusing propaganda, promoting ‘virtual communities’ of debate, fundraising, and organizing and mobilizing political campaigns” (Caiani and Parenti 2009: 273). Similarly, Caiani and Wigemann (2009) examined, with a comparative perspective and through a social network analysis, the right-wing nationalist networks including political parties and non-party organizations in Italy and Germany. They asserted that the Italian network appeared to be more fragmented, highly diversified, and difficult to be coordinated (‘policephalous network’) whereas the German one was denser and much more concentrated on a few central actors (‘star structure’). Beside the differences mainly due to political opportunity structures in the two countries, Caiani and Wigemann (2009: 66) suggested as a common conclusion that “extremist groups increasingly use and abuse the Internet for their propaganda and their recruitment, and also for their internal communication.”

The research about nationalists and extremists on the Web shows that the Internet is used by those groups for several different purposes such as disseminating propaganda and inciting violence (Caiani and Parenti, 2009; Glaser et al., 2002), enhancing political consensus-seeking (Hoffman, 1996), spreading hateful messages (Barnett, 2007), facilitating recruitment (Zhou et al., 2005), generating collective identities (Thiesmeyer, 1999) and pride (Barnett, 2007), helping mobilization (Parker and Song, 2006; Caiani and Parenti, 2009), marketing purposes including fundraising, reaching a mass audience, entertaining and recruiting new followers (Conway, 2006; Rajagopal and Bojin, 2002; Weimann, 2006) and most importantly community building online (Caiani and Parenti, 2009; Diamandaki, 2003; Tateo, 2005; Thiesmeyer, 1999). For realizing these purposes, nationalists employed a variety of online rhetoric. Many of the arguments repeated by these groups are already mentioned in the review. The content analysis in this research is also framed by using some categories offered by the literature. Most of the categories that we preferred to use stems from the work of Lynn Thiesmeyer. Thiesmeyer (1999: 120) proposes seven categories for analyzing the content of the online rhetoric used in racist web sites: (1) pedantism, (2) urgency, (3) the use of ‘historicism,’ fake tradition and folk etymology, (4) de-legitimization of other discourses, (5) overt and privileged use of a ‘collective subjectivism’ (‘virtual community’ vs. ‘real’ community), (6) dual structure of the production side (composed of ideology makers and agents), and (7) factualization. We will explain how we used and modified this structure in the following section.
Community-building online, involving notably collective subjectivity and identity formation is believed to be the most important purpose for which the Internet is manipulated by Turkish nationalists. Therefore, we will especially attempt to deepen our understanding about this feature. As suggested by Diamandaki (2003: 1), the ambiguous and complex environment of the Internet constitutes a new arena for the expression of the demands for recognition, generating hybrid collective formations such as digital nations, virtual diasporas and other online communities of an ethnic/national orientation. What allows for the reconstruction of these communities in the case of computer-mediated-communication is the flexibility and openness of the Internet. Ironically, the Internet – a placeless medium – allows for the (re)creation of place. Consequently, this newly created place, namely the online community, works as a symbolic glue that can gather and hold people together, as a mechanism for gaining visibility in the public sphere, and notably as a medium for constructing identity and collective subjectivities (Diamandaki, 2003). Nevertheless, it should also be noted as a limitation that any constructed digital nation is subject to the ephemerality that stems from the a-temporal, non-durable and constantly changing nature of cyber-discourse (Diamandaki, 2003).

In contrast to the reviewed literature, our study also deals with the aspect of design. Regarding the role of design in nationalist web sites, we were able to find only one directly related recent article, published in 2007 by Wright and Street, which in its turn underlines strongly the lack of literature about this issue. Thus, the arguments presented in this part about the role of design will be mainly taken from Wright and Street’s work. They argue that what will determine the nature of participation through the Internet, whether it will be a deliberative action or an act to strengthen nationalistic discourses, is not only the content of discussions in forums but also the way these sites are designed and the discussions are organized. In addition, Barnett (2007) analyzes the visual content of US hate sites. He found that extremists take full advantage of the visual communication capabilities presented by the Internet in order to support their community-building efforts. Following their case study, Wright and Street (2007) conclude that design does not determine deliberation but it can facilitate or impede it. The processes by which web sites are commissioned and the parameters that are designed into the software should be studied carefully if we are to understand the nature of the deliberation on the net. Wright and Street (2007: 12) believe that this would help us “to move beyond the rather sterile debate that tends to dominate the stand-off between those who believe that the internet can enhance deliberation, and those who believe it will harm it.” After examining the EU and UK online discussion forums, they argued that the potential importance of design is not limited to the architecture of the Internet itself but to the nature of the interface: how it is designed and constructed (Wright and Street 2007: 17). Wright and Street conducted a very useful study, but they did not however attempt to combine the design aspect with an analysis of the content or discourse presented by nationalists on the net. Therefore, we believe that our study might make a modest contribution to the literature on that point.

TURKISH NATIONALISM

Regarding the Turkish example, scholars generally employ two competing interpretations – namely the modernist and the ethno-symbolist – for explaining the nature of Turkish nationalism and notably the nation-building process in modern Turkey. According to Gol (2005), modernist explanations are more appropriate to understanding the Turkish nationalism which is causally linked to the Ottoman modernization process and is founded on an image of a modern nation with territorial sovereignty after the erosion of the traditional Ottoman umma (religious community) identity and the relevant millet system. Hence, the ethnic element was less significant because of the fact that Islam became the stronger social force unifying Turks and Kurds within the same boundaries during the construction
of the nation. Gol also suggests (2005: 121) that “the ontology of otherness becomes the necessary basis of social imagination” of a nation. He uses as an example the Armenians, whose claims over the Anatolian territory were taken as a real threat to Turkish identity as well as the territorial basis of the nation, thus constituting the first ‘Others’ during the nation-building process. In the current offline Turkish nationalism, Armenians and Kurds are considered as the principal ‘Others;’ however, on the cyber network Kurds are seemingly the first and most excluded ‘Others.’

Meanwhile, Canefe (2002: 150) claims that “the modernist core of the Turkish National Revolution needs to be re-examined in terms of its relation with older myths, acceptances and traditions that influenced the Ottoman/Turkish socio-cultural realm.” She underlines a particular tradition of patriotism and communalism bordering nationalism in the modernization period of Ottoman Empire and suggests that (idem: 145) this tradition – built upon a reasonable mass of indigenous material and sentiments – led to the formation of an idiom and movement of patriotic Turkish nationalism, notably after some determinant historical events such as the separatist and independentist movements of some ethnic groups in the Empire, the Balkan Wars and finally the Turkish Independence War. She thus concludes that the ethno-symbolic model helps us better capture the relation between the two highly antagonistic but co-existing sets of historical, cultural and political traditions stemming from imperial Ottoman and Turkish national history.

In a very recent contribution to this debate and through the analysis of the Turkish schoolbooks and curricula, Keyman and Kancı (2011) argue that the ethno-centric and civic-political interpretations of citizenship have simultaneously co-existed and have gone through repeatedly occurring swings. The concept of territorality took precedence over other factors during the creation of the new state in 1923. Afterwards, the territorial factor has been completed with the ethnic conceptualizations of the nation, and both dimensions – civic and ethnic – became the underlining elements of the discourse of official Turkish nationalism. Our analyses show that Turkish cyber-nationalists, despite emphasizing often the essential place of the territorial element, constitute a clear example of ethnic nationalism that validates only one dominant ethnic group (the Turks in the sense of Anthony Smith’s ‘ethnic core’ or ‘dominant ethnic’) and leaves no room for other ethnic groups within the Turkish nation. However, the political parties especially, with a preoccupation of ‘image control’ (Gerstenfeld et al., 2003), attempt not to openly support an ethnic type of nationalism, but rather claim to be civic nationalists who also emphasize notions like citizenship, rights and duties, legal institutions of the Republic, etc. Nevertheless, Turkishness, the unity of Turkish territory and the indivisibility of the nation, are dealt with above all other constituting factors in their websites. They can only accept the existence of other ethnic groups within the Turkish nation as long as these latter identify themselves as a part of the Turkish nation or ‘accept the “irreversible truth” that they are in reality Turks any way’ (as often suggested by the documents in informative links of nationalist websites).

**Analysis Framework**

The first section of the analysis framework includes the investigation of the network structure of Turkish nationalism and the proposition of a concrete typology. The remainder of the analysis framework is derived from the main aspects of nationalist and racist web sites mentioned in the literature review. Accordingly, in this second section, which focuses solely on the web sites, our analysis is managed through a three-step investigation. The first step focuses on the ‘functions’ presented in these web sites by categorizing the interactive tools and services provided. The second step is based on the investigation of the ‘content’ of these sites. Departing from the idea that content and rhetoric in online
nationalist websites are tightly bound to each other within a mutual context, we designed the content analysis with reference to the variables derived from the previous studies in the literature on online nationalist content and rhetoric. Eight variables are employed in the content analysis: educational narrative (pedantism), historicism and tradition, use of dominant myths and symbols with constant repetition, verbal fetishization of martyrdom, de-legitimization and exclusion of other discourses by a discourse of superiority, factualization, collective subjectivity and marketing rhetoric. The analysis in the second step is based on the correlation of the variables chosen for categorizing the content and functions.

The third and last step of the analysis focuses on the design of the visual layout of these web sites. This step includes the investigation of the design aspects which have an impact on the presentation of the content through the use of specific tools.

Variables for Content Analysis:

1- Educational Narrative (Pedantism) is formulated mainly for those willing to be recruited, who are already followers and who need constant reminders from a paternalistic, authoritative, but kind voice.

2- Historicism and Tradition include references to the history of the nation and its traditions, folk etymologies, word derivations, most either fabricated or distorted.

3- Factualization signifies phrasing of a subjective perception unknown or non-agreed on item in such a way that it seems to have been already established (Thiesmeyer, 1999: 123).

4- Use of dominant myths and symbols with constant repetition.

5- De-legitimization and exclusion of other discourses by a discourse of superiority.

6- Verbal fetishization of martyrdom includes poems, songs, videos, etc. dedicated to martyrs.

7- Collective subjectivity involves the use of a virtual community to create an illusion of the real community.

8- Marketing rhetoric contains not only merchandise sales or fundraising but also tools for the promotion of propaganda and recruitment.

Sampling and Analyzing Methods

Our research attempts to provide a qualitative discursive analysis of Turkish nationalist web sites through the main features they present. A total of 118 web sites were included in the analysis. Our study was limited to web sites that are designed and moderated by nationalist groups belonging to the host nation. In other words, only web sites designed by Turkish nationalists with a Turkey-centered content are included in this study. Thus, diasporic web sites, which also reveal significant nationalistic discourse, are excluded. Three different strategies were employed for selecting the web sites. First, following a regular Google search on specific keywords on Turkish nationalism, all the web sites presented in the first 10 SERP (search engine results page) were included in the study.

The second strategy can be called as a sort of “snowball technique” (Caiani and Parenti, 2009). First, the important nationalist organizations in the Turkish network were identified. Then, the web sites of their local nationalist units were accessed by focusing exclusively on friends links that were explicitly indicated by these organizations. The process was repeated up to the point where it became impossible to add new sites or organizations to our sample.
The third strategy for determining the web sites included in the study were those that analyzed the traffic among sites with a common theme. Thus the particular web sites that provided a list of popular Turkish nationalistic web sites with traffic statistics were utilized. All three strategies led to the same addresses, making up of a total of 118 web sites. They enabled us to get a panoramic view of the Turkish nationalistic network structure on the web (see Appendix for their names). It can be said that the total of the samples in this study includes all the major actors in the scene of Turkish cyber-nationalism as well as many minor ones.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion will be oriented through the analysis framework, and the findings will be evaluated in two sub-sections. The first section of the analysis framework includes the network analysis of Turkish cyber-nationalism and a proposition of a concrete typology. Referring to the proposed typology, the second section comprises a three-step discussion on nationalist websites. In this section, first, we will make a brief analysis of the services. The second step will include the correlated analysis of the content and functions of the web sites. Finally in the third step, findings on the design aspects of the layout will be discussed with regard to their role in presenting a specific content through particular tools.

Network Structure and Typology of Turkish Cyber-Nationalism

Although the Internet is a place where national identities can be manipulated anew, it is not totally different from its non-virtual manifestations. As Diamandaki (2003) argues, in most cases nationalist online communities function as spaces for the re-articulation of the same “social dialogues” that usually preexist in the offline world. Accordingly, it would not be wrong to suggest that the Turkish cyber-nationalism is a reflection of Turkish nationalism in the political sphere. The Turkish cyber-nationalism is also as diverse as the offline Turkish nationalism. They both offer a synonymous picture. Tanıl Bora (2003; English translation by Linda Stark) proposes a classification of Turkish offline nationalism: (1) official Kemalist nationalism, (2) left-wing Kemalist nationalism, (3) liberal neo-nationalism (i.e. using the language of pro-western nationalism advocating ‘civilizationism’ and prosperity), and (4) Turkish radical nationalism (with the language of racist/ethnicist Turkish nationalism). Certainly, there are coinciding points between the online and offline Turkish nationalisms and it should be noted that the reflections of mainstream features of offline nationalism, such as the nationalist political parties and their ideological stances and the extremist political groups and their discourses, are largely present on the net. As an example, the two mainstream nationalist political parties (MHP and BBP) have a dominant position both in offline and online nationalisms with 89 of the 118 web sites being directly or non-officially related to these two parties. However, the organization, the extent and the variety of Turkish nationalism on the Internet appear to be quite different from offline nationalism and seem to have their own particularities. In order to better capture the distinguishing features we propose a typology of online nationalism under four categories.

1- Right-wing nationalist web sites with a party or political movement affiliation

   a- Official party web sites: There are two main nationalist political parties in Turkey; one is the Nationalist Movement Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, MHP), and the other (more extremist in nature) is the Big Unity Party (Büyük Birlik Partisi, BBP). Both official web sites are included in our sample.
b- Sites affiliated to a political party (openly or covertly): This sub-category includes web sites of groups that are the local affiliations of these two political parties, respectively Ülkü Ocakları for MHP and Alperen Ocakları for BBP. In addition, some web sites that are not openly affiliated to one of these two parties as their local branches but are affiliated informally with the movement that they represent, namely the Bozkurt or Ülkücü Movement for MHP and the Alperen Movement for BBP, and are also categorized here.

c- Sites of sympathizers of a particular political party or movement.

2- Historicist (Turanist) Nationalists: This category includes web sites that support the Turanism ideology which puts a strong emphasis on pre-Islamic Turkish traditions and history, and claims the unification of all Turkic nations and populations. Because of their emphasis on Turkish ancient history, they are labeled as ‘Historicist’ or ‘Turanist’ nationalists.

3- Neo-Kemalist Leftist (Ulusal Sol) Nationalists: Although they position themselves at the orthodox left of the political spectrum, given their rhetoric they seem to be the most racist group on the Turkish cyber-nationalist arena. They claim themselves to be the real owners of the Kemalist ideology and nationalist left, and label themselves as Ulusal Sol. Therefore, the ideology of this group will be referred in italic as the Ulusal Sol movement.

4- Nationalistic ‘Forum’ sites: Openly racist web sites or hate sites which are mostly designed and published by personal initiatives are excluded because they are not much present or easily found on the net, and when found they are either banned or cracked. Thus, we do not build a separate category of racist web sites. However, most exclusive and explicit racist proponents are mainly present in forum sites where unanimity and lack of control make it attractive and easy to post racist ideas.

Analysis of Turkish Nationalist Websites

Functions: Turkish nationalist web sites provide various web services and tools which can be categorized by several topics. Those ‘web sites with a party affiliation,’ ‘forum web sites’ and ‘historicist web sites’ are the ones employing most of the functions investigated in this study. Mostly based on a one-way interaction, neo-Kemalist leftist web sites provide the weakest function spectrum. Those leftist nationalist groups sanction one-way interaction. This particularity also reflects their offline ideology which shows more authoritarian tendencies than the other categories studied regarding the issues of human rights and freedoms.

Based on member subscription, all categories of nationalist web sites provide virtual interaction tools like a message board, a forum and even instant messaging. However, rather than deliberation, these tools serve to promote and disseminate propaganda. But to a certain extent, it can be stated that considerable effort is made by Turkish nationalist web sites to create cyber-communities of debate. However, it is also noteworthy that these groups still face some difficulties in exploiting all available multimedia tools to support interactivity. In other words, spaces of asynchronous discussion are more widely used than spaces of synchronous discussions, such as instant messaging.

Some web sites present the opportunity for users to post articles and comment. One of the major functions of nationalist web sites seems to be providing news services which make reference to media coverage on topics such as politics and the Turkish and Islamic world. Users can post comments on the news, and most of the web sites categorize the news by referring to user comments as ‘most read,’ ‘most commented,’ ‘recently commented,’ etc. in order to provoke further discussion. Most of the web sites share user statistics in order to contribute to user interaction. Besides the news services, the use
of information links seems to be another dominant feature of nationalist web sites. In particular, ‘web sites with a party affiliation,’ ‘forum web sites,’ and ‘historicist web sites’ are overwhelmed by this function. Presented in various formats such as text, audio and video; historical information on Turkish history, traditions, Turk-Islam relationship and the Bozkurt movement were found to be popular issues in those informative links. Iconic figures such as Atatürk, Türkeş, Nihal Atsız and martyrs of the Turkish nationalists are the other features that are repeatedly mentioned in the information links.

### Table 1
Correlated Analysis on the Content and Functions Presented in the Websites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTY or POLITICAL MOVEMENT AFFILIATION</th>
<th>FORUM</th>
<th>NEO-KEMALIST</th>
<th>HISTORICIST</th>
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<td>BBP website</td>
<td>MHP sympathizers</td>
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Turkish nationalist web sites also employ entertainment links like radio, TV, videos, photo gallery and music. A few of the web sites rely solely on user-generated content and it is even possible to find a site that imitates youtube (e.g. ullahcuteTube). Most of the web sites value user feedback and also provide user support through functions like RSS, site map, search engine, and shortcut links. Nearly all categories have banners that are embedded in the layout. However, rather than commercial motives, these banners are mainly used for promoting the current political campaigns of the organizations that they are formally or informally affiliated with. For example, supporters of the nationalistic movement (Bozkurt movement) put banners about the campaigns of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) on their sites. In this sense, friendly links are another dominant feature providing outgoing links to web sites that share similar political perspectives.

Content: The content will be discussed in correlation to the functions through which they are provided. The correlated analysis on content and functions proposed in each web site can be found in Table 1. The discussion will refer to the variables mentioned earlier.

1) Educational Narratives (Pedantism): As can be seen in Table 1, most of the categories belonging to nationalist web sites place educational narratives in the information links. This finding overlaps with the recent study of Caiani and Parenti (2009: 280) which points out the usage of the web by Italian extreme-right organizations for the collection and dissemination of information.

Adopting a pedagogical approach, the analyzed web sites define their target audience either as users that demand political education or as those who need guidance from a superior authority. This informative material consists of documents that refer to a broad range of issues. The category is composed of narratives on the history of the Turkish nation, race, language and tradition, political manifestos and doctrines of the major nationalist groups, biographies and finally narratives on the iconic figures of Turkish nationalism such as Nihal Atsız, Alparslan Türkeş and Atatürk. Alparslan Türkeş is widely used in the web sites that belong to the gray wolf (bozkurt or ullahcu) movement whereas Nihal Atsız is the theorist of the Turanist approach which is based on pre-Islamic Turkish customs and beliefs dating back to the Göktürk period. Atatürk is adopted by both movements, but significantly he appears as a highly idealized figure –“the one and only” for the neo-Kemalist leftists. Neo-Kemalist leftists do not refer to any other national iconic figures; however, they sometimes use non-Turkish heroic figures of the revolutionary left such as Che Guevara.

It should be noted that the formats of these educational narratives represent a variety. Most of the narratives are written in the form of formal articles. However, it is also possible to observe other types such as poems, audio speeches, documentaries and even those more informal like letters to a young nationalist (ullahcu) or advice (nasihatlar) which reflect a tone of paternalistic kindness. In addition, it should be emphasized that the web sites of the two nationalist political parties (MHP and BBP) show great efforts to distinguish themselves from non-party organizations and their discourses. Therefore, especially the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) (being currently the third biggest group in the Turkish parliament and the second opposition party) does not, strategically and because of its concern about its reputation, place on its official web site overtly propagandist or openly nationalist claims. They do not even provide links to their local party affiliations the Ülkü ocakları which had a poor reputation in the past because of their part in violent manifestations and criminal cases.

The various web sites of the Big Unity Party (BBP) in their turn also pay attention to this issue on the official web site; however, they behave more like militants of nationalist ideology and prefer to
provide links to their local affiliation of the Alperen ocakları that shares almost the same problems of reputation as the Ülkü ocakları. It would be correct to assume that especially the MHP is doing what Gerstenfeld et al. (2003: 40) call “image control” which aims to make the web site and its owner more credible and respectable through a slick, professionally-looking design, and carefully chosen words.

2) Historicism and tradition: As mentioned in the discussion on the first category, educational narratives mostly rely on historicism and tradition. In particular, the narratives on the history of the Turkish nation, race, and language through the Turanism ideal become prominent in this category. Turanism, which is an overwhelming theme in the historicist web sites, envisions the unification of all Turkic geographies and ethnicities under one common rule. This ideal is supported by historical texts referring to symbols like Gök Tengri, which belong to the pre-Islamic Turkish period. Although the turanism ideal can be evaluated as a motto for only one single category of Turkish nationalists, namely turanists (or historicists), other categories also seem to value it. Turanist ideals addressing Turkish unity are one of the fundamental tools employed in the reconstruction of nationalist discourses of both the Ülkücü movement and the Alperen movement which represent the majority of the Turkish nationalism sites.

Historicist rhetoric also exposes a variety of forms. It is presented mostly as historical narratives with an epic tone. Repetitive references to Turkish traditions (tıre), folk etymologies and even word derivations based on a pre-Islamic Orkun language (Abaca) are also frequently used. A significant example of the latter is one of the web sites which provided a dictionary for original Turkish names based on the Orkun language (hunturk.net).

3) Use of dominant myths and symbols with constant repetition: All categories of the nationalist web sites make extensive use of dominant myths and primary symbols repeated constantly through the virtual interaction, and news tools and information links. Discussions in forums, news chosen from media coverage and informative material in the relevant links are all accompanied by symbols of Turkish nationalism. These web sites reveal an ample anthology of documents, photos and propaganda material recalling Turkish nationalistic iconography and rhetoric. These symbols serve as the historical and cultural glue of the national identity and contribute to the unification of offline nationalist communities on the web. However, the opposite is also possible here. The use of these symbols also enables the emergence of new communities that cannot be easily observed or maintained in the current offline political spectrum. While in the actual physical political spectrum individuals do not have a chance to articulate and gather to support allegiance to the customs of the pre-Islamic Turkish period, virtual space provides them with this opportunity to realize this ideal of Turanism. In the offline political world there are limits stemming from the political culture and socio-political context of the respective country that draws the line between possible and impossible and between feasible and non-feasible. Therefore, some movements in Turkey remain so marginal that their existence is not easily perceivable in the political scene.

The wolf, the Turkish flag, the flags of the Turkic republics in Asia, collections of epic tales and legends about the glorious events of the past, the Göktiırl alphabet, metaphors (otağ) and cognomens addressing Turkish history (soydaş,ırkdaş,kandaş,ülküdaş) and photographs of Nihal Atsız, Alparslan Türkeş and Atatürk can be cited as the most popular symbols. Furthermore, those people are praised as quasi-divine personalities whose quotations glorifying the supremacy of the Turkish race and nation are popping up in almost every web site. Heroism and martyrdom are also found to be popular symbols which are discussed below as a separate category.
4) Verbal fetishization of martyrdom: The content in this category is based on the persistent emphasis on national pride that emanates from heroism and a glorification of martyrdom. Both concepts involve emphases on legends and accomplishments of nationalists who fought till death for the glory of Turkish nationalism. The martyrs of the Turkish army in the war with the PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan – Kurdistan Labor Party) are also recurring symbols. There are even specific web sites devoted to the memory of martyrs and forum web sites that serve as a communication platform for the families of martyrs. In all web sites, the Turkish army is glorified to the extent that each Turk should surrender himself to the sacredness of the army. The Turkish militarist culture, paraphrased as “each Turk is a natural born soldier,” is reflected on these web sites because military service and martyrdom constitute the most essential duties as well as the highest level of glory of a citizen. At the same time, it is a ‘natural’ indicator of Turkishness. However, constructing Turkish identity by emphasizing the warrior nature of Turks often results in a tendency to adopt violent attitudes and measures in current domestic and foreign policy. The consequences of this tendency, particularly in the discussion forums, lead to hate messages against the minorities and ethnicities that become increasingly difficult to mitigate.

5) De-legitimisation and exclusion of other discourses: De-legitimisation and exclusion of the discourses of ethnicities living in Turkey is found to be a fundamental content category in nationalist web sites. In this sense, two complementary tendencies of racist or ethnicist discourse appear. The first one praises the superiority of the Turkish nation while the second one openly humiliates other ethnicities, particularly Kurds, Armenians, Greeks and Jews. In the neo-Kemalist leftist web sites in particular, this content category is generated from issues concerning Turkish foreign policy. According to these nationalistic sites, the main direction of Turkish foreign policy should include a detachment from the influence of the US which is seen as the main financer of PKK terror, and that of the EU which has a secret agenda for the partition of Turkey. Moreover, the EU membership is strongly rejected on the grounds that it will cost Turkey the loss of Cyprus. In these forums, Russia also receives many criticisms as the persecutor of Turkic people.

At the function level, this de-legitimization approach is made significantly explicit in discussion forums that can be found either as integrated features in web sites or as separate sites. These forums play an important role in the construction of the collective identity of the group by defining who the ‘enemies’ and the ‘allies’ are and what the main goals of the group are (Caiani and Parenti, 2009). Provocative discussion topics on conflicts with other ethnicities (e.g. Armenian genocide, PKK terrorism) posted by the moderators provide a basis for users to express hatred against other discourses in an overt and offensive tone. On the other hand, although the adopted rhetoric is defined by a more subtle tone based on coded metaphors, news presented in these web sites also contributes to this approach. Either the news chosen from media coverage or the news posted by the moderator and users presents a subtext of hatred with a mantle of value-neutral rhetoric.

De-legitimisation and exclusion of other discourses can also be traced in informative links which are used for political education and enlightenment. A huge number of articles and dossiers claiming to shed light on the conflicts with Armenians and Kurds are widely distributed through these links. Besides articles on the “Armenian Reality” and the “Kurdish Problem;” conspiracy theories on other issues such as “Missionary Ideals of Greeks,” “Mutual Relations between the Governing Justice and Development Party and the Nûr Creed” and even “Secret Collaborations between the Jews and the USA” are also implied. These kinds of conspiracy theories can be evaluated under the category of factualization as well which tends to show, with evidence from invented facts, a collapsed offline world order full of conspiracy scenarios and threats to the nation as an already recognized phenomenon. The
discourse, embedded in informative material, is a major feature in the neo-leftist web sites, namely the ‘turksolu’ (Turkish left). Though the name recalls a left-leaning point of view, the “turksolu” web site is the platform which adopts the most polarized and blatantly racist discourse among them. The Kurds constitute the principal target of the bloggers of these nationalist environments even though these web sites also generate hate messages through articles against Armenians and Islamic groups as well. Articles on the “Invasion Plan of the Kurds” are supported with maps and statistics. The authors feel free to speak openly about the exclusion of Kurdish people in daily social life and to advise Turkish people to avoid shopping from Kurdish stores, listening to Kurdish music, eating Kurdish food and marrying a Kurdish person.

The characteristic tone and message of this discourse is that of alarm. Through a tone of paternalistic kindness, this so-called informative material claims that the audience, who is completely unaware of the facts, has been used and manipulated without its knowledge. This finding corresponds to the work of Thiesmeyer on racism on the web. Thiesmeyer (1999: 121) asserts that this strategy is probably the easiest way to alarm the audience, as anything that has happened without their knowledge is a phenomenon that does not require much evidence: it is all happening behind the scene and is thus more frightening. She states that “the website itself is seen as evidence of the argument it propounds.” It is obvious that this approach is open to the fabrication or distortion of the facts which can easily be embedded in long and dense textual materials.

6) Factualization: The findings support the notion that educational narratives in informative links, which reveal a discourse based on the exclusion of other discourses, benefit from factualization. Arguments, which are gathered in an eclectic way, are authoritatively represented with serious assertions but without empirical proofs. This anonymous material composed of long pages of texts is targeted towards people who browse the net quickly and presumably without time and interest for any background debate on what might have produced the so-called fact. Referring to Thiesmeyer (1999: 124), it can be stated that factualization here lends itself to persuasion and recruitment of web text readers who want to surf it using the minimum of time for careful reading.

7) Collective subjectivity: Collective subjectivity can be defined as “the use of virtual community to create an illusion of real community” (Thiesmeyer 1999: 122). Especially in mainstream Turkish nationalist web sites, collective subjectivity can be traced in informative links on Turanism, which relies on the vision of the unification of all Turkic populations. Extensive emphasis on Turkish union with a constant repetition implies the existence of numerically significant groups behind both the web site and the ideal itself, and plays a crucial role in conveying a message containing the group’s ideology.

Tools that provide user statistics such as ‘who’s online’ links and hit counters are used to support the establishment of the illusion of collective subjectivity. Nationalist groups seem to be willing to show the popularity of their web sites to the audience. However, it is obvious that the user statistics can be artificially manipulated by the moderators in order to support the illusion of the existence of a huge virtual community sharing common nationalistic ideals (for an example see Gerstenfeld et al., 2003: 40). Therefore, it should be noted that the real organizational strength behind a web site is always difficult to estimate, and, in that sense, open to manipulation.

8) Marketing Rhetoric: Several studies underline that throughout the world right-wing extremists are increasingly using the Internet as a tool for facilitating recruitment, reaching a global audience
and connecting with other groups (e.g. Lee and Leets, 2002; Tateo, 2005; in Caiani and Parenti, 2009: 274). Thiesmeyer (1999) also asserts that recruitment and marketing success of the nationalist groups have a great deal to do with the ability of the web to transcend national boundaries for linking enormous numbers of people.

Our findings on Turkish nationalist web sites seem to be in line with the relevant literature. Firstly, the illusion of collective subjectivity seems to play an important role in recruitment. It indicates the so-called feeling of security within a solid community and enables the dissemination of propaganda for the recruitment of new followers. Outgoing links and banners for the well-known nationalist media and for other nationalist organizations also support this strategy by addressing a greater traffic. User recruitment is enabled by tools of viral marketing like ‘recommend us’ and ‘add to your site’ whereas user loyalty is supported with mobile versions of the websites and RSS technology, which is one of the new tools of the Web 2.0 paradigm. Web sites of the Alperen movement, which is a sub-group of one of the major nationalist political parties (BBP), even employs donation tools for funding.

The majority of the sites also use entertainment links which serve as multimedia content for user recruitment. The multimedia approach allowed by the web is particularly appealing to young people who usually are the preferred target of the extremist groups’ recruitment (Gerstenfeld et al., 2003: 38; in Caiani and Parenti, 2009: 282). It is obvious that due to its low cost, a new form of propaganda has emerged. Nationalist groups can dictate their rhetoric, update their discourse on daily basis, and reach millions of users for a much lower price than they once would have spent for publicity.

**Visual Design of the Layout**

The importance of design has been recognized widely in the online community literature for, as Preece (2001: 349 in Wright and Street 2007: 854) puts it, “designing for usability is not enough; we need to understand how technology can support social interaction and design for sociability.” In this context, Wright and Street (2007) argue that what will determine the nature of participation through the Internet is not only the content of discussion in forums but also how these sites are designed and the discussions are organized.

Despite the fact that Turkish nationalist web sites offered tools for user interaction and support, an in-depth analysis of the visual layouts of the forum sites indicates the reconstruction of an oriented and manipulated interaction. Though this finding demands verification through further interviews with the designers of these sites, the layouts of the majority of the forum web sites revealing similar visual aspects seem to support our assertion. Just like the nationalist web sites in other categories, most of the forum sites also have homepages overwhelmed by the use of well-known symbols of Turkish nationalism mentioned in previous sections. All discussion topics which are based on an offensive and racist discourse are given as a list and are located in the middle of the page layout that is decorated with nationalist symbols. The visitors can quickly have a look at the discussion topics and easily navigate towards the chosen topic. Besides using the list of discussion topics or categories, access to the forums is also supported with search and help tools. “Ulkucuderlerbize.com,” which is one of the most popular nationalist forum sites with a high traffic, can be given as a typical example.
According to Horton (2008), good design depends on creating a hierarchy of contrast and viewer attention, so that a few focal areas of the page become entry points and the other page materials are clearly secondary. Our analysis showed that tools like manageable headline areas were used as primary visual entry points in most of the sites. However, the intention does not seem to be to provide a consistent user experience, but rather to promote certain ideas through the visual entry points in the layout. As a typical example, the news headline bar in the “gok-turkler.net” is located at the middle of the homepage as a visual entry point big enough to be unavoidable (Picture 2).
CONCLUSION

The Internet is a strong tool which might help us reconfirm our identities; but it may also lead us to think critically and dispute their very foundations (Diamandaki, 2003). Our study investigates the network structure of Turkish nationalism and proposes a concrete typology. It concludes that Turkish nationalists mainly use the Internet in order to diffuse their ideology, to strengthen Turkish national identity and the nationalist community structure and finally to build a dedicated virtual community. In order to realize these purposes, Turkish nationalists benefit from various content categories. Educational narratives based on historicism and dominant symbols support the reproduction of nationalist values and strengthen national allegiances. Factualization embedded in educational narratives enables the de-legitimization of other discourses and constitutes the most significant category in the findings. Mostly presented through the tools of virtual interaction, news items and informative links, this category reveals two distinctive discourses, one emphasizing the greatness of the Turkish nation and the other excluding the presumed ‘Others’ (mostly Kurd and, Armenians) and threats coming from supposed enemies (mostly the U.S.A, the EU, Kurds, and Islamists). Collective subjectivism is mostly employed for building a virtual community of new followers and for supporting the current community structure. At this point, in order to recruit new followers or to provide fundraising, new web technologies of marketing are used effectively and exclusively. Findings also reveal that the visual layouts of the web sites provide opportunities for the reconstruction of an oriented and manipulated interaction organized around the imposed nationalist ideology.

Regarding the particular relation between the Internet and nationalism, it might be considered too hasty to argue definitely that the Internet serves to strengthen nationalist ideologies and allegiances rather than merely reproducing them on a new virtual area. Such questions as “do the sites, in fact, ‘convert’ new extremists, or do they simply inform and unify existing ones?” (Gerstenfiled et al., 2003) are crucial. It can only be answered by inspecting the interaction between these sites and their users. Therefore, looking more closely at the user side is a must for a future research agenda in order to fully capture the picture. Nevertheless, with the already available data, either specifically from this study or generally from the relevant literature, it is quite possible to conclude that the Internet plays a significant role in the (re)production of nationalism through new tools that are easy to manipulate and widely diffuse. Thus, it is extensively and also professionally used by nationalists or other types of extremist groups in order to spread their messages and ideologies as well as their hate – openly or covertly – against their presumed ‘Others.’

As Kluver points out, the technological optimism – which sees in the Internet the end of nationalism and parochialism – is grounded “not only in a romantic understanding of human motivation, but also an unrealistic understanding of how the Internet functions as a medium for human interaction” (2001: 8). As claimed by Wright and Street, “technology can facilitate deliberation but cannot guarantee that it will happen in any one particular way” (2007: 8). Time will show us which side of the Internet – either its deliberative or dark side – will triumph in this virtual/visual battle. However, further research, especially including the user side as well, is undoubtedly necessary to be able to better analyze the real extent of the dark side of Internet and the conditions under which this latter comes into being in order.
to predict to which future this virtual Internet battle between deliberation and hate, between more democracy and more nationalist separatism will lead us.

REFERENCES


**APPENDIX**

1- **Nationalist web sites with a party or political movement affiliation (89)**

   a) **Official Party Websites (2)**

      BBP (Buyuk Birlik Partisi) (Big Unity Party) www.bbp.org.tr
      MHP (Milliyetci Hareket Partisi) (Nationalist Mouvement Party) http://www.mhp.org.tr/

   b) **Sites Affiliated to a Political Party (65)**

      **Ulku Ocaklari of MHP** (42)
      Ülkü Ocakları http://www.ulkuocaklari.org.tr/?CCC
      Erenköy Ülkü Ocağı http://www.erenkoyulkuocagi.org/
      Trabzon Ülkü Ocakları http://www.trabzonuluocaklari.org/
      Ankara Ülkü Ocakları http://www.ankarauluocaklari.net/
      Bursa Ülkü Ocakları http://www.bursauluocaklari.net/index.php
      Ankara Fatih Ülkü Ocağı http://www.fatihuluocagi.com/
      Bigadiç Ülkü Ocakları http://www.bigadiculuocaklari.org/site/
      İzmir Ülkü Ocakları http://www.izmiruluocaklari.org/CCC/
      Çubuk Ülkü Ocakları http://www.cubukuluocaklari.net/
      Bandırma Ülkü Ocakları http://bandirmaulkuocaklari.blogcu.com/
      Osmaniye Ülkü Ocakları http://www.osmaniyeuluocaklari.com/
      Tokat Ülkü Ocakları http://www.osmaniyeuluocaklari.com/
      Antalya Ülkü Ocakları http://www.antalyauluocaklari.com/
      Sivas Ülkü Ocakları http://www.sivasocak.com/
      Bahçelievler Ülkü Ocakları http://www.istbahcelievleruluocagi.org/
      Sincan Ülkü Ocakları http://www.istbahcelievleruluocagi.org/
      Kartal Ülkü Ocakları http://www.kartaluluocaklari.com/ocak
      Rize Ülkü Ocakları http://www.rizeuluocaklari.net/
      Esenler Ülkü Ocakları http://esenleruluocaklari.6te.net/ataturk.htm
      Adana Seyhan Ülkü Ocağı http://seyhanuluocagi.hareketforum.com/portal.htm
      Ali Fuat Paşa Ülkü Ocağı http://alifuatpasaulkuocagi.org/?Bid=216829
      Bağcılar Ülkü Ocağı http://baggclarocak.tr.gg/
Alperen Ocakları of BBP (23)

Avrupa Türk Birliği http://www.atb-europa.com/
Selçuklu Vakfı (SOGEV) http://selcukluvakfi.org/
Eğitimde Birlik Derneği http://www.ebirder.org/default.asp
Genç Alperenler http://www.gencalperen.com/
Muş Alperen Ocakları http://www.musalperenocaklari.org
Berlin Alperen Ocakları http://www.berlin-alperen.de/index.php
İstanbul Alperen Ocakları http://www.istanbulalperen.org/
Bakırköy Alperen Ocakları http://www.bakirkoyalperenocaklari.com/web/
Beykoz Alperen Ocakları http://www.alperenbeykoz.com/
Ümraniye Alperen Ocakları http://www.umraniyealperen.com/
Bozkır Alperen Ocakları http://www.bozkiralperenocaklari.com/
GaziOsman Paşa Alperen Ocakları http://www.gopalperen.tr.cx/
Kayseri Alperen Ocakları http://www.kayserialperen.com/
Şarkışla Alperen Ocakları http://www.sarkislaalperen.com/
Tokat Alperen Ocakları www.tokatalperen.org
Keçiören Alperen Ocakları http://www.keciorenalperenocaklari.org/?&Bid=252910
Haber Hilal www.haberhilal.com
Ozan Hasan Sağındık www.hasansagindik.com.tr

c) Sites of sympathizers of a particular political party or movement (22)

Sites of sympathizers of MHP (20)
http://www.gok-turkler.net/
Sites of sympathizers of BBP (2)
http://www.turkirilisi.org/
http://www.medeniyetocagi.org/wp/

2- Historicist (Turanist) Websites (3)
Hun Türkler http://hunturk.net/
Nihal Atsız http://www.nihalatsiz.org/
Türk Ülküsü http://www.turkulkusu.com/

3- Neo-Kemalist Leftist (Ulusal Sol) Nationalists (5)
IP (İşçi Partisi) (Labor Party) http://www.ip.org.tr/
Aydinlik Dergisi http://www.aydinlik.com.tr/
Doğu Perinçek http://www.doguperincek.info/
Türk Solu http://www.turksolu.org/
http://www.vatansohbetimiz.blogspot.com/

4- Nationalistic ‘Forum’ sites (21)
http://www.ulkucuderlerbize.com/
http://www.turkislamdevletleri.com/
http://www.radyobayrakfm.de.tl/
http://www.bozkurtforum.org/
http://www.bozkurtfm.net/
http://hedefuran.he.funpic.org/forum/
http://www.turkuazcilar.net/
http://www.turkislamocagi.tr.gg/
http://www.vatankolik.com/web/
http://www.ulkucutavir.com/
http://osmanlitokadi0326.tr.gg/
http://www.ulkotagi.com/forum/
http://tiyansan.hareketforum.com/portal.htm
http://www.bozkurtbartin74.de.tl/
http://www.ulkucu.somee.com/
http://www.simdiaskerim.com/forum/
http://www.turkiyem.org/
http://www.otagim.com/
http://www.turkobasi.com/
This article focuses on the secular Turkish identity that was being shaped during the interwar period. It examines the cleavages within the Muslim community of Cyprus and explores the formation of the Turkish Cypriot national identity. The main argument of this paper is that the rift in the Muslim community during the interwar period was a reflection of the conflict between the reformist and traditional trends that was taking place at the same time in the Republic of Turkey.

During the interwar period, 1919-1939, the Muslim community of Cyprus was divided between the secularist and the traditional Muslims. As in Turkish society in the 1920s, the Turkish Cypriot community was dominated by the so-called traditional Muslims. Only the Muslim elite minority favored Kemal Atatürk’s secular views. The British colonial rule cooperated more with traditional elites. At the same time secularist Muslims were cooperating with Greek Cypriots in economic issues. The 1930s was the crucial decade in the development of a Turkish Cypriot secular identity. This internal conflict of the Muslim community was terminated after World War II, with the victory of the secularists.

Keywords: Cyprus, nationalism, national identity, religion.

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Engels (1978) writing on the philosophy of history held that the periods of non-conflict are the blank pages in history. This could be true in the case of the Turkish Cypriot politics. If one considers the gallons of ink that has been spilled over the history of Cyprus, almost nothing has been written about the interwar period. However, during this period a major transformation took place in the identity of the Muslim community of the island, a shift from a primarily religious to a national identity.

Certainly Turkish Cypriot politics during the period of the British rule in Cyprus has not been the most popular field of research. Even the scholars that are engaged with the Cyprus issue tend to focus on the Greek Cypriot politics of the period, ignoring the interesting dynamics of the Muslim Cypriot community.

Cyprus, the largest island in the Eastern Mediterranean, had received colonists from all the ancient empires of the region since antiquity, not least because of its geostrategic importance. In 1571 the island became part of the Ottoman Empire and the former was incorporated into the framework of Ottoman rule. Since then the Ottomans transferred population from Anatolia to inhabit the island. The Muslims of the island were part of the dominant millet. The Christians were also recognized as a separate millet. There are conflicting estimates for the composition of the Cypriot population during the Ottoman era (Hill, 1952). It is interesting that Kyprianos (1971), a historian of Greek Cypriot origin, argued that in the 18th century the number of Muslims exceeded that of the Christians. The cleavages between the ruling elite (both Muslim and Christian), the peasantry (both Muslim and Christian), and a limited middle sector of local craftsmen torn between the two were more basic than the institutional and religious differences between Muslims and Christians. It was a class society, where class relations, identities and conflicts superseded all others.

To trace the ethnic origins of Muslim Cypriots only in the immigration of the Muslim populations from Anatolia is probably inaccurate. During the Ottoman epoch in Cyprus numerous Christians converted to Islam for socio-economic reasons. Following the act of the religious conversion, the convert immediately became part of the dominant Muslim millet. However, there were a large number of those converts who remained secretly Christians. The so-called Linovamvaki passed through a crypto-Christian stage to Islam during the period of the Ottoman rule and remained Muslims even after the advent of the British rule because the powerful Church of Cyprus did not accept them back (Gürkan, 1986: 39). Additionally, there are many reports of inter-marriages between Muslims and Christians during the Ottoman rule in Cyprus.

Cyprus experienced imperialism under British colonial rule which started in 1878 and ended in 1960. Greek and Turkish nationalism developed at different historical periods and at different paces. Greek nationalism started at the beginning of the 19th century before the advent of British Colonialism while Turkish nationalism started to develop in the Ottoman Empire at the end of 19th century and was
made fully real with the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. Relations between Turkish Cypriots and the British on the one hand, and Greek Cypriots and the British on the other, were asymmetrical. During the colonial era in Cyprus, the Muslim community had undergone an enormous change in terms of national/ethnic identity and class characteristics. Turkish Cypriot nationalism developed belatedly as a militant nationalist and anti-Enosis movement in the 1950s.

In 1878 the island passed to the administrative authority of the British Empire, under the suzerainty of the Sultan. However, the change from the Ottoman to the British rule was not translated into a modern administration system as the British did not transform the Ottoman system (Georghallides, 1979: 34). In 1914, because the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War on the side of the Central Powers, Britain officially annexed Cyprus. The Muslims of Cyprus welcomed the annexation by affirming their loyalty to the British rulers (Attalides, 1979: 41). Turkish scholars attributed the stance of the Muslim community of Cyprus to the feeling of abandonment by Turkey and the awareness of Turkey’s weakness. However, after the annexation the Cypriot Muslims lost their special status that had been derived from the Sultan’s nominal sovereignty. Just after the First World War and followed by the Greek-Turkish war of 1922, the modern state of Turkey emerged. Questions of identity arose in the early twentieth century among the Muslims in the Ottoman Empire: Turkish, Ottoman or Muslim (Landau, 1995). There was no sign of Turkish nationalism in Cyprus until the early 1920s. When we are examining Turkish Cypriot nationalism, we should always bear in mind the fact that Turkish nationalism was the last to develop in the Ottoman Empire. Thus the Muslim community of the island did not have a mainland nationalist movement to attune to until the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. But even then (or when the Young Turks’ Revolution was broken) there was little response from the Muslims of Cyprus.

The interwar period, which is the period under question, represents one of the most interesting historical periods of the 20th century. It was a period marked by the Great Depression in 1929, the New World Order, as well as the end of the British Empire. The British Empire was still a pre-eminent world power but undergoing a huge decline. This fact had serious repercussions on Cyprus and the British colonial policy there. Prior to the period in question Britain had offered Cyprus to Greece three times, all unsuccessfully. These years were extremely important in the political history of the island because it was then that the Muslim community began its identity transformation from a religious one to a national.

The aim of this article is to explore this process that made the Cypriot Muslim community embrace Atatürk’s reforms while it was left outside of the borders of the newly established Turkish Republic. The main channel through which the new Turkish Kemalist ideology was spreading in Cyprus was the Turkish Consulate. However, until the Turkish national archives become accessible to the scholars we can only base our conclusions on the British documents.

Atatürk’s political and cultural reforms were the two sides of the same coin that aimed at the modernization of the Turkish Republic. The abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924 came along with revolutionary changes that included a new alphabet, a new dress code and a major revision of the family law. This article suggests that the introduction of these reforms met an opposition by the majority of the members of the Muslim Cypriot Community during the interwar period.

We will briefly give a historical background of the conflict in the Republic of Turkey. Then the two Cypriot rivals will be presented in order to proceed to the analysis of their conflict in two arenas. The
political and the cultural arena actually comprise the two sides of the same coin that was successfully used by Atatürk in order to buy a ticket towards modernization.

The Kemalist ideology was elaborately analyzed in the notable *Nutuk*, the ‘six days speech’ of Kemal Atatürk at the General Congress of the Republican Party in 1927 (Atatürk, 2008). His ideology was constructed on six main principles or values, namely Nationalism, Republicanism, Statism, Populism, Revolutionalism and Secularism that have been illustrated in the six arrows of the symbol of his Republican Party. These six values were the road map for the Republic of Turkey towards the modernization and the westernization of the state and the society. These values and principles were disseminated limitedly among the Cypriot Muslim Community through the system of education and the activities of the Turkish Consulate.

The liberal educational policy adopted by the British up until the 1920s permitted the young generation of the Cypriot Muslims to be educated following the official curriculum of the Republic of Turkey. However, the disturbances of 1931 were the ideal pretext for the British rule to become authoritative, ruling by decree and abolishing the Constitutional order.

**INTERNAL DIVISION**

The religious vs. the secular struggles that are apparent today in contemporary Turkish politics date back to at least the late 19th century. The struggles between religious and secular agents have involved different goals and strategies. From the end of the 19th century in the declining Ottoman Empire, Young Turks opposed the monarchy of the Sultan and supported the re-installation of the constitution of 1876, seeking a progressive path to modernization. Turkish nationalism began to be developed at the end of 19th century but in the beginning of the 20th century it took on a more political character and was transformed into a political movement. The Turkish nationalist project that the Republic of Turkey undertook aimed at the homogenization of the population.

The Muslim community of Cyprus was not homogeneous during the period in question. In Cyprus the traditionalists figured prominently in the religious oppositions to Atatürk’s reforms and they enjoyed a large influence even after World War II. The British collaborated with the traditional *Evkafçılar* section of the Muslim community. Until the 1930s, on nearly every occasion that the Greek Cypriots submitted a petition or passed a resolution calling for Enosis, the Muslim Cypriots either remained neutral or responded with a demand that there should be no change in the status of the island, thus demonstrating their loyalty to British rule. Through loyalty to the British administration and the Islamic solidarity Muslim Cypriots expressed their fear that they would be dominated by their Greek compatriots (Attalides, 1979).

The two rivals in the Muslim Community were the so-called *Evkafçılar* and the *Halkçılar* (Kızılyürek, 1999). These two camps were also identified as the *Evkaf* who were the conservative traditionalists in favor of the status quo, and the Kemalists who were the progressive reformists. From the late 1920s the two prominent leaders of the community were Münir Bey and Nejati Özkan along with the Turkish Consul representing respectively the traditionalist and the Kemalists. Münir Bey was the leading personality in the politics of the community for two decades. He represented the traditionalist and the so-called *Evkafçılar* section of the community. According to British officials, Münir was totally pro-British and had “the mentality of an old Turkish pasha” (C0 67-247-13). He had absorbed
into himself every office he could. Nonetheless the British Governors saw him as the best collaborator and appointed him the Delegate of the *Evkaf* institution and a member of the Executive Council when, at the same time, he was elected as a Legislative Councillor.

Prior to his appointment as the Director of the *Evkaf*, Münir Bey had served for many years in the Accounting Branch of the Treasury and as a judge of the District Court. Münir Bey was a barrister at law, one of the Public Loan Commissioners, a member of the Irrigation Board and of the Muslim Board of Education. He was the nephew and son-in-law of the *Müftü* (Mufti) and a very respectable person in the Cypriot society. He had a good deal of influence with the Cypriot Muslims and was entirely pro-government. He was appointed as a member of the Executive Council and his advice “was generally sound and [he] has good knowledge of local conditions” (CO 67-233-14). He was undoubtedly a very valuable man for the British (CO 67-233-14).

On the other side of the spectrum, in the emerging Kemalist trend within the Muslim community, Nejati Özkan was the unquestioned leader for the Kemalists. In addition, the Turkish Consulate that was established in 1925 in Larnaca was the main channel of spreading the Kemalist ideology among the Muslim Cypriots. The Turkish Consul was critical of the stance of the traditionalists who were collaborators with the British rule. He was hostile to the administration of the *Evkaf* (CO 67-262-2).

Having said that, let us turn the attention to the scenes of action where the conflict took place. The battle was played mainly in two different arenas, the political and the cultural. There the two camps clashed over different goals and ends. Let’s now proceed to examining each battlefield.

**Political Arena**

In 1925 Cyprus became officially a Crown Colony and Turkey established its Consulate on the island (McHenry, 1987). Actually, by the provisions of Article 16(4) of the Treaty of Lausanne that caused a big debate, especially in the 1950s Turkey renounced all her rights in Cyprus. Kemal Atatürk’s Turkey encouraged the Muslims of Cyprus to migrate and resettle in Anatolia in order to homogenize the population of the newly founded Republic of Turkey. In December 1925, there was the settlement of approximately 5,000 Muslim immigrants from Cyprus to Turkey. However, a report of 1928 claimed that many Muslims who had immigrated from Cyprus to Turkey in previous years, had returned. The population who had emigrated from Cyprus to Anatolia chose to go back to Turkey because of the prospect of better living standards (CO 323/1213/8). But eventually the vast majority of the emigrants went back to the island because the conditions they faced in Turkey were worse than the political and religious liberties they had under the liberal British administration (CO 67/221/11).

The election in 1930 was a major turning point for the politics and the political balance in the Muslim Cypriot community. At the elections that were held on October 1930, the Kemalist and progressive Nejati Özkan Bey was elected to the Legislative Council, taking the place of the traditional and pro-British Münir Bey (Kızılyürek, 1999: 57). Nejati Bey fought for the rights and the interests of his community and he supported the release of the British control of the *Evkaf* and the election of the *Müftü* by his community rather than by an appointment by the British Governor. He was definitely against Enosis but he voted on the side of the Greeks only when he thought that it was in favor of the Muslim community (Nevzat: 2005: 17).
The Governor Sir Ronald Storrs in his memoirs highlighted the role of the Turkish Consul Assaf Bey in spreading the Kemalist ideology among the members of the community (Storrs, 1939: 588). The Turkish Consul was in close touch with the Editor and proprietor of the Kemalist local newspaper Söz, Remzi Effendi (CO 67-262-2). In 1930 Söz published various reports attacking Münir Bey’s pro-British stance. The Turkish Consul interference in the local affairs caused dissatisfaction among the British officials (CO 67-275-10). There political enmity between the Turkish Consul and Münir Bey was often reported in the Turkish Cypriot nationalist press of Söz, Hakikat and Vakit that were the link between Turkey and Turkish Cypriot community and affirmed the loyalty of the latter to Kemalism. (McHenry, 1987: 140) According to a secret dispatch from Governor Palmer, the Turkish Consulate funded the newspaper Söz the sum of £18 a month (CO 67-291-10).

The rivals often sent petitions to the British Government. The most interesting fact was that the Kemalist faction of the community was pre-occupied with the rivalry with the Evkaf institution and Münir Bey, and any opposition to or hostility against the Greek Cypriots was secondary. So preoccupied was the Kemalist newspaper Söz with its opposition to Münir Bey and his policies that this priority often undermined the newspaper’s opposition to the Greek Cypriot cause. Nevertheless the Kemalists were loyal to the British Government only when they wanted to avoid the Greek Cypriot invitation for cooperation. They affirmed that it was impossible for them to cooperate in any action which was incompatible with the consent and wishes of the Government (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.605, dated 15.9.1933).

The Kemalists were persistent in their refusal to recognize Münir Bey as the leader of the community. Especially after the abolishment of the Constitution and the Legislative Council, there were no elections in the 1930s to give evidence of the popular support for Münir Bey. The Kemalists argued that Münir Bey was not the Head of the Community as he was appointed the Director of Evkaf which was a department of the Government (SA1 517/1928/2 Söz, No.713, dated 21.1.1934). Nejati Özkan, the prominent leader of the Kemalist faction, sent a petition to the Colonial Government arguing that it was unjust to consider the Delegates of the Evkaf as the representatives of the Muslim community who were entitled to speak on behalf of the whole community (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.591, dated 1.6.1933).

In 1933, in anticipation of a visit from the Conservative Minister Sir Phillip Cunliffe-Lister to Cyprus, the Kemalist agents within the community prepared to present themselves to the British Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Kemalist newspaper Söz seized the opportunity and argued that the Director of the Evkaf was not the representative of the Muslim Cypriots, calling on fellow citizens to “abstain from signing any document which may be presented to them by the Evkaf party to the effect that they are satisfied with the present organization” (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No. 672, dated 2.12.1933).

On a regular basis, Münir Bey reported to the Governor of Cyprus that the Turkish Consuls in Cyprus considered the Evkaf institution as a block to their aims to speak for the Muslim Cypriots. Münir Bey held that one who was loyal to the British Government was not necessarily anti-Turkish (C0 67-262-2). In 1931 Münir Bey asked the Governor Ronald Storrs to make an enquiry about Judge Raif in regard the allegations of his meddling in local politics. Raif Efendi, District Judge at Nicosia and Kyrenia, was accused of taking part in local politics. He had grievances against Münir Bey and several police officers and considering them as his enemies who were persistently trying to injure him (CO 67-238-11). However, Storrs decided not to make a judicial enquiry as he thought it would not serve any
useful purpose. This bitter personal vendetta between the two prominent Turks was not of paramount importance to the British.

An interesting and indicative case of the internal conflict within the Turkish Cypriot community took place in 1935. Münnir Bey took the liberty to communicate directly with Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In his secret letter, Münnir Bey complained about the interference by the Turkish Consul in respect to his nephew Ertuğrul İşınay. Münnir Bey accused the Turkish Consul of using his political enmity towards Münnir Bey’s family in order to compel Münnir Bey to fall more in line with the Turkish Consul’s political views. In particular Münnir Bey accused the Turkish Consul of requesting the Turkish Government to expel Ertuğrul from the Military Veterinary College at Ankara (CO 67-262-2).

In 1937 the debate on the new Cyprus Constitution was still going on. In the Kemalist agenda concerning the prospect of a new Constitution, the perception of the threat of a Greek Cypriot dominance was prevalent. Söz published an article on that issue highlighting the issue of defense that perceived the Greek Cypriot as a threat: “Then comes the question of defense. To attribute the present tranquility and security to our own powers would be an absolute fallacy. If it is intended to leave the responsibility of defense to Great Britain, this will certainly involve submission to her power and authority, in which case we shall have to seek the ways of our local progress and development” (SA1 517/1928/2).

The Kemalists opposed Evkaf policies and were constantly sending letters to the British rule calling them to consider their concerns. They addressed the British officials claiming that they, the Kemalists, were the real representatives of the community. Their main issue and objection that they raised in their correspondence with the Government was the participation of the Turkish Delegate of the Evkaf Department in politics. They argued that the Delegate of the Evkaf as a Government official had insufficient time to look after the affairs of the community, and he could not defend the rights of the people in cases where the interests of the Government and of the Community might clash (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.584, dated 26.5.1933).

Moreover, the emerging secular Cypriot Muslims criticized Münnir Bey also for economic issues regarding the administration of the Evkaf (SA1 533/1931). There were certain criticisms about the benefit of Evkaf funds used for the Muslim Community. The Evkaf Department frequently used its funds in order to erect minarets in some villages that considering the harsh times, in the eyes of the Kemalists were nothing but luxury. Also the Religious Schools that the Evkaf were investing money in were seen by the Kemalist as totally unnecessary. They argued that instead of establishing religious schools, a special course in the Lycee for those who were willing to be trained for the posts of Imam and Preacher could be organized. The Kemalists suggested that the appropriation of the Evkaf Funds should not be at the discretion of its delegates. They asked that the annual Evkaf estimates should be framed by a body that included the representatives of the people, and that any surplus should be utilized for religious, charitable and educational purposes (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.584, dated 26.5.1933).

Cultural Arena

As we mentioned above, Atatürk’s reforms in the 1920s attempted to achieve nothing less than a cultural revolution. In the early years of the Republic of Turkey, many innovative reforms were introduced, changing, inter alia, the alphabet, the dress code, and the family law. The emerging
secular opposition was in favor of the adoption of Kemal Atatürk’s reforms and actively promoted them, while the conservative traditionalists strongly opposed them.

The Kemalists strongly advocated for the establishment of a Muftiship in order to acquire the spiritual head of the community. The Müftü’s duty would not be simply to issue Fetvas (canonical opinions) but also to represent the community as its spiritual head. The Kemalists were arguing that the delegates of the Evkaf appeared to have wrongly assumed this right, while their duty should have been only to administer the Evkaf Department which the former perceived just as a financial institution (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.581, dated 25.5.1933).

Actually the Turkish Consul was pressing the British Government to accept the reforms in the law on polygamous marriages (SA1 766/1935). However, the British were reluctant in the 1930s to encompass these reforms not least because of the discontent that they would cause. For instance, when in 1933 a Judge from the District Court in Nicosia suggested that the divorce law should be altered, the Colonial Office was unwilling to implement that reform because “it would meet with the strong opposition of the Muslim community as being an interference with their religion” (SA1 844/1933).

It is interesting enough that even the newspaper Masum Millet that was constantly opposing Evkaf’s policies and was considered to be siding with the Kemalist section of the community was being published in the Arabic alphabet even in the 1930s. This choice can be explained if we consider that the shift from the Ottoman to the new Turkish alphabet was not adopted immediately by the members of the Muslim Cypriot community, especially its elderly members. This fact was often criticized by the leading Kemalist newspaper Söz writing that “we see Masum Millet is increasingly scattering microbes and attacking every honest person in the country. This paper is vulgarly attacking the Koran, and at the same time is being published in Koranic (Arabic) characters. The paper is full of grammatical mistakes” (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.624, dated 7.10.1933).

Though the two newspapers Söz and Masum Millet were the voices of the Kemalists, Söz many times published articles criticizing Masum Millet’s columns on the ground that the latter published wrong ideas and suggestions. On the issue of the Müftü, Söz saw the stance of Masum Millet to be flawed when it wrote that a Müftü was not required (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.603, dated 24.8.1933).

Actually the Turkish Consul was pressing the British Government to accept the reforms in the law against polygamy (CO 67/268/4). Despite the fact that the British were reluctant in the 1930s to accept these reforms, gradually the Cypriot Muslims embraced them. Regarding the use of the fez in Cyprus a paradox occurred. Although in Turkey the fez was an Ottoman symbol and was abolished by the Kemalist reforms, in Cyprus the use of the fez was popular throughout the period in question and was perceived as a Turkish symbol. It is of interest that the Greek Cypriots grasped that wearing the fez presented a Turkish appearance (CO 67-239-14). After all, the official version of Turkish nationalism under the Republic was different from the actual operative ideals and loyalties of the Muslim Cypriots. It was only after World War II that Kemalism became apparent in every aspect of life within the Turkish Cypriot community.

Söz incessantly promoted the new image of the Turk and actively opposed the fez. For instance, in 1933 Söz published an anonymous letter addressed to the Editor of Söz criticizing the fez wearing leaders of the Muslim community:
“….with reference to the two photographs inserted in the previous issues of your paper, showing the Turks bidding goodbye to His Excellency Sir Reginald Edward Stubbs at Larnaca, I protest against your lines below each photograph describing the Turks seen in them as the representatives of the Turkish Community. Those Turks wore fezzes or turbans while all the Turkish youth and the majority of the Turkish people in Cyprus wear hats. I do not wish to criticize those gentlemen for their head dresses, as we are living in a country which enjoys liberty, but I wish to point out that the headdress of the Turkish Community in Cyprus is hat and it can be represented only by persons who wear hats. A Turk from Nicosia” (SA1 517/1926/2- Söz, No.682, dated 14.12.1933).

Then the Editor of Söz commented that “we admit our mistake in publishing the lines refered to and are glad to see that the press is being controlled by our youth” (SA1 517/1926/2- Söz, No.682, dated 14.12.1933).

The wearing of hats by the Muslim school boys alerted the Kadi (judge in a Muslim community) of Cyprus. In 1925 the Kadi sent a letter to the Chief Inspector of Schools requesting that “the present costumes of the Students may not be allowed to be changed at all on account of the political and special attitude of Cyprus unless a Fetva is issued by His Eminence the Müftü of Cyprus and unless a decision is obtained from the Muslim Board of Education and the Governing Body” (SA1 969/1925).

Söz also pressed the Government to enact a modern law regarding wills. In 1933, Said Hoca, a former member of the Legislative Council, sent an open letter to the Governor suggesting that a modern law on wills should be enacted for the Muslim Community in Cyprus embodying provisions that would be compatible with Sheria principles (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.590, dated 26.5.1933).

The new family law had a paramount importance in the modernization process adopted by Kemalist Turkey. The emerging secular fraction of the Muslim Cypriot community was anxious to adopt the new family law also in Cyprus. At a time when the Republic of Turkey had adopted the Swiss law, it could not be justified for the Kemalist section of the Muslim Cypriots to continue with a law which was framed 1260 years before and in their view could not satisfy their requirements (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.613, dated 24.9.1933). However, the majority of the members of the community did not want any reform in the family law. It is indicative that in 1933 a report from Charles Abbott, President of the District Court of Nicosia, called for the need for a legislative reform in the divorce law of the Muslim community. In reply, Governor Stubbs wrote that the suggestion that the Muslim law of divorce should be altered would meet with strong opposition from the Muslim community (SA1 844/1933).

Finally one very important issue that caused a lot of debate was the use of alcohol. The ‘Kardeş Ocağı’ Club in Nicosia in 1936 amended its constitution in order to be able to sell alcoholic beverages. “Up to the present date, the use of intoxicating drinks on the Club premises was prohibited. The rule imposing this prohibition was deleted and a resolution was passed authorizing the Club to obtain a license for the sale of drinks” (SA1 517/1928/2- Söz, No.919, dated 14.1.1936). This fact met the strong opposition of the conservative fraction of the community who asked the British Administration to intervene.
CONCLUSION

The politics of Cyprus throughout this period were part of a bigger story. One cannot really understand political and social developments in Cyprus unless one sees them in the context of developments within the region of the Eastern Mediterranean and especially of the former Ottoman lands. This is especially true of the shape of national identity and the growth of nationalism. These should not be examined in isolation, nor in a purely Anglo-Cypriot context. The political, social and cultural interchange with the developments that were taking place at the same time in the Eastern Mediterranean was of major importance to the culture and politics of the entire region.

After the Second World War, Cyprus experienced inter-communal fighting during her de-colonization process. Understanding the development of the Turkish nationalism during the interwar period enables us to have a greater understanding of the postwar Cypriot politics. Thus the analysis of the interwar period allows a longer term perspective on Turkish nationalism, and makes it possible to evaluate how much of its rapid growth and militarization were due to interwar developments.

NOTES

1. In Turkish, millet means religious community. The Ottoman Empire used the millet system, which granted minority religions the freedom to establish their own set of laws and system of taxation. Under the millet system non-Muslims were granted autonomy to manage their own personal and religious affairs so long as they swore loyalty to the Empire.

2. The act of religious conversion from Christianity to Islam was changing the social status of the individual. He changed from being an infidel taxpayer into a Muslim taxpayer, which meant he paid fewer taxes.

3. Linovamvakoi comes from the words linen and cotton meaning that those people were different in appearance (Muslims) than what they really were (Christians).

4. Article 16 in the Lausanne Treaty: Turkey hereby renounces all rights and title whatsoever over or respecting the territories situated outside the frontiers laid down in the present Treaty, and the islands other than those over which her sovereignty is recognized by the said Treaty, the future of these territories and islands being settled or to be settled by the parties concerned. The provisions of the present Article do not prejudice any special arrangements arising from neighborly relations which have been or may be concluded between Turkey and any limitrophe countries.

5. The Article 21 of the Treaty of Lausanne provided that: Turkish nationals ordinarily resident in Cyprus on 5 November 1914 will acquire British nationality subject to the conditions laid down in the local law, and will thereupon lose their Turkish nationality. They will, however, have the right to opt for Turkish nationality within two years from the coming into force of the present Treaty, provided that they leave Cyprus within twelve months after having so opted. Turkish nationals ordinarily resident in Cyprus on the coming into force of the present Treaty who, at the date, have acquired or are in process of acquiring British nationality, in consequence of a request made in accordance with the local law, will also thereupon lose their Turkish nationality.
It is understood that the Government of Cyprus will be entitled to refuse British nationality to inhabitants of the island who, being Turkish nationals, had formerly acquired nationality without the consent of the Turkish Government.

6. Raif Efendi was the father of the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş.

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The State Archives, Nicosia, Cyprus.
EU-TURKEY RELATIONS IN THE RADICAL NATIONALIST DISCOURSE: THE NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (MHP)

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to analyze the discourse of the radical nationalist perspective about Turkey-EU relations from the 1990s to 2008. The EU is discussed as an actor within the globalization process. Therefore, in a broader context, the study will present the situation of the radical nationalist perspective in Turkey within the globalization process. In the study, the Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Action Party, MHP) has been selected as the political representative of radical nationalism in Turkey. The party’s official discourse is focused on the relations with the EU. In this framework, the party’s perception of the EU, of Turkey-EU relations and of Turkey’s position in these relations will be analyzed concerning the themes prominent in its discourse. While doing this, we will also try to reveal contradictions, uncertainties and ambivalences.

Keywords: Nationalism, Turkish nationalism, Nationalist Action Party (MHP), globalization, European Union (EU).

RADİKAL MİLLİYETÇİ SÖYLEMDE AB-TÜRKİYE İLİŞKİLERİ: MİLLİYETÇİ HAREKET PARTİSİ (MHP)

ÖZET


Anahtar kelimeler: Milliyetçilik, Türk milliyetçiliği, Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP), küreselleşme, Avrupa Birliği (AB).

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The transnational/supranational nature of globalization gave rise to various debates on the future of nations. Some thinkers claim that nation-states will be eliminated; some claim that they will get even stronger; and some claim that they will be transformed and acquire new characteristics. In addition, there are some views suggesting that the process will activate nationalist movements. Regardless of their predictions about the position of nationalism within the globalization process, all these views suppose that there is a tension between nationalist movements and globalization. The influence of globalization is studied especially in the radical right/nationalist movements arising in Europe since the 1990s.

Transnational organizations are among the most important actors in the globalization process. The EU is among the most significant of these institutions. The member countries face at a concrete level the changes proposed by the globalization process through membership in the EU. Therefore, looking into the debates on the EU will also provide us with information about the positions concerning globalization.

In Turkey, the views of radical nationalists loom large in the debates over the EU. In the political life of Turkey, the MHP drew attention with its Turkist ideas, and sometimes obviously brought the anti-Westernist discourse to the forefront. It leaned toward the alliances that would be established with Turkic peoples rather than with Western states. In this respect, the EU has put pressure on the fundamental characteristics of the MHP. Therefore, it is considered that the debates over the EU would appear in a crystallized form in the MHP’s discourse. In this line, this study analyses the discourse which the MHP has adopted on the course of EU-Turkey relations from the 1990s to 2008.

There are a couple of reasons as to why this study focuses more on the period in the 1990s. First, the collapse of the Soviets and the gains of independence of Turkic Republics influenced the MHP. Second, with the Customs Union Treaty (1996), an active period began in terms of the relations with the EU. Third, in the period after the 1990s, the MHP was first a coalition partner in the government (1999-2002), then extra-parliamentary (2002-2007), and finally a parliamentary opposition party (2007 to the present). Therefore, it is suitable to focus on this period for comparing the MHP’s discourse in different political positions. Fourth, there are views suggesting that the MHP has been changed since the end of the 1980s; it has become more moderate and conciliatory down playing the Turkist and pan-Turkist elements. In this study, I will look into how the asserted change was reflected in the party’s discourse on the EU.

In the study, the search is on how the MHP perceives the EU, Turkey, EU-Turkey relations, itself and the other actors in this period. In terms of methodology, this study relies mainly on analysis of the primary sources published by the MHP head office such as reports, tractates, booklets and statutes of the Party, the Party lines and speeches of Devlet Bahçeli in Parliament or in press statements.

While analyzing how the nationalist discourse in Turkey perceived the EU in particular and globalization in general, it becomes apparent that the MHP’s perception evidences both changes and contradictions in the same time period.

NATIONALISM IN THE GLOBALIZATION PROCESS

One of the most important issues in the political aspect of the globalization debates is the transference of sovereignty to supra-national institutions. This brings along debates related to the future of
nation-states in the globalization process. McGrew (2000: 140-142) states that the political aspect of globalization involves the following points: Political interactions have become supra-national, and as can be seen in the UN example, they are now institutionalized in an international manner. Connected to this, some thinkers assert that the nation-states will vanish (hyperglobalists); some assert that they will get even more important (skeptics), and some assert that they will be transformed (transformationists).

According to hyperglobalists, local and national differences, autonomy and sovereignty have been diminished, and a more homogenous global culture and economy have come into existence (Mackay, 2000: 46-55). In the near future, regional administrations and global institutions will become more powerful than the state’s autonomy and sovereignty. Nation-states are being eroded from the bottom by a superstructure which leads to political, economic and cultural integration on the global level on the one hand and through disintegration and decomposition in the context of micro-nationalisms on the other hand (Gelekçi, 2003: 193).

According to skeptics, globalization has not brought about changes that are as big as claimed. The exchange of goods and cultures and the liberal economic relations have continued from the nineteenth century. Nation-states hold their powerful position. The international system is still organized on the nation-state basis. Members of the international organizations, such as NATO and UN, are again nation-states. Nation-states are the ones having their militaries and holding the use of legitimate power on the territory under their sovereignty (Gelekçi, 2003: 88; Özkırımlı, 2008: 105).

According to those who approach globalization as a transformational process, nation-states are still powerful in economic, military and political terms. However, the process of globalization may have very complicated and unexpected consequences. Talking about full independence is impossible in the present day world. While handing part of their sovereignty over supra-national structures, nation-states continue to hold and even enhance their sovereignty in other fields (Özkırımlı, 2008: 105).

One of the most important points in nationalism debates on the socio-cultural aspect of the globalization process is the matter of uniformization and domination of a single global culture. Globalization means the process of leveling of the world’s societies and the emergence of a single global culture (Keyman and Sarbay, 1998: 9). Intense mutual interaction, as the fundamental characteristic of the process, gives rise to debates on culture.

On the other hand, not only homogenizing but also diversifying dimensions of globalization are talked about. Sarbay (2002) says that globalization involves both repudiation and adoption. Adoption means the consumption of the cultural codes of Western societies by non-Western societies. As for repudiation, it takes place in two forms: Firstly, in the form of purification from the advanced societies’ cultural codes or prevention of their intervention in local cultural codes. Secondly, in the form of dissemination of the belief that the West’s cultural codes actually correspond to codes which exist in the local culture. Some views suggest that in this regard the process of globalization goes hand in hand with “localization.”

According to some points of view, the globalization process is influential not only in the spread of nationalist movements but also in their form/degree. According to Hall, the erosion of nation-states, national economies and national identities are very dangerous. As the nation-state era is declining in the globalization process, national identity is being molded into an “over defensive” and “very
dangerous” form by an aggressive racism. A return to the local identity arises generally as a reaction to globalization (Hall, 1998: 46-47, 54-57).

The globalization process can be said to affect nationalist movements in another respect too. The process causes inequalities in terms of information, ownership of the means of communication, and information flows (Mackay, 2000: 46-5). These inequalities, which also create economic gaps, become gradually deeper both in national and international terms. The excessive imbalance due to globalization paves the way for the rise of radical movements. Likewise, the globalization process renders human relations more dependent upon the market relationships. Therefore it dissociates and atomizes individuals and communities. Thus it increases the existential anxiety of individuals, and so their nervousness against others increases as well (Beck, 1999).

There are also various views about the rise and position of nationalist movements in the process of globalization. According to some views, rising nationalist movements are the remnants of previous nationalisms, and they will be wiped out in a short while. For another view, nationalism is the product and the producer of modernity. Global modernization had transformed our life styles largely and it brought about disintegration. In this disintegrating and alienating world, “nationalism is the means of controlling destructive effects of the mass social change.” It is the popular force that legitimizes and gives meaning to the state’s activity. Just like nations, nationalisms are also perpetual (Smith, 2002: xi-xxi).

These elements --sovereignty, common culture, territorial integrity-- are the basis of the modern state and the components of the nation. Therefore, they are the immediate concerns of nationalism. In this regard, nationalist reactions directed to globalization can be expected to concentrate on these points. Thus in this study these points formed the thematic framework which was used to discuss the MHP’s approach to the EU.

When the above mentioned points are considered, nationalist movements can be thought to adopt a discourse that is directly against globalization. However, as stated by Erbaş (2000: 214) as well, the rapid and effective implementation of globalization is presented as “contemporaneity.” Not to be involved in the process of globalization is seen as “backwardness” or “undevelopedness.” If Turkey’s objective of modernization is considered, the difficulty of being anti-globalization can be understood. Under these conditions, nationalist movements can be expected to remain in between two alternatives, namely, being anti-globalization (by adopting the elements that are claimed to vanish with globalization, and regenerating nationalism from this) and not seeming to be backward. This can render the globalization discourses of nationalist movements stuck/indecisive.

NATIONALISM IN TURKEY AND MHP

It will be helpful to glance over the history of the MHP and the sources that formed its institutional mentality in order to comprehend the origins of its views about the EU.

In the dissolution era of the Ottoman Empire, the notion of Turkism that spread among the intellectuals harbored two principal points: an establishment of a state which was based upon the sovereignty of the Turkish element in the Empire and a probable union with the Turks outside the Empire (Uzun, 2005: 97). However, there was not a national consciousness till the late period of the Empire. With the
rise of nationalism, Ottoman intellectuals had become aware of linguistic, cultural and racial (ethnic) nationalism in the West. However; after all, they had not supported a nationalism that was based upon racial unity for a long time (Bayraktutan, 1996: 54).

Among the most important actors in the development of the conception of Turkism were the Turkist intellectuals who emigrated from Russia to the Ottoman Empire. Owing to them, Turkism became a political ideology in the 20th century following its historical, philological and literary accumulation (Çalık, 1995: 96). These intellectuals studied the language, culture, economic development and history of the Turks.

The Constitutional Era had presented a favorable ground for the development of Turkism. The atmosphere was open to arguments of Turkism and the government of the Committee of Union and Progress was influential in propagating it. Turkism had started to have more radical characteristics from that period on. The principal target had turned out to be “to achieve the unity of a race.” Thus, the aim of Turkists had been directed at a vast geography, and evolved into a utopia (Öğün, 1992: 19). Turanism/Pan-turkism had appeared as the ideal of gathering all Turks under the same flag.

Following World War I, the culturally based design of Turkism has been carried to a political ground. Its irredentist aspect had come into prominence during the War. Most of the Ottoman territory was carved up by the European states following the War. For this reason, Turkish nationalism gained a Turanist characteristic which was reactive and disposed to imperialism (Arslan, 2002: 302). If the whole process is considered, according to Taner Akçam, Turkish national identity was belated. It had the aim of catching up with other countries. This caused it to be aggressive (1995: 39).

A Turkist legacy coming from the Ottoman Empire formed a basis for the nationalism of the Republican period. However, the founding cadre of the Turkish Republic redefined nationalism during the establishment period of the Republic. In this way, Turkist-Turanist nationalism became differentiated from Atatürk nationalism/Kemalist nationalism. However, the Turkist-Turanist movement remained passive for a while (between the years 1923-1939) in the period following the establishment of the Republic. The nationalist movement limited itself to helping Turks who emigrated from various countries to Turkey, and to activities in the fields of literature and language. It avoided presenting a political agenda.

**Turkism During and Following World War II**

There is a common view that during World War II, the Turkist movement was used as a diplomatic means of maneuver by the state in order to prevent Turkey’s participation in the war. The Turkist-Turanist movement, which involved German propaganda, was supported by the government against the pressure from Germany. However, it was sometimes repressed in order to balancing the relationships with the Soviets.

Especially in 1941, when the Nazis attacked the Soviets, Turkist publications increased in number and they became more aggressive as well. Turkists expected Turkey to participate in the war on the side of Germany and to establish a Turan state which would also cover Turks living in the Soviet Union (Uzun, 2005: 251).
During the war, Turkist ideology got into a process of organization and structuring. A large number of Turkist journals and newspapers began to be published. Actually, the Turkist movement that was becoming widespread in this period revealed a multipartite structure within itself with several opinions that differed only very slightly from each other. At this point, two names can be mentioned who had their influence on Turkist-Turanist thought as well as on the MHP later on. One of these names is Nihal Atsız who was also influential in the 1930s. According to him, innate inequalities among human beings also exist among peoples/races. The Turkish race is superior. The Turk’s original duty is the Turkification of the world. He considered ethnic groups that are not Turkish to be foreigners even if they spoke Turkish. Another influential name who had given shape to the Turkist-Turanist perspective is Reha Oğuz Türkkan. According to Türkkan, being governed by “foreign blood” and the racial intermingling lead to the erosion of nations. Also for Türkkan, the Turkish race is superior to all the other races. Turkism means the Turkification of Turkey. One should continually proceed to reach the Great Turkish Union (Özdoğan, 2002: 213).

An important characteristic of the Turkist-Turanist movement of the 1930s and especially the 1940s was its opposition to the policies of the Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People’s Party, CHP) especially in the fields of culture and education. In this regard, the Turkist-Turanist movement developed a reaction to the Westernization policy. It was functioning as an anti-modernization platform. The CHP and the elitist rulers were blamed for imitating the West without comprehending the real foundations of civilization and also for becoming degenerate (Özdoğan, 2002).

Following the war, the CHP did not have a tolerance for nationalistic trends apart from the official/Kemalist nationalism. In 1946, the change to a multiparty system and the Demokrat Parti (Democratic Party, DP) had been a hope for the Turkists. The DP’s attempt to purge leftist groups pleased Turkists. Turkists became more organized at the beginning of the multiparty period. They gained supporters from young groups. The movement started to gain political acceptance within the society. It started to move towards an activist line. The socialist left was on the rise in Turkey in the same period. The Turkist movement gained effectiveness as a reactionary force against the socialist left (Uzun, 2005: 260-261).

The development of the Turkist-Turanist understanding, summed up to this point, was to leave both an intellectual legacy and a political/organizational cadre for the MHP. However, in spite of the intellectual and political accumulation, the Turkists were not able to establish a unified organization up to the end of the 1960s. The representation of the unorganized and dispersed Turkist-Turanist movement by a political party took place upon the establishment of the MHP.

Foundation of the MHP

The root of the MHP is the Millet Partisi (Nation Party, MP). The MP was established in 1948 by the parliament members most of whom had left the Demokrat Parti (The Democrat Party, DP). Osman Bölükbaşı, one of the founders of the MP, established the Cumhuriyetçi Millet Partisi (Republican Nation Party, CMP) in 1954. The party was a populist, conservative nationalist rural middle class party in the 1950s. Previously established as the Türkiye Köylü Partisi (Peasants’ Party of Turkey in May 19, 1952) it joined the CMP in 1958. The name of the party was changed to the Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi (Republican Peasants’ Nation Party, CKMP). Its president Bölükbaşı resigned from the CKMP in 1962, and established the MP once more. Meanwhile, Colonel Alparslan Türkeş,
who had been purged shortly after the 1960 coup d’état and had left the country with a foreign service, returned to Turkey in 1963. Türkçeş and his circle joined the CKMP. At the assembly meeting held in 1965, Alparslan Türkçeş was elected president. At the assembly meeting held in 1969, the name of the party was changed to the Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Action Party, MHP). Following the leadership of Türkçeş, the conservative discourse took a back seat and the ultra nationalist discourse loomed large in the party’s ideology. (Arslan, 2002: 307).

MHP Following the Coup d’état of September 12, 1980

The coup d’état of September 12, 1980 was a turning point in the MHP’s discourse. In the 1970s, MHP espoused the mission of advocating the flag, the nation and the country together with the state authorities. Thus, it had not expected to be seen as an “opponent” in a military intervention. However, with the coup d’état, the MHP was closed down (like all the other political parties). Türkçeş and many party administrators were brought up for trial. Some were sentenced and many were tortured. Therefore, the coup d’état had been a “shocking” experience for the MHP. Being treated by the state in the same way as leftists/communists were treated, started a period of questioning among the MHP voters. An anti-system discourse emerged in patches and an organizational lacunae and disintegration was experienced in that period.

The Muhafazakâr Parti (Conservative Party, MP) was founded on July 7, 1983 as the continuation of the MHP. The party’s name became the Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi (Nationalist Working Party, MÇP) in 1985. In the assembly meeting of October 1987, Türkçeş was elected the president of the party. This assembly meeting was also a turning point in the discourse and image of the MÇP/MHP. Academicians such as Devlet Bahçeli and Ali Güngör started to be influential in this period. Qualified cadres, a “scientific” discourse instead of agitative discourse, and a more professional determination of the policies were considered important. The historical framework, democracy, human rights and the rule of law were brought to forefront instead of defining an organic nation. As an alternative to all the imitation systems, the “domestic production” was brought up (Arıkan, 2002). Although the process of change had started, anti-Westernism was still an important issue of the 1980s.

There was a disagreement between the ones in favor of making a greater emphasis on Islam and the ones emphasizing Turkism. While the focus was on Turkishness in the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, it is more on Islam in the emergent view named “Turkish-Islamic idealism.” The party administration was close to the state’s official attitude that considered Islam a “motive.” Therefore, the discrepancy between the party administration and the Turkish-Islamic idealists who had an Islamic discourse grew wider. The party was divided. Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu established the Büyük Birlik Partisi (Great Union Party, BBP) in 1992. In this way, the party was substantially separated from the Islamist group. This paved the way for a re-Turkisization of the MHP in the 1990s.

The MHP in the 1990s

In the 1990s, both the nationalist wave had risen and the MHP’s change that began at the end of the 1980s had become evident. Developments in the world, and both Turkey’s and the party’s internal dynamics had been influenced by this.
Globalization had brought about a new structuring in the world’s economic and political life. The gap between the prosperous states of the “North” and the third world countries of the “South” had deepened. Turkey was taking its place between the North and the South in economic, cultural and social terms. Within this crystallizing hierarchy countries—including Turkey—were concerned about acquiring a prominent position for themselves. According to Bora (2004: 495-97), this atmosphere paved the way for the rise of radical nationalism since it enabled support for views which involved “militant” discourses directed at a higher position for the country. At the same time, the trends focusing on the national interests and producing radical solutions were gaining supporters. The MHP was already covering such discourses. It presented history as a struggle among nations with a discourse focusing on the upper/superior position of Turkey all along within this hierarchy.

The disintegration of the Soviets was another crucial development of the 1990s which affected the nationalist wave in Turkey and around the world. With this development, the West’s superiority over the Communist Russia was recognized. This situation can be said to have refreshed MHP’s self-confidence. With the collapse of communism, the party started to proclaim that it was right in its years-long struggle, and that its thesis of the collapse of communism had been affirmed. The nationalist movements rising in the Turkic communities provided the MHP with extra credit. The MHP headed towards gaining influence over that geography. Turkist motives started to get popular and to be more highlighted at the symbolic level (Arslan, 2002; Bora, 2004).

The MHP expressed its anti-Westernism by means of its anti-communist discourse. The ending of the threat of communism created a gap in the MHP’s discourse. However, the MHP had always defined itself through an opposition to an existing or imagined enemy or “the other.” Therefore instead of anti-Sovietism, already existing anti-Westernism started to be sharpened once more (Uzun, 2005). A growing inequity of income and the cumulative reaction among the wide masses devastated by globalization led to a result that generated hostility against the West (Yanardağ, 2002).

On the other hand, following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the MHP needed to keep up with the changing conjuncture. In their program before 1990, liberalism, communism, Westernism and “imitation” were all unacceptable systems since they were not in conformity with the Turkish history and tradition. With a corporatist approach, the Turkish nation was seen as a whole. However, in the new era, this understanding was backward and outdated in a world of liberal-capitalist systems. Thus the party started to advocate a neo-liberal economy in its 1993 party program.

In this period, Turkey faced a new “wave of modernization.” Democracy was the dominant political theme. The MHP highlighted the Westernist nationalism in its discourse. Westernist Turkish nationalism was based on the assertion that 200-year complex of “backwardness” had now been overcome. It potentially had the idea or feeling of growing over its boundaries and imperialism. It emphasized a Turkey rising within its own territory (Yanardağ, 2002: 19).

One of the factors that was influential in the rise of the nationalist wave and in the prominence of the MHP’s Turkist discourse in Turkey was the increase in terrorist events. A popular nationalism was pumped into the society with the rising PKK terror (Arikan, 2002). The MHP had overstated loyalty to the military and the state in this period. It reproduced its unique mission of power, which advocated the indivisible unity of the country and the nation in reaction to the Kurdish problem (Yanardağ, 2002: 25).
The popularization of nationalism and its prevalence in the general political atmosphere benefited the MHP. It headed towards being a mass party (Arıkan, 2002). From the beginning of the 1990s, it presented itself as a centrist, not a marginal, party.

However, the “moderation” in question added a completely contradictory, complicated and indecisive characteristic to the party’s discourse. As can be seen, the traditional Turanist ideals, a racist understanding, the nervousness felt from “the other” and a sharpened anti-Westernism were intertwined with the 1990s’ conformity to the changing conditions, to an articulation of the process of globalization as a leader country, and an emphasis on the Westernist values such as democracy and human rights. This renders it hard to analyze the MHP. In the following chapters, the extent to which the party’s discourse on the EU coincides with the picture introduced above will be analyzed.


The Ottomans’ perception and characterization of the Europe/West had also varied. The perception of the West for the Ottomans had been religion-oriented for a long while. However, the perception in question began to change with the start of the decline of the Empire. Hanioğlu points out that the idea of reshaping the Ottoman State in accordance with the West was the most critical point in the Ottoman/Turkish history of thought (1989: 16). The formulation of “being like the West,” which was first seen as “the remedy for getting over the crisis” and as a technical/military issue, had started to surround social and cultural living spaces. Hanioğlu (1989: 16) points out that the idea of reshaping the Ottoman State in accordance with the West was the most critical point in the Ottoman/Turkish history of thought. Here the important thing was the acceptance of the ideas that the West was advanced, that it had desirable and long-awaited characteristics, and that the Ottoman Empire was lacking and backward compared to it. On the other hand, there was an effort to adopt the technological developments but not the cultural values of the West. There was a concern about the damaging influences of Western culture on the local culture. Consequently, the West was a subject “that involved corrupting influences within its differences;” and thus, it should be approached with deliberation. This kind of a perception of the West had also been very effective following the establishment of the Republic.

The European Union was a new phase in Turkey’s relations with the West and its Westernization adventure. Turkey’s relations with the European Union have a history of almost fifty years. This process, which can be considered long, has witnessed different perceptions of the European Union.

This is also similar in terms of the MHP’s perceptions, which became one of the prominent actors in the Turkish politics from the 1970s onward. In the 1970s “Turkism,” coming into prominence in the MHP’s ideology, targeted Western influence and “Westernist” approaches inside the country; and it adopted a “turn to yourself” discourse against Westernization policies, starting with the Tanzimat (Reform) Era of the Ottoman Empire” (Özdoğan, 2002: 10). In the same period, the MHP’s discourse on the European Union (its name was the European Economic Community at that time) had a similar character.

In this period the MHP defined the EU as “an economic organization.” However, the EU, appearing in the party’s discourse as an economic organization which could be joined, was turning out to be a dangerous structure when the cultural and political components were considered (1973; 1977). Türkəş
expresses this clearly in the “Milliyetçi Hareketin El Kitabı” (“Manual of Nationalist Movement”), which was first published in 1973, then again in 1977 by the party: “...[the] MHP commits itself to the use of regional economic organizations as a means of social, cultural and political integration going beyond the economic relations.” This statement asserts that the EU was discussed in two different axes, namely, the material/technological/economic and the spiritual/cultural/civilizational. This is a division that was referred to quite often in debates on the West.

The perception of “the West as a corrupting civilization” was the fundamental reason for the harm that Türkeş saw in “social and cultural” integration. As a matter of fact, Türkeş also added:

[The] MHP is openly and absolutely against the Common Market because it will cause an indirect implementation of the Treaty of Sevres by allowing foreigners to acquire land and opportunities in any part of the country and as much as they want; it will lead to cultural and social deformation; and it will prevent the development of national industry [emphasis added] (MHP, 1973; 1977: 43).

The reason why Türkeş was doubtful of political integration was that he saw the EU as an indirect enforcement of the Treaty of Sevres. Here it should be noted that in the MHP language the EU was presented as “an obvious enemy, secretly aiming to destroy Turkey’s territorial integrity” through discussing the relations with the EU in a framework referring to the Treaty of Sevres. The parties to the Treaty of Sevres were the Ottoman Empire and the Allied Powers with whom it had fought for a long while. In this context, the EU was seen as a continuation of the Allied Powers that had tried to seize lands of the Ottoman Empire, rather than an economic organization undertaking the regulation of some political and social elements.

Despite the dark picture outlined above, it is also noteworthy that the MHP could not leave the EU aside completely.

Our government is a coalition government [The Second Nationalist Front Government, together with the Adalet Partisi/AP (Justice Party) and the Milli Selamet Partisi/MSP (National Salvation Party)]. In the protocol of the coalition, which is a consensus government, our opinions about the Common Market are determined. Accordingly, necessity of a regulation and reform based on mutual interests, particularly Turkey’s industrialization matter, was manifested. Today our governments are also working for this (Nalbantoğlu, 1994: 200-201).

The year 1978 witnessed the beginning of an uncertain period in terms of Turkey-European Union relations. Turkey demanded to be released from its obligations in 1978. Following the coup d’état of September 12th, 1980, the relations were suspended. An atmosphere of military intervention and the following interruption in the relations removed the EU from the agenda. Turkey applied for membership on April 14th, 1987 but this application was rejected in 1989. The relations, passing through a period of stagnation until the year 1995, revived with the enactment of the Customs Union Treaty in 1996. However they were interrupted again after the Luxembourg Summit in 1997.
According to the MHP, which was the government party when the Customs Union Treaty was signed between Turkey and the EU, from this date onwards the EU had become an “unfair” party by blocking the required financial aid to Turkey. In addition, the EU enlargement was decided at the Luxembourg Summit in 1997; and the accession of eleven countries that had applied much later than Turkey was accepted. Therefore, the EU was a party “excluding Turkey from the process” and “discriminating” against Turkey, and “set[ting] it [in] a secondary position which is not in the United Europe but kept it along its trajectory.” (Bahçeli, 2002b: 16-19).

At the EU Summit that was held in Helsinki in December 1999 when the MHP was also a partner in the coalition government, the Union accepted Turkey’s candidacy. This development led to a period in which the government partner MHP’s discourse on the EU was swayed toward different points. The MHP started to avoid explicitly highlighting the image of an “enemy” while mentioning the EU. On the contrary, the EU (having accepted Turkey’s candidacy) turned out to be a subject “accepting gradually increasing international reputation and power of our country,” “rediscovering its geopolitical and geo-economic importance that was underestimated in the post Cold War period,” and “needing Turkey for desired stability in the Caucasus, the Balkans and the Middle East.” (Bahçeli, 1999d) Similarly the EU offered Turkey a “route map” which was “free from prejudices and additional conditions to a certain extent compared to the past.” Rather than “impositions,” “disturbing” points existed related to some issues (Bahçeli, 1999d). In a sense, the EU was portrayed as a party acknowledging its mistake and accepting the facts related to Turkey. However, the EU still continued to be a “suspicious” subject in the MHP’s discourse.

After 1999, the EU was “addressed as a party” from whom an “amicable” approach, “good will,” “sincerity” and “tolerance” were expected. The relation with the EU was not a simple relationship based on interest but rather “a strategic and economic association.”

The EU, having been turned into an enemy by the MHP in the 1970s, at the end of the 1990s and right at the beginning of the 2000s it was portrayed more as a partner having some negative characteristics. A “complaining” tone was more dominant in the discourse. In this narrative, the EU’s negative characteristics were presented in the form of defects such as “not being freed from prejudices” and “being confused” rather than hostile (Bahçeli, 2000d).

“Disappointment” was one of the prominent themes especially in the texts emerging right before the November 2002 elections. Two functions of the theme of disappointment can be pointed out. First of all, this theme of disappointment indicated that what was required was accomplished in the period when the MHP was a coalition partner. This meant that the party had no responsibility for the stagnation in the relations; and all the responsibility belonged to the EU, which could not get rid of its “ulterior motive.” Secondly, the theme of disappointment meant a “transition” within the process leading to the MHP’s construction of a completely negative image of the EU in the future because the EU, which had been disappointing and “offending” Turkey at the beginning, would gradually have an image as if it were deliberately working against Turkey.

By the year 2003, in the MHP’s texts the EU was constructed through an image of “enemy” in an unassailable manner. It was again identified with a historical enemy who had been fought against during the long Ottoman/Turkish history. Included in this perception, the EU was “the ones who want to realize the dreams of [the] Byzantine Empire” (Bahçeli, 2003b).
In the MHP’s discourse, in addition to constructing the EU as the enemy, there was also an increasing elaboration of the enemy’s characteristics. The EU was a compelling and even censorious institution that imposed conditions on Turkey. Furthermore, it had both transparent and ulterior motives: it wanted Turkey “to pay a price,” it approached Turkey with “double standards and exclusion,” it aimed “to control Turkey,” and it wanted “to conquer” Turkey (MHP, 2004a; MHP, 2005; 2006a). This meant that it led Turkey to catastrophe and a “blind alley” (in collaboration with the country’s government). It expected Turkey to enter into “a way whose end and length was uncertain,” it ordered that Turkey “met the instructions in all the reports,” it “extracted compromises from Turkey,” and implied that “there was no return from these compromises.” That is, it ventured directly against Turkey’s independence and its integrity. Finally, the EU appeared as “an imaginary goal” and a “lie” (MHP, 2006a).

THE POSITION OF TURKEY AND THE RELATIONS IN THE DISCOURSE OF THE MHP

The year 1999 signifies a quite critical year in the MHP’s perception of EU-Turkey relations. According to Bahçeli, in the period from 1959 to the 2000s, relations were “bumpy,” “distressed” and full of “disappointment.” “Stagnation,” “unevenness” and “breaks” were the other features of this period. In this duration, a significant “acceleration” could not be brought into the relations. Besides this, Turkey was the party that made sacrifices. It had been given a secondary position on the EU’s orbit. The negation in this narration, basically, served to underline the progress which, it emphasized, had to be realized in 1999. Indeed, according to the narrative of the MHP, in this negativity a change of destiny was realized in 1999.

Thus the beginning of the 2000s was the period when the MHP indicated that Turkey needed to take part in the global institutions: Turkey should not withdraw into itself; it should not be outside the process of globalization. Accordingly; the relations with EU were seen as a tool for Turkey to catch up with the global developments.

In this period, another point in the regard to the MHP attitude toward EU-Turkey relations is worthy of mention. These emphasized that EU-Turkey relations would be carried out alongside Turkey’s relations with its eastern neighbors. It was evidence of the concern of a party that had built its rhetoric for a long time on the opposition to the West/EU. By associating itself with the Turkic Republics, it was trying not to frighten its base.

However, the “affirmative” stance towards the structure of EU-Turkey relations in MHP’s rhetoric was not prolonged. Immediately from 2003 onwards, the rhetoric again acquired a negative character. It emphasized that the membership in the EU that had been transformed to a state policy had not been examined in every phase and that the process could not go beyond the “one sided dependency relation” (Bahçeli, 2003c: 26).

From the middle of the 2000s in the MHP’s discourse, EU-Turkey relations were viewed as essentially a “dependency-satellite relation,” and characterized as “the story of inability,” “deception-distraction process” and even “a buffoonery” (MHP, 2006b: 3, 41). According to Bahçeli, it was “a very dangerous submission process” (2006a).
In the narration of the MHP, the relations with the EU were handled in the framework of the “situation that Turkey falls into/or is thrown into.” The emphasis of the superior and advanced country in the perception of the MHP and its reporting regarding Turkey’s position in its relation with the EU exposed a tension. In the language of the MHP in general, along with that relation, Turkey was portrayed as duped, detained, wronged and subject to a double standard.

However, the transition from 1999 to 2000 prepared a suitable ground for MHP’s narration concerning a Turkey that would become the “leading country.” The year 2000 was characterized as the “closing of an age” (Bahçeli, 2000g), “a historical turning point, the beginning of a new era and an era of change” (Bahçeli, 2000h). The Turkish nation would again find its place that it deserved by fulfilling the requirements of the new age.

In these narrations Turkey emerged as a country that took its power from its history and would carry this power into the new age. Bahçeli (1999a) stated that the MHP’s target of being the leading country was “to construct a strong and active Turkey that had been opened to the world through protecting its national identity and honor.”

The Helsinki Summit in 1999 pointed out an explicit progress in the position of Turkey. Thus, Bahçeli, in this summit, stated that Turkey had been accepted as a candidate to the EU with unanimity and under the same conditions with the other candidate countries (Bahçeli, 2000g). The MHP suggested that “to be the ascendant nation” which was one of the most important components of the MHP’s rhetoric, did not represent a contradiction to Turkey’s candidacy to the EU when it was a part of the coalition government. While the Party indicated that it was in line with the developments required by the new age, it also emphasized that it had not drawn away from its traditional goals (Bahçeli, 2000g).

However, the “affirmative” regard was not prolonged. By the year 2002 Turkey was presented as the country whose sovereignty had been weakened in the process. This narration of the MHP contained the problem of “a concern of honor” rather than a fear of the delegation of authority. In other words, each and every point limiting the national sovereignty was sentimentalized as a loss of honor.

The MHP underlined that Turkey not only in its foreign policies but also in some fields inside its borders would incur losses of sovereignty:

The understanding which is put forward with the Negotiation Framework Document will bring the result of the transfer of all of Turkey’s policies, decisions, and in time relinquish all administration to EU control. A Turkey that EU inspectors and EU missionaries govern was the aim. This situation would be the DÜYUN-U UMUMİ İDARESİ (MHP, 2006b: 29).

In the vocabulary of the MHP it is meaningful to remember Düyun-u Umumi İdaresi, from the Lausanne and Montreux Treaties. Düyun-u Umumi terminated the independence of the Ottoman Empire. The expressions of those treaties emphasized what was gained with the Independence War. Thus, the sovereignty which had been gained against the enemy would be lost with the accession process to the EU.
According to the MHP, the EU expected Turkey to radically change all of its regulations with respect to its national security and to give up the indivisible integrity of the country (MHP, 2005). Besides, the EU demanded that Turkey come to a compromise with the PKK (MHP, 2006b). The MHP emphasized the connection of the EU and the PKK: “What the EU demanded from Turkey persistently in the name of the alignment with the Copenhagen political criteria and the claims of the PKK/KADEK overlap” (Bahçeli, 2002b: 51, 52).

Another point that needs to be mentioned about the perception of the MHP was the enormous glorification of the geographical location of Turkey: “… one of the most problematic and favorite regions of the world is Eurasia, and Turkey takes part in the point of the triangulation of Eurasia” (Bahçeli, 2000f: 26). It emphasized frequently that Turkey was the most important country and the center of the most complicated geography of the earth.

The emphasis on the geo-strategic location of Turkey bore the allusion that its territories were desired by “others.” In fact this glorification referred to the existence of the enemies who sought to splinter other territories.

While the MHP portrayed Turkey’s position even more seriously, in fact it emphasized the need for a rebirth. The Independence War was conspicuous in the speeches of Bahçeli prior to the 2007 elections. The Independence War pointed to the birth of the Turkish Republic. The Turkish people gained their independence in a period when they were faced with the danger of losing their sovereignty. In the rhetoric of the MHP, Turkey was face to face with a new sovereignty/independence problem this time. Thus, it needed a new struggle for rebirth. The country would come to life again as a leader (of course with the leadership of the MHP).

DOMESTIC ATMOSPHERE FOR THE EU IN THE DISCOURSE OF THE MHP

Threat for National Unity

In the discourse of the MHP, one of the most important points that never changed since Türkeş was the definition of the nation. According to this, only one nation existed in Turkey. The whole nation was “brothers and sisters of each other, all belonged to the same religion; all were the community of the same almighty prophet, possessor of the same sacred book, and the same flag, children of the same country, the people of the same state.” With these characteristics “our nation was a sacred whole who did not accept division” (Türkeş, 1979: 17).

According to this, to mention the existence of any ethnic or sectarian difference inside the country was considered dangerous for the unity of the country. Consequently, the problems which were defined on the basis of ethnicity were characterized as incitements of the foreign centers that threatened to break the unity of the country.

In the party’s discourse, although the national unity approach and those who sparked criticism against national unity had changed, the expressions regarding their aims and their methods remained generally the same. It was clear that in the MHP’s narrative from the end of the 1990s and beginning in the 2000s onwards, the institution that threatened the national unity and integrity was the EU. In the
discourse of the MHP, the threat of the EU process towards Turkey’s national unity was part of the “democratization” criteria of the Union.

For the MHP, on the one hand democracy and human rights were exalted as the values which needed to be developed. On the other hand, these values were mentioned with their potential to form a base which would lead the country into difficulties. According to narratives of the MHP, these values were mostly used as symbols, and under these titles other political struggles are carried out. (Bahçeli, 1999c). The EU process paved the way for “detrimental” constitutions that made use of the concepts of democratization and human rights. The democratization criteria had the characteristics of supporting PKK terrorism. In the narration of the party, the support of the EU for the politicization process of the PKK occupied a dominant place.

According to Bahçeli, the EU was confused about the concepts of human rights, terror, democracy and racism. Some of the components inside the EU were unable to make a differentiation between democratization and terrorism (Bahçeli, 2000a). Depending on the subject that was emphasized in the party’s discourse, some of the EU countries protected the terrorist organizations that were the enemies of Turkey and aimed to damage the national unity. The EU used the notion of the human rights as an excuse for this.

The MHP saw another important dimension of the EU process in the threat of breaking down Turkey’s national unity-integrity. According to this, the EU again, by using the democratization and the human rights concepts, supported ethnic discrimination. In the discourse of the Party, the EU’s support for terrorism and the minority question were the two dimensions of breaking the national unity-integrity. However, in the discourse of the Party these two dimensions (minorities and terrorism) were mixed with each other. Subsequently, the matters related to democratization and human rights (the minority question was also discussed under these titles) would easily be associated with terror and division. For instance, basically the issue of minority rights that was discussed concerning the Kurdish question and education in the mother tongue which was included with these rights, took place as the “new game of the terrorist organization” (Bahçeli, 2002a) in the discourse of the MHP. The demands regarding the language, on the other hand, prepared a ground for the identity of “Türkiyelilik” (“Turkeyness”) (Bahçeli, 2005). The Türkiyelilik identity damaged the sense of belonging to one nation. The concept of self-determination that would lead to division was one of the impositions proposed to Turkey in the EU accession process. Besides, it was presented as a cultural right.

The demands of the EU which were bound to divide Turkey covered not only the ethnic minorities but also the religious minorities. Therefore the division of Turkey was discussed not only on the ethnic basis but also on the religion basis in the discourse of the MHP in the EU process.

Bahçeli (2005) noted that the EU asserted that apart from Sunni Islam in Turkey, other religions and sects do not have the freedom of worship. The danger that was imminent here was the possibility of the recognition of the Armenian, Greek and Jewish communities as legal entitlements. The members of these three communities would be entitled to own real estate. The waqfs, legal charitable foundations, belonging to these communities would not be subject to legal supervision. There would be a new administrative regulation for the Armenian community.
“OTHERS” AND THE MHP ITSELF IN THE MHP’S DISCOURSE ON THE EU

The MHP

“The MHP Protecting the Country in a Self-Sacrificing Way.” As indicated in the discourse of the MHP, globalization was on the one hand a process that should be entered to become an active (leading) country. However, on the other hand, the Party’s discourse drew attention to the tension between taking part in the process and avoiding the process.

In the discourse of the MHP, the 1990s, when the globalization process made us feel its effects, was a troubled period for Turkey. Besides the EU issue, the country was passing through a hard period inside and out. As noted before, in the discourse of the MHP the 21st century was seen as a new but a formidable beginning. In this beginning the MHP assigned itself the following mission:

Today the very first historical task for us is to give this sacred country spotlessly to the next generations because this country is a treasure that is consigned to us. Therefore to give this trust with all of its beauties, with its national and moral wealth to next generations is the duty of all of us, the duty of everybody. In truth, this is the fundamental goal and basic duty of the existence of the ülkü ocakları. Therefore, it owns a very almighty, very honorable, very meaningful mission (Bahçeli, 2000b).

Basically, the mission that the MHP assigned itself was the continuation of the positioning style of Turkey in its history. In the discourse of the MHP, “to protect the country in a self-sacrificing way” was one of the leading themes. According to this and thanks to the efforts of the Turkish nationalists, the hard and miserable periods of Turkish history were over. In the darker periods of the Turkish history, the ülkücüler (those who supported the ülkü ocakları) also passed the tests together with the country. (Bahçeli, 2000c). The MHP presented itself as the continuation of the group who started and carried out the Independence War (Bahçeli 1999b). In the MHP’s discourse the Turkish nationalists were constructed as those who were “aware of their national duties and responsibilities” (Bahçeli, 2000c).

The MHP emphasized that, as in any period of history, in the 21st century the MHP would be aware of its mission and responsibilities. The existence of the MHP was identified with the continuation of Turkey. In the party’s discourse, the MHP was portrayed as protecting Turkey from every danger. In this narration, while the country was losing its independence, those who would protect it were the Nationalists and the MHP. The MHP increasingly intensified the theme of “struggling on the point of protecting the country.” This was a struggle which was to be carried out with the leadership of the MHP with a call to the Turkish nation:

The Nationalist Action will resist the darkening of Turkey’s future with all its conditions and with democratic ways; it will do all its duties regarding the struggle to protect Turkey’s unity, honor and pride; and will be the standard-bearer of this blessed struggle…. We invite all our citizens who love their country and nation to take part in this struggle. (MHP, 2004b; Bahçeli, 2007c).
The MHP assigned itself one more mission in the EU process, that of telling the truths to the nation. In the MHP’s discourse, “...[the] EU process to conceal the truths from people” is an important theme (Bahçeli, 2000e). According to Bahçeli, the ability of the people to sufficiently perceive the threats that the country is facing is hindered; blackout campaigns are being performed. (Bahçeli, 2003d: 8; MHP, 2006b). At this point, the MHP constructs itself as a subject that realizes and shows the truths to everybody, and warns everybody as well (Bahçeli, 2003a).

“MHP Supporting the EU Membership ‘With All Its Heart’” / “MHP as Accused of being the Opponent of the EU.” In the EU context, the self-sacrificing narration of the MHP was constructed in various ways. One of the frameworks that the self-sacrificing narration established was the MHP’s “endurance for being presented as the opponent of the EU while it was crying out the truths.”

As indicated before, the MHP’s approach to the EU contained ambiguities and contradictions. The most important break within the Party’s approach to the EU materialized in 1990s onwards. The MHP’s support of the EU membership, especially when it was in the coalition, was one of the points appearing frequently in its discourse. According to Bahçeli, the developments that were achieved during the EU process in a great portion was a result of the MHP’s decisiveness. Compared to the progress that was made in all the 40 years of relations with EU, more progress was made between 1999 and 2002 (Bahçeli, 2002b). However, on the other hand the MHP also expressed “the threats” that had been pointed out before. At this point the MHP stated that to express the national sensitivity led to being perceived as an EU opponent. Therefore, the MHP presented itself frequently as the sincere supporter of the EU. It stated that the Party “cared” and “took the full membership process seriously” before everything else (Bahçeli, 2000c). The EU was shown as one of the basic and leading targets of Turkey and it emphasized that the MHP supported the membership sincerely (Bahçeli, 2002b: 1, 9, 24). According to Bahçeli, the expressions of the MHP regarding the national sensitivities did not express an opposition to the EU. “On the contrary, this was the proof of stating honestly and clearly (the terms of) healthy relations with the EU and the full membership” (Bahçeli, 2002b: 62). The MHP justified its support for the EU as a requirement of the national interests.

The MHP emphasized that it denied the accusations of being an opponent of the EU. In this narrative, the reason for supporting and not being against the EU was due to a consideration of the country’s interests. Indeed, the MHP “took the interests of Turkey before everything” (Bahçeli, 2002b: 124). Its target was “to provide the actualization of Turkey’s integration with Europe by a sincere and self-respecting cooperation process, and to ensure that Turkey take the place in the EU which it deserved as an honorable member” (Bahçeli, 2002b: 10).

This narrative enabled the MHP to characterize itself with qualities of “heroism/boldness,” and advocating the truths at the expense of being presented as the EU opponent. Parallel to this, Bahçeli stated that they would not give up debating the EU’s policies toward Turkey and they would not abandon what they knew as truth due to the malevolent campaigns (Bahçeli, 2002b: 132).

This type of narrative was more explicit in the period when the party was in power. In this period when both the negative characteristics of the EU and the positive ones were mentioned, the MHP especially emphasized that it was not against the EU. However in the party’s discourse, along with the construction of the EU as an enemy, this emphasis became blurred.
“The Others”

“Those Who Underestimate Sensitivities of the MHP” / “Those Who Ease the Job of the Enemy.”
In the party’s discourse there was a focus on a systematic campaign against the MHP concerning the EU. Those who carried out the campaign against the MHP were some of the media, civil society organizations and some political forums. According to Bahçeli, the forums mentioned trying to present the right and legitimate sensitivities of the MHP as unimportant. They underestimated the MHP’s EU approach with metaphors like “the Syndrome of Sevrès” “the paranoia of the division” and “the paranoia of change” (Bahçeli, 2002b: 25). According to Bahçeli these “warped mentalities” were annoyed by the expression of “Turkey’s national honor and interest” that the MHP valued (Bahçeli, 2000e).

In the language of the Party, criticizing the MHP’s approach to the EU was identified with disregarding the national interests. The ideas of actors apart from the MHP within the country were characterized as “mentality shift,” “meaning shift.” Consequently, it implied that the criticisms were too “unhealthy” to take into account.

In the MHP’s discourse those who facilitated the job of the enemy (especially mentioned was the political party in power) basically were presented as “the toys of those who want to realize the dreams of Byzantium” (Bahçeli, 2003e: 19). The story of the interior “traitors” who supported the foreign enemy, in the narration aggravated the country’s condition even more. The emphasis put on the seriousness of the country’s situation signified the urgency for a solution. Consequently, the MHP presented itself as a protector whose predominance was an urgent matter.

“The Submissive Mentality” and “West-admirers.” In the discourse of the MHP the “submissive mentality theme” which accepted the EU membership without questioning Turkey’s situation/losses was used frequently. This submissive mentality caused the EU matter to be discussed on a narrow and shallow ground. (Bahçeli, 2002b: 9, 25; Bahçeli, 2003c: 28-30). Therefore, it impeded the discussion of the matter of the EU in a healthy environment. Consequently, it claimed that the reason why the MHP encountered unjust accusations was this mentality.

The contradiction between the MHP/nationalists who protected the country versus the submissive others was established. Basically, in the MHP’s discourse the emphasis on submission was meaningful. The “submissive mentality” in the MHP’s discourse was employed to evoke the behavior of the last period of Ottoman governments/sultan that led the country to the collapse. Indeed, in the official narration of history, the theme was common that the “Ottoman Sultan submitted the country to the foreigners.” Therefore, the narration of the submissive government versus the nationalists who carried out the independence struggle was reproduced in the EU context. Another striking point was that the MHP did not clearly spell out who was referred to by the submissive mentality in the period when the Party was in power. However, in the AKP period, the one pointed out by “the submissive mentality/milieus” was more obviously the AKP government (Bahçeli, 2003d: 8, 25, 27).

In the MHP’s discourse Western admiration “reached a mentality that had problems with national unity, national identity and national values” (Bahçeli, 2007a). This was a mentality that conflicted with national values; it would become a “love of the foreigner” (Bahçeli, 2007b; Bahçeli, 2007c) (the MHP put the “love of Turkey” -- “Türkiye Sevdalısı -- against this).
The narration shows that the MHP constructed itself as the only protector of the existence and unity of the country. The MHP positioned itself against the “Western admirers.” Therefore, it constructed itself as the subject who also protected the “core culture” of the nation. What was emphasized was that, along with the very existence of the country, the assurance of the moral values of the nation belonged to the MHP.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the MHP’s perception of the EU has varied over the course of time while at the same time contradictory aspects coexisted in this discourse. In the 1970s, the party characterized the EU as “an economic organization” and considered it “harmful” in social and cultural terms. Following the signature of the Customs Union Treaty, the level of negativity increased in the discourse. This completely negative discourse changed as Turkey’s candidacy to the EU membership was realized in 1999 when the MHP was a partner in the coalition government. In the 2000s, the EU’s negative aspects started to be mentioned in addition to its positive aspects. The MHP brought the theme of “disappointment” to the forefront related to the EU before the November 2002 elections. The party which lost its seat in the parliament as a result of the November 2002 elections, adopted a very aggressive discourse related to the EU.

A similar course of events can be seen in the perception of EU-Turkey relations and in the perception related to Turkey’s position in these relations. In the period before the 1999 Helsinki Summit (that is, the period before MHP was a government party), the MHP had stated that the relations were stagnant and negative. A “change in the destiny” was achieved in the year 1999 when the relations had attained an “equitable” nature. However, this discourse did not last for long. With the AKP government, the MHP started to emphasize that the relations turned into a one-sided dependency relationship.

In this picture, Turkey was gradually portrayed in a more passive position. At this point, hurting Turkey’s pride came up as an important theme. MHP often referred to the War of Independence and thus transmitted the message that Turkey was occupied in a sense. There was the danger that such a discourse could be used as a justification for more aggressive nationalisms. Legitimizing the use of violence by the cause of “defending the country” could catalyze the aggressiveness of the masses.

The MHP also combined the influence of the EU process in the domestic atmosphere with a similar theme of “threat.” The EU process threatened two things especially: national integrity and national identity. The EU did that implicitly through supporting terrorism and highlighting ethnic and religious minorities. In the party’s discourse, the matter of ethnic minorities was already considered a ground for terrorism. The issues of terrorism and minorities could not be separated from each other. According to the MHP, highlighting the minorities (especially the ethnic minorities) was a long standing method used by those who want to split Turkey apart. They indicated that a similar method had also been used in the 1970s by the supporters of a foreign ideology (Marxism). By the 2000s this method was applied using concepts like human rights, minority rights, cultural rights and democratization. Therefore, these concepts were always approached with suspicion by the party. It is worrisome that a political party that has decision making authority approaches these concepts which are crucial in the democratization of a country with this kind of a suspicion.

While the MHP presented the state of Turkey-EU relations from a negative perspective, at the same time, it stressed the need for a rescuer. It invited people to take part in this movement to save the
country. It also attributed some characteristics to the ones in the “opposing front.” According to the MHP, these actors had a tendency to surrender. They admired the West; they blocked the development of a healthy debate on the issue, and they carried the issue for debate on a limited and superficial platform.

The worries uttered by the party around the EU framework were related to the points which were discussed in a broader framework by some thinkers (especially hyperglobalists) as being eroded through the globalization process as the transfer of the nation-state’s sovereignty in the political field, and the threat of national cultures in the socio-cultural field. Similar to the discourse of the skeptics, the MHP also stated that, in the globalization era, nation-states and nationalism would not only remain important but would also gain power gradually. Nationalism was seen as the best adhesive within the changing order due to globalization. It was offered as a protective thought within the chaos of the new order. The MHP’s discourse on the EU pointed out a field where the worldwide tension between globalization and nation-state/nationalism was materialized in the context of Turkey.

The party’s discourse on the EU has also been shaped by its traditional structure. The MHP’s themes such as a fear of foreigners, the perception of a continuous threat, a claim of being the real possessor of the state, nation (and its values), the approaches inherent in the party’s discourse throughout its history, can also be observed in the issue of the EU.

Some views show that the MHP experienced a kind of “moderation” since the 1990s. This “change” can be traced in the context of the EU. In this period, the MHP occasionally stated that to be included in the EU was necessary for strategic reasons. However, the actual influence of the mentioned “change” on the discourse was to render it quite complicated and contradictory. As a matter of fact, despite all the negative/fierce approach, the MHP did not express its opposition to Turkey’s EU membership in an open and clear manner. On the contrary, it complained about appearing/being depicted as if it were against the EU. On the one hand, it complained that globalization and the EU served to politicize the minorities. Therefore, there was a phenomenon whose influences should be avoided. On the other hand, it emphasized the necessity of getting involved in this process as a requirement of the new era. This articulation required “compromise” in terms of the points that the party highlighted as “national sensitivities.” Consequently, the party’s discourse exhibited an uncertain and contradictory structure due to staying in between. The MHP tried to overcome this “crisis” by means of highlighting its position as the “leading country” in the process. There would be an involvement in the process but the “greatness” of Turkey would not be compromised. In this way, the MHP transmitted the required message to its voters while at the same time trying to save itself from being regarded backward.

In the dark picture outlined in the MHP’s discourse on the EU, the year 1999 looks like a “salient point.” Only the Helsinki Summit held in the period when the MHP was in power could be assessed as a positive step by the party. On the one hand, the MHP legitimized this on the basis of keeping up with the era; and on the other hand, it explained that the National Programme, signed in the framework of adaptation to the European Union when it was a government party, involved hard conditions.

On the other hand, the party can not be said to adopt a positive discourse related to the EU during the whole period when it was a government party (between 1999 and 2002). Shortly after Turkey’s becoming a candidate country, it again started to portray the EU in negative terms although not very severely. This situation could partly be said to be related to the dynamics of domestic politics and that the MHP’s anti-EU attitude aimed to oppose the Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party, ANAP), one of
the coalition partners which pursued a pro-EU policy in that period. Today as well, the MHP uses the EU issue as a means of opposition to the government party. The pessimism of the picture portrayed related to the EU creates a suitable condition in order to criticize the AKP government that pursues a pro-EU policy.

Of course, accession to the EU has been a painful process for many countries. Every country has gone through debates involving tensions and uncertainties within the framework of their domestic conditions. Turkey has been discussing the issue within the framework of its own historical, political and cultural conditions. It is also useful that the critical points uttered by the MHP have been discussed. However, a discourse focusing on “enemy” and “collaborationist domestic betrayers” can lead to the danger of approaching every call for recognition of identity from this perspective. Moreover, the discourse in question blocks a multi-dimensional argumentation of the issue.

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THE CHANGING NATURE OF TURKISH-SYRIAN RELATIONS: A GLOBALIZATION PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines globalization’s effects on the change in Turkish foreign policy towards Syria in a comparative perspective. Through the 1990s Turkish foreign policy towards Syria was shaped by realist parameters as Turkey relied on an alliance with Israel, and hard power seeking deterrence and coercion. However after Syria submitted to Turkey’s demands and signed a counter-terrorism accord in 1998, the two states engaged in a certain rapprochement process. Most notably, following the Iraq war that promoted common threat perceptions, Turkey put a new face into practice in its foreign policy. In the 2000s, besides its growing military capabilities, Ankara also drew on soft power in its new approach to Syria and introduced many new opportunities for its neighbor through the bilateral cooperation. That carried Turkey’s relationship with Syria to unprecedented levels of collaboration in the political, economic and social realms. As elaborated in the study, the changes in Turkey’s new approach towards Syria resonate with some significant theoretical perspectives in the literature on globalization and foreign policy change. In this respect, Turkey’s new foreign policy approach is suggested as a late response to globalization’s challenge to traditional foreign policy formation as the regional security dynamics in the 1990s impeded a rapprochement. Along with the changes in Turkish foreign policy towards Syria in the first decade of the 2000s, the regional implications of Ankara’s new approach are also discussed. Lastly, the limits of Turkey’s new foreign policy approach are examined touching upon the developments in Syria since the “Arab Spring.”

Key words: Turkish foreign policy, Syria, globalization, structural power, soft power.

TÜRKİYE-SURİYE İLİŞKİLERİNİN DEĞİŞEN DOĞASI: BİR KÜRESELLEŞME PERSPEKTİFİ

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, küreselleşme sürecinin Türkiye’nin Suriye’ye yönelik dış politikasında görülen değişim üzerindeki etkileri, karsılıştırmalı bir perspektifte incelenmektedir. 1990’lar boyunca Suriye’ye yönelik Türk dış politikası realist parametreler tarafından biçimlendirilmiş, Türkiye İsrail ile kurduğu ittifakla beraber çayırma ve zorlamayı amaçlayan sert güce dayalı bir politika izlemiştir. Ancak 1998 yılında Suriye’nin Türk tarafının taleplerini kabul ederek teröre mücadelede işbirliği anlaşması imzalamasının ardından iki ülke belirgin bir yaklaşıma süreci içine girmiştir. Ortak tehdit

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: GLOBALIZATION AND FOREIGN POLICY (ANALYSIS)

Foreign policy can be defined simply as an “area of politics which is directed at the external environment [i.e. beyond the state’s borders] with the objective of influencing that environment and the behavior of other actors within it, in order to pursue interests, values and goals” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008). Foreign policy analysis (FPA), on the other hand, is a distinctive branch of international relations that examines how international actors (primarily state governments and leaders) make choices in shaping and implementing their foreign policies (Garrison et al., 2003: 163). The mainstream foreign policy analysts have always focused primarily on the state, underlining its role in safeguarding the common interest of those living within its boundaries. In this respect, foreign policy is viewed as a separate area of government that ensures the security, defends the fundamental values of the state and seeks to further the domestic well-being of the society (Chong, 2007: 7). Yet, through the 1970s, an alternative pluralist framework developed which emphasized the roles of a wider range of actors other than states, such as the NGOs, multinational corporations (MNCs) and international institutions that operate in relations of interdependency. For pluralists, thus, foreign policy as a site of governmental/bureaucratic action becomes less important than the external relations of those multiple actors (Groom, 2007: 199).

In the coming years, globalization, defined as the “widening, deepening and speeding up of global interconnectedness” (Held et al., 2003: 67), introduced new challenges to the concept of foreign policy. Some scholars even argued that globalization has rendered foreign policy redundant (see Hill, 2003a: 13). As Hill pointed out, there was a simultaneous decline in interest in FPA. The first reason for that was the growth of skepticism about the autonomy of the state and the second one was the argument that ‘foreign’ is no longer a meaningful category since globalization has come to eliminate the distinction between internal and external spheres through the transnational actions of the new actors (Hill, 2003b: 235). Yet, Hill argued that we are far from the point of the demise of the state nor we are welcoming the erased boundaries because both the legal and the socio-cultural framework that differentiate the internal and the external realms continue to exist. Furthermore, transnational actors like the MNCs are not capable of exercising political responsibilities and often turn to their governments to influence their strategies regarding the states’ function in securing their own interest (Hill, 2003b: 236). States, in this new environment, continue to play significant roles in spanning boundaries rather than acting as gatekeepers for the defense of the country as the conventional view suggested (Groom, 2007: 212).

For all these reasons above, foreign policy is likely to maintain its significant role in the global era, but in a transformed manner (Chong, 2007; Garrison et al., 2003; Groom, 2007; Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008). Globalization is, in fact, a process that promotes winners and losers in material terms and this fact forces the states to look out for their interests in the external realm which is getting more complicated. In this respect, the changes in the structure of the global world can be better understood through the ‘global governance’ perspective that emphasizes the emerging “complex formal and informal institutions, mechanisms, relationships and processes between and among states, markets, citizens and organizations, both inter- and non-governmental, through which collective interests on the global plane are articulated, rights and obligations are established, and differences are mediated” (Aras and Crowther, 2009: 10). According to this perspective, states should concern themselves principally with influencing those structures, mechanisms or processes in order to gain a substantial position.
Therefore, in the global age, states should rely on something more than the military capabilities and relational power in order to exert influence on the external space. At this point, some scholars take the concept of ‘structural power’ instrumentally in explaining the new trends in foreign policy making in the global world (see Chong, 2007: 66-69; Holden, 2009; Keukeleire 2002; Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008). In her commonly-cited study on this analytical concept, Strange defines structural power as “the power to shape and determine the structures of the global political economy within which other states, their political institutions, their economic enterprises and (not least) their scientists and other professional people have to operate” (1994: 24-25). Structural power takes its most explicit form when an influential actor designs international regimes of rules and customs that are assumed to govern international economic relations. Yet, as Strange points out, this is only one aspect of structural power for the concept has a broader meaning. In general, it is “the power to decide how things shall be done, the power to shape frameworks within which states relate to each other, relate to people, or relate to corporate enterprises” (Strange, 1994: 25). In this respect, the possessor of structural power is able to change the range of choices open to others by imposing some international legal constraints or through the attractiveness of specific principles in conducting international relations. “The range of options available for an entity could be extended through the development of new opportunities, or restricted through the imposition of costs or risks, rendering some choices more attractive, and others more difficult” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008: 24). In short, structural power focuses on setting the organizing principles and rules for the economy-related and political games being played among international actors (nation states, non-state entities, entrepreneurs etc.). Through altering the context in which actors operate, structural power can lead to fundamental and long-lasting effects in the external realm, an arena that gets further complicated by globalization.

Drawing on Strange’s concept of structural power, Keukeleire and MacNaughtan (2008) then developed the idea of structural foreign policy that may be a significant tool in order to understand the changes that Turkish foreign policy is going through in the face of globalization (see also Keukeleire, 2002: 12-14). Following the Westphalian order of the European states and the Cold War period in the 20th century that featured competition in power politics and bipolar divisions, Keukeleire and MacNaughtan (2008) emphasize the need for reformulation of foreign policy to respond to the challenges of the new world order. As we all observed, the demise of the bipolar international system soon led to instability in the former communist bloc and the Third World. In the transition period, those regions became characterized by the emergence of regional or intra-state conflicts among different ethnic, political and religious groups. According to Keukeleire and MacNaughtan (2008), the rising threats, risks and challenges from those areas were in fact rooted in the resolution of long-standing structures beyond the Western bloc. As the nature of the conflicts and threats changed, the need to create more stable and sustainable structures in those regions moved up in the agenda. That required both new types of military capability and a wider range of non-military instruments. For those authors, the crises in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq all demonstrated that wielding military force alone would not bring lasting peace and long-term stability. Thus it became clear that foreign policy needed to focus more on structures. In this respect, structural foreign policy refers to an approach “which, conducted over the long-term, seeks to influence or shape sustainable political, legal, socio-economic, security and mental structures” that characterize “not only states and interstate relations, but also societies, the position of individuals, relations between states and societies, and the international system as a whole” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008: 25-26).
The idea of structural foreign policy examined by Keukeleire and MacNaughtan (2008) emphasizes some neglected (but significant) aspects of foreign policy in the traditional approach and covers many of them together. In this sense, structural foreign policy differs from the conventional one in its approach to the core concepts of FPA (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008: 19-25). First of all, the former deals with a wide range of actors such as societies, business chambers, multinationals, international organizations, NGOs; and some other governmental actors apart from foreign and defense ministries (like ministries of finance and the interior) because, in order to manage changes in many levels of foreign relations including the political, economic and social realms, multiple governmental and non-state actors should be involved in the process. Secondly, in terms of interests and objectives, instead of formulating a narrow definition of national interest, structural foreign policy regards promoting the basic interests of other states and non-state actors. Since the global context of the 21st century increases mutual dependence and vulnerability, to regard the collective and the other’s interests reflects a healthy choice for securing far-sighted self interest. Thirdly, a structural foreign policy defines security in a broader sense that goes beyond a national-territorial security concept and deals with threats arising from the global, societal and individual levels. On the other hand, in regard to a bilateral relationship between particular states, structural foreign policy calls for a desecuritization of the main issues in the conflict. This means a process in which security problems are gradually removed from the security agenda and placed on the political agenda that deals with everyday issues. Thus, desecuritization would bring more mutual confidence through which a ground for comprehensive dialogue can be established that would provide structural changes for establishing cooperative relationships. This prospect has been applied in the case under investigation here, namely the desecuritization of the Hatay and the water problems.

Fourthly, structural foreign policy embraces the argument that, though being essential in the global age, military and diplomatic powers/instruments remain insufficient if they are not complemented by economic and financial powers/instruments. Accordingly, hard power must be complemented by soft power. Contrary to hard power that is based on coercion, soft power reflects the ability to influence others’ behaviors through attraction. It is mostly based on the attractiveness of an entity’s culture, values, political ideals and policies. Soft power is enhanced when these are seen to be legitimate (Nye, 2004: 256). Structural changes are often manipulated by the combination of hard and soft power, i.e. carrots and sticks together. Last, but not the least, conventional and structural foreign policies differ in their foci. While the former seems to be actor-, conflict- and event-oriented, the latter is rather process-, structure- and context-oriented (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008: 24). In other words, while traditional foreign policy focuses on managing other actors and conflicts in terms of a particular interest, structural approach looks for the reasons of the conflicts in the deeper political, economic, cultural structures and tries to reshape them in order to manage the threats and increase the opportunities. However it is important to note that Keukeleire and MacNaughtan (2008) suggest that conventional and structural foreign policies are not contradictory but are rather mutually complementary. The authors give the historical progress in the Balkans as an example, emphasizing that a structural approach has been possible only after there were successful conventional foreign policy actions that brought stability through military operations and diplomatic initiatives. On the other hand, the authors argue that the enduring stability could only be guaranteed through the creation of a comprehensive set of new structures (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008: 26-27). In our case too, a new approach towards Syria was developed after a military threat that compelled Damascus to give up supporting the PKK. At this point, a successful structural approach does not ignore hard security issues; it always needs to focus comprehensively on various relevant structures (e.g. political,
legal, social, economic and security structures) together (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2010: 5). Ignoring one of these aspects may result in its failure.

Before concluding this section, Nimet Beriker-Atiyas’s (2001) study that exposes the needs for change in foreign policy understanding of Turkey in the post-Cold War context has to be elaborated here, as the model she proposed is of significance in her focus specifically on Turkey’s conditions. Beriker-Atiyas’s (2001) article “The New World, Old Approaches” criticizes Turkish foreign policy which clearly reflects the realist pattern of behavior. For her, this policy contrasts with the new dynamics of the increasingly globalized world after the end of bipolarity. The author defines Turkish foreign policy as re-active and defensive in nature, affected mostly by balance of power considerations that have called for reliance on military and economic power. Through the 1990s, Turkish foreign policy was limited to the aim of defending the state’s constant stances against the problematical cases using classic diplomatic tools. Turkish governments embraced the idea that states are passive units affected by the events within the international environment. In this sense foreign policy was totally equated with national defense policy. Instead of this kind of an ‘old approach’ reminiscent of the Cold War period, Beriker-Atiyas proposes another pro-active type of foreign policy that actively seeks reshaping the political, economic, social procedures/environments in the periphery of Turkey as these regions are going through a transformation that boosts transnational interdependency and global interconnectedness. Beriker-Atiyas suggests that in the 21st century Turkey should define its national interests according to the shifting international conditions rather than in a static sense oriented in response to specific threats. Accordingly Turkey should contribute to the peaceful resolution of regional problems and try to enforce the principles of co-existence regarding common benefits in its neighborhood in order to secure its wider national interest (Beriker-Atiyas, 2001: 53). Beriker-Atiyas (2001) also suggests that the instruments for managing these tasks are soft power, preventive and complementary diplomacy and mediation activities. For the author, the state is not the only actor in serving these foreign policy objectives; rather it should cooperate with other politically and economically salient actors to create a synergy.

All these theoretical perspectives examined above have the common emphasis that foreign policy should go beyond the limitations of the realist logic and the state-centric view of international relations and instead deal with the new political, economic and social processes in global dynamism in which multiple actors operate. Yet this does not mean that those theoretical views are constructed in contrast to the main assumptions in the realist theory of international relations. The authors’ emphasis on soft and structural power also does not imply that hard power is an obsolete instrument in dealing with international crises. As explicitly suggested in the study on structural foreign policy, the security dimension is essential to build the ground for structural change and sometimes can be managed only through the conventional foreign policy utilizing hard power (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008: 26-27, see also Keukeleire, 2002: 21-22). Turning to our case, in 2011 Turkish-Syrian relations again started to be dominated by security issues due to the Assad government’s armed suppression of civil protests that emerged as repercussions of the “Arab Spring.” (2) Today, the necessary international consensus for military measurements regarding the Syrian crisis has not entirely come about. However, the possibility of a multilateral military operation under the UN mandate or through the NATO alliance pushes Turkey to undertake serious commitments in managing the process as a neighbor state and active player in regional politics. In this respect, even if the military option would be laid aside, Turkey may engage in certain coercive methods such as economic sanctions, arms embargo or a campaign of political isolation as some other ways to exercise hard power. These observations, along with the
experiences in the case of Libya, prove that the conventional methods and hard power instruments are not yet exhausted in the new world order.

Through the theoretical perspectives represented above, this paper now will examine the Turkish foreign policy change towards Syria in the last years. The changes in relations are suggested as a late response to the challenges of globalization to conventional foreign policy understanding. Turkey’s inability to respond earlier, on the other hand, resulted from the existence of some unresolved hard security problems and regional dynamics which impeded a rapprochement between the two states in the global era. In order to build a comparative perspective, those problems and dynamics have to be underlined first.

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE WEIGHT OF CHRONIC PROBLEMS AND BIPOLAR RIVALRY**

Turks and Syrians share a long history as they lived together for almost four centuries under the Ottoman Empire. But this common history did not result in close partnership after the Turkish Republic and Syria were born. Both Arab nationalists and Turks conceptualized their identity as otherness. For the Arab nationalists, the Ottoman period was defined as the first part of double colonialism which denied their own national and economic development. On the other hand, the Turkish Republic’s new state elite associated the Arab narrative with ‘deep-rooted suspicion’ and ‘betrayal,’ pointing to the Arab community’s collaboration with Western powers in the disintegration process of the Empire (Jung, 2005). After 1923, the Turkish Republic, with a clear Western orientation, followed a non-interventionist and hands-off approach to the Middle East which it saw as a backward zone of conflict. One exception became the incorporation of Hatay (Alexandretta) in 1939, when Syria was forced by France to give the province to Turkey. Syria never accepted the legitimacy of this unification and regarded it as another manifestation of Turkish colonialism that aimed to divide the “historical Syria” (Altunışık, 2010: 151). Even today, the Hatay issue is alive in Syrian popular culture, and the province is shown as a part of the country in the official maps.

During the Cold War, Turkey and Syria allied themselves with rival blocs. After joining NATO, Turkey harmonized its policy with the Alliance and sought to incorporate the regional states into the Western defense system against the increasing influence of the Soviet Union. However, this was done at the expense of relations with those states (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2003: 115). Turkey embraced the Western oriented, democratic Israel as a natural ally in the region. But the Arab states such as Egypt and Syria maneuvered towards the Soviet Union in order to provide support in their struggle against Israel’s influence in the Middle East. In 1955 when Turkey introduced the Baghdad Pact that included Great Britain, Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan as members, Egypt and Syria perceived it as "a new instrument of Western imperialism, which was designed to recolonize the Arab world” (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2003: 119). In a counter move, Syria appealed to Egypt and signed a military agreement with it for a unified command in October, 1955. Consequently, Turkey was forced to enter into a secret alliance with Israel, namely the Phantom Pact in the same year to balance the threat on its borders (Walker, 2006: 71). The cold war rivalry, thus, drew Turkey and Syria into a hostility that was enforced by political, ideological and identity differences.

Another issue which is known as the water dispute has also been a determining factor in the problematic relations. In the 1970s and 1980s, Turkey began to build a series of dams and irrigation systems with
the South Anatolia Project (GAP) on the Euphrates River which rises in Turkey and flows through
Syria and Iraq. Damascus protested Turkey’s controlling of the Euphrates’ water claiming that it would
decrease the amount and the quality of water flowing towards Syria. In countering the GAP project,
Syria allied with Iraq, the other country in the river’s basin, and also took the issue to the agenda of the
Arab League meetings in order to turn the water problem into a Pan-Arab issue. Throughout the 1980s
and 1990s, besides the other problems, Syria provided sanctuary to the PKK, the ASALA (Armenian
Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia) and the Turkish radical left (Dev-Sol). The Turkish side
often coupled it to the water problem (Altunışık and Tür, 2006; Pamukçu, 2004). This view was
symbolized in a statement by the former Foreign Minister Deniz Baykal in 1995 who suggested “Syria
as a neighbor country should stop being the headquarters of a terrorist organization. It can be thought
that hands with the blood of terror could be washed with more ‘water.’ However, Turkey will never
bargain the use of terror for water” (Baykal, in Tür, 2010: 164). After the 1980 military coup in
Turkey, the leaders of the PKK escaped to Syria. The PKK militants found shelter in Syria and the
Syrian dominated Bekaa Valley in Lebanon, while the PKK’s head, Abdullah Öcalan, used Damascus
as his base. That situation promoted the most immediate threat to Turkey’s security in the 1990s.

In fact, in the late 1980s and early 1990s there was a major change in the type of foreign policy
understanding in Turkey under the leadership of the President Turgut Özal. Drawing on an understanding
of the new international conjuncture shaped by globalization, Özal tried to reformulate the economic
policy of Turkey and, accordingly, the foreign policy. As the Turkish economy was transformed into
an export-oriented model within the liberalization process, Turkey encouraged its businessmen and
entrepreneurs to seek foreign trade relations and investments. Turgut Özal viewed non-governmental
actors (business chambers, NGOs, ethnic, religious groups etc.) as significant actors in foreign policy
in order to improve partnerships with other states and societies (Laçiner, 2009). In the Özal period
international trade was boosted especially between the former socialist world and Turkey, as the latter
played an active role in integrating the region into the global economic system. Ankara further tried
to restructure political, economic, social and cultural environments in the Central Asian Turkic World
through the projects of the TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)
and sought some kind of economic and political union with those states (Aydın, 2003). However,
as Kirişci, Tocci and Walker (2010: 20) suggest, the new pattern of foreign policy did not manage
to expand vis-à-vis the Middle East because Arab leaders remained lukewarm to the Özal leadership
approach, in spite of the latter’s intentions to develop closer relations with the region as well. The
authors specify the reasons as trade sanctions on Iraq, souring relations with Egypt and the growing
terrorism in southeast Anatolia that was supported mainly by Syria. In order to resolve the bilateral
problems, Ankara signed a security protocol with Syria in 1987 that called for obstructing “groups
engaged in destructive activities directed against one another on their own territory” and promised to
ensure a specific amount of water from the Euphrates (James and Özdamar, 2009). Nevertheless, it
did not bring a solution to the problem as Syria denied that Öcalan was in Damascus and continued
to support the PKK. Therefore the ongoing instability in the Middle East and the terrorism problem
became the main issues shaping the relationship between Turkey and Syria through the 1990s.

TURKEY AND SYRIA IN THE 1990’S

The end of the Cold War resulted in the emergence of many uncertainties with raising inter-state and
ethnic conflicts in the periphery of Turkey. Contrary to the prospects of globalization in a foreign
policy change, Ankara primarily had to deal with security problems in the traditional sense. Although
Turkey and Syria were together in supporting the international coalition forces against Saddam’s Iraq in the First Gulf War, a fact that reflects the pragmatic move of Damascus in the new conjuncture, this ad-hoc alignment did not bring a rapprochement in the realm of security. The vacuum of authority in Northern Iraq after the war only increased the PKK’s logistical advantages, while the terrorist organization gained considerable political-financial support from Turkey’s neighbors that Ankara had problems with, such as Syria and Iran.

Besides continuing to support the PKK, Syria also appealed to external balancing acts against Turkey in the 1990s. The Hafez al-Assad regime turned to new allies, namely to Armenia and Greece and concluded a military partnership with the latter in 1995 that permitted the Greek air force to land at Syrian air bases. On the other hand, Moscow, having hosted the third meeting of the “Kurdish Parliament in Exile,” also signed a military and technical cooperation agreement with Greece in the same year, and approached Iran with a plan to build a strategic partnership. (Aykan, 1999). The developments in Turkey’s new environment pushed Ankara to perceive that it had been surrounded by hostile alignments. Most strikingly, Şükrü Elekdağ, former Turkish ambassador to Washington, suggested that in 1996 Turkey’s defense strategy must be prepared for “two and a half wars,” indicating the full scale war potential against Syria and Greece and the reduced-scale military struggle against the PKK insurgency (Elekdağ, in Kösebalaban, 2010: 45). Under these conditions, Turkish foreign policy was formulated on the realist pattern of behavior. Specifically, Turkey turned to Israel, an available partner in 1996, to balance the external threats in its vicinity in keeping with the classical neorealist theory on a balance-of-threat alliance formation (Walt, 1987). In February 1996, Turkey and Israel concluded the “Military Training and Cooperation Agreement” with provisions for “the exchange of military information and joint military training, including naval access to the ports of both countries and Israeli air force training flights from Turkish bases over Turkish territory” (Martin, 2004: 182). Although the Turkish side pointed out that the military cooperation was not directed at the third parties, some official statements suggested the existence of expectations concerning “the deterrence of Syria from supporting the PKK and the Arab countries from supporting Syria” (Aykan, 1999: 176). Syrian Vice President, Khaddam, on the other side, described the military partnership as “the greatest threat to the Arabs since 1948,” referring to the establishment of the State of Israel (Khaddam, in Bengio and Özcan, 2000: 3).

As Aykan (1999) suggests, in the 1990s, Syrian support for the PKK was far stronger than other foreign governments, as the state hosted its headquarters and training camps, helped recruit personnel and exerted influence on the PKK strategy and tactics. Following the 1987 protocol that had failed to generate the expected results, Turkey also signed agreements with Damascus regarding cooperation against terrorism in 1992 and 1993. However those agreements, likewise, did not terminate the PKK’s activities in Syria (James and Özdamar, 2009). In 1996, Turkey suspended all official contacts with Syria, and touched upon Article 51 of the UN Charter citing Turkey’s right to military self-defense against this de-facto aggression. In October 1998 Turkey further threatened the use of force against Syrian support for the PKK and deployed 10,000 troops on its Syrian border. This intimidation with ‘hard power’ tactics finally forced Damascus to submit to the Turkish demands. The Syrian President, Hafez al-Assad, sent word to Ankara that the government had already begun arresting the PKK militants and would expel them along with Öcalan from Syria. The crisis ended when the Turkish side confirmed that Öcalan had been expelled from Syria. Then on October 20, 1998 the Adana Accord on the cooperation in counter-terrorism was signed between Ankara and Damascus (Sezgin, 2002: 49-50). Ultimately this agreement produced a Syrian compliance with all of Turkey’s demands, while the
latter gave nothing in return. This development opened the way for the desecuritization of the water and Hatay issues, as Syria gave up using the terrorism card against Turkey.

In sum, during the 1990s, Turkish foreign policy towards Syria was shaped by the realist principles. As Beriker-Atiyas (2001) suggests, Turkey appealed to hard power and alliance politics regarding the balance of power to deal with its problems with Syria. It handled itself reactively against the developments in its neighborhood and therefore could not concentrate on reshaping the political, economic and social processes in the region. Yet, Ankara’s foreign policy implementation in the first decade after the Cold War was not in stark contrast to the foreign policy behavior of other regional and great powers. In this transition period with rising threats and conflicts, bringing stability in the Balkans and Caucasus became possible only through the conventional foreign policy that used diplomacy and military power. In the Balkans, the role of multilateral peacekeeping forces and the diplomatic efforts by the US and its partners were crucial. On the other hand, reconstruction in the Caucasus through the international projects waited until 1994 when the ethnic conflicts were frozen by the Russian protectorate. Accordingly, in the Middle East the situation was also troubled and complicated in the aftermath of the First Gulf War. The US dual containment policy over Iraq and Iran and the system of counter alliances among regional states (e.g. Arabs vs. Israel, Turkey vs. Syria and Iran), prevented the Western states and regional actors from using structural and soft power instruments. In this context, the agenda of Turkey-Syria relations was dominated by hard security issues. It was not likely that Turkey would establish economic and social ties of cooperation with Damascus in that period when even diplomatic contacts reached a deadlock. Therefore, an urgent solution to the security problem with Syria through hard power emerged as a rational approach, considering the weaker position of Damascus against Turkey in terms of military capabilities that cut Syria’s options when facing the military threat. For all these reasons above, the change in the Turkish approach to Syria in line with a globalization perspective waited for the resolution of the terrorism problem through a conventional approach and for other revisions in Middle Eastern affairs.

THE AFTERMATH OF 1998 CRISIS: CHANGING REGIONAL DYNAMICS

The cessation of Syrian support to PKK terrorism provided a rapprochement between Ankara and Damascus in the security realm. Towards the 2000s, as provided for in the framework of Adana agreement, regular meetings were held by the Joint Security Committee comprised of military officials from both sides (Altunışık and Tür, 2006: 238). In June 2000, the Turkish President Sezer’s attendance at Hafiz al-Assad’s funeral ceremony was also seen by some scholars as a historic step towards ameliorating the relations (Ari and Prinççi, 2010; Özer, 2007). In the face of the Iraq war, this rapprochement process gained some other dimensions. The Turkish Parliament’s rejection on March 1, 2003 of support for the US war efforts in Iraq brought Turkey and Syria closer together, as the latter also chose to stand against the US operation. At a meeting in Istanbul in 2003 organized by Turkey, Syria attended along with Iraq’s other neighbors, from which came a declaration exposing their common aim at heading off the US led operation (Fuller, 2008: 71). Additionally, the Second Gulf War increased the perception of a threat common to Turkey and Syria related to the future of Iraq and the increasing Kurdish autonomy in the North. In 2004, terrorist activities in the southeast of Turkey again escalated. At the same time, Syria was also worried about the repercussions of the developments in Iraq on its own Kurdish population (roughly 1.7 million, 9% of the total Syrians). As Altunışık and Tür suggest, riots in March 2005 in the Kurdish-populated areas of Syria reinforced such anxieties (2006: 241). Therefore Syria backed Turkey’s announcements that Ankara was against the
establishment of a Kurdish state, with Syrian President Bashar Assad emphasizing that “a Kurdish state would violate our red line too” (Altunışık and Tür, 2006: 241). In the early 2000s anti-Americanism in Turkish public opinion was growing, while Ankara was disappointed with Washington’s and Israel’s increasing ties to Kurdish actors in Iraq. These developments led to a political and societal consensus to strengthen Turkey’s ties to the regional states and its neighbors (see Altunışık and Tür, 2006: 239-244).

In the 2000s, the Bush government’s unilateral strategy based on military power created a vacuum for soft power projections in the Middle East since Washington did not manage to transform the region into a liberal, peaceful zone but, rather, further complicated the situation. As a result, the development in relations between Turkey and Syria created the opportunity for the former to utilize ‘soft power,’ in contributing to Syria’s economic and political transformation. After 9/11, Syria was on the US list of the states sponsoring terrorism. Washington put great pressure on Damascus for providing an international isolation in order to change the Syrian regional strategy. The aim was to sever the ties between Syria and the Iraqi radical groups as well as Syria’s relations with Hezbollah in Lebanon. To achieve this, even a change in Syria’s regime through a military operation appeared to be an option for the US (Orhan, 2009). The Western world and the traditional allies of Syria like Russia and France supported this international campaign of isolation. However Turkey took a different stance. In December 2004, when the international campaign that aimed at forcing Syria to withdraw its military presence from Lebanon was in its peak, the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, visited Damascus (Ayhan, 2009). Furthermore, the Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer visited Syria in February 2005 following the assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri for which Syria was charged. Sezer’s visit to Damascus took place against all the warnings and protests by the US that called for Turkey’s abiding by the decisions of the international community on sanctions against Syria. During these visits and with other diplomatic communications, Turkish officials emphasized Damascus’s “need for domestic reform, for the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon (which took place) and for the need to ensure that international jihadists do not enter Iraq from Syrian territory” (Fuller, 2008: 73). This attitude of Turkey and the constructive dialogue between the two were crucial as Syria looked for relations with the regional states to break the international isolation. Talking about this period, Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Ammura suggested that “Syrians would not forget Turkish support given in rough times” (Ammura, in Arı and Prinççi, 2010: 9).

It is also interesting to note, as Altunışık and Tür suggest, during the 1990s it was Turkey that advocated pressuring Syria, and therefore criticized the Clinton administration for being too accommodating towards Damascus. However after solving the PKK problem with Syria, Turkey turned to a constructive-engagement approach, while the Bush administration adopted a tougher stance towards the country (Altunışık and Tür, 2006: 243). In this period, Turkey served for Syria as a door to Europe for economic and trade relations, while Turkey’s policy impeded radicalization of Damascus’s strategies and its maneuvering towards Iran (Ayhan, 2009: 31). In the new regional conditions, therefore, Turkey’s attractiveness increased greatly in the perspective of the Syrian regime. That consequently fed Ankara’s soft power capacity regarding the relations with Syria, and set the opportunity for building more cooperative bilateral relations between the two states.

In sum, after the Iraq war the distribution of regional threats by and large changed and that removed most of the motivations for Turkey and Syria to engage in counter-balancing actions against each other. In the new conjuncture, against the US pressure on Turkey regarding its relations with the
Syrian regime, Ankara sought a more independent role and pursued its own developing interests in its neighborhood. Turkey also tried to harmonize its national objectives with the global processes and aimed for Syria’s integration into the world economic system. After setting the ground for cooperation in the security realm using classical diplomatic tools, the next step would be carrying the cooperation to economic-social spheres to enforce a sustainable partnership between the two countries.

TURKEY’S NEW FOREIGN POLICY APPROACH TOWARDS SYRIA (2004-2010)7

As an international relations academician and the current Foreign Minister of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu’s study (2001) on the Strategic Depth doctrine represents his understanding of the need for a revision of Turkey’s foreign policy in the globalization era. Therefore, some quotation from his book, one that is highly influential in the Justice and Development Party (AKP) Government’s foreign policy, seems to be necessary here. After the end of the Cold War, Davutoğlu suggested that the dynamism in the transformation of international affairs increased greatly, and this fact challenged the static concept of the international system and, accordingly, the state’s position. He posited that Turkey should move the potential of its own dynamism into the melting pot of international dynamism in order to enforce its power parameters (Davutoğlu, 2001: 10-11). To build a theoretical guide for managing this task, Davutoğlu also touched upon the changes in the global environment whereby non-governmental agents increase their role in national strategies due to global-scaled interdependency and regional integration processes. Because the emerging MNCs, NGOs and international institutions among others have decreased the state’s control in national independent economy, the states now have to harmonize their locally scaled micro strategies with macro-strategies reaching the global scale in regard to the relationship among these actors (Davutoğlu, 2001: 25). Davutoğlu also indicated the area where Turkey should focus principally as the ‘near land basin’ including the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caucasus. According to his doctrine, Turkey should concern itself with the cultural and political parameters and the relations of interdependency in this area in order to build an internationally substantial position there (Davutoğlu, 2001: 118).

In the Middle Eastern politics, Davutoğlu criticized the previous approach that drew on alliance politics which sought to balance the problematic neighbors with other states. For him, if Turkey continued to have crises with its neighbors it would never be able to improve regional or global strategies. The current Foreign Minister has suggested that there is no alternative alliance strategy that would overcome the costs of damages brought by constant conflicts with Iraq, Iran and Syria. He has further argued that the third parties in the alliances, such as Israel and Greece (in the case of the crisis with Syria), tend to exploit the crisis in order to increase the dependency of the conflicting sides on their own strategies (Davutoğlu, 2001: 451). Instead, Davutoğlu suggested that to overcome the tensions with its neighbors Turkey should expand the ground for relationships to economic and cultural levels that intensify societal interactions, going beyond the difficult and thorny processes between bureaucrats and politicians. For Davutoğlu, Turkey should lead the efforts in regional security and cooperation, while trying to enforce the relations of cultural-economic interdependency, specifically in the fields where Turkey feels relatively stronger (2001: 144-145).

Therefore, regarding the relations with Syria, Davutoğlu portrayed the offers such as “covering all the border with electronic security apparatuses” as irrational. Rather, he recommended economic and cultural mechanisms of cooperation like the projects to facilitate transportation, border trade, labor
and capital flow that tend to decrease the political tensions based on the political elite’s perceptions in the Middle Eastern autocratic states. For example, Davutoğlu (2001: 145-146) proposed that integrating the Halep-centered Northern Syrian economy into the booming industry in Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş would seem to be a rational way towards building a sustainable partnership with Syria.

In foreign policy implementation, the AKP government took important steps towards realizing these objectives. In 2004, during Prime Minister Erdoğan’s visit to Damascus, Turkey signed a free trade agreement with Syria to remove custom taxations and quotas gradually (Özer, 2007: 25). From then on, trade relations between the two states increased dramatically. Between 2000 and 2008, the bilateral trade volume grew from $0.72 billion to $1.8 billion (Tür, 2010). Turkey also encouraged its entrepreneurs to invest directly in Syria. Between 2005 and 2007 alone, Syrian authorities have approved more than thirty Turkish investment projects in the country, with a total value of over $150 million (Gordon and Taşpınar, 2008: 58). In addition to that, the Turkish-Syrian Business Council was established that aimed at exploring the possibilities of expanding economic relations between the two countries, and entrepreneurs from both sides have begun to meet in the joint Turkey-Syria Economic Forum since 2008 (Altunışık, 2010: 152). In this sense, the energy sector became an essential area of cooperation as the two countries have established a joint company for oil exploration, and the Turkish Petroleum International Company (TPIC) began importing and exporting various oil products along with crude oil since 2008 (Ari and Prinççi, 2010: 10). In the new period, non-governmental actors and business associations played a crucial role in developing partnership between Turkey and Syria such as the Turkish Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK), the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen’s Association (MUSIAD), the Turkish Exporters Assembly (TIM) and the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association (TUSIAD). They lobbied the Turkish government, and their economic interests in the neighbor states like Syria shaped Turkey’s approach to the foreign policy questions (Kirişci et al., 2010: 11).

In September 2009, two other important steps, the lifting of visa requirements and the decision to form a High Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC), were taken towards further economic integration and cooperation between the two states. Regarding lifting the visas, Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu said that “we are lifting the borders which were artificially put and becoming the people of one hinterland. We are turning the economic cooperation to an economic unity. We are hoping that this will be a model for all our neighbors” (Davutoğlu, in Tür, 2010: 173). The formation of the HLSCC, on the other hand, provided a concrete mechanism that sought further cooperation in many areas. The Council decided to meet at least once a year with its high level members as the Prime Ministers and other important government officials. In addition to that, within the mechanism the ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs, Energy, Trade, Public Works, Defense, Interior Affairs and Transportation from both sides have been scheduled to meet at least twice every year with the aim at building common action plans (Tür, 2010: 174). In the first meeting of the cabinet members (September 13, 2009), it was decided to work on 40 protocols and agreements in the political, economic and social realm. In the second meeting of the Council in December 2010, another 11 agreements were signed and both sides agreed on many documents about cooperation in a wide range of areas such as social service, production and distribution of electric energy, housing, child welfare, protection of the environment and insurance policies (Coşkun, 2011). Therefore the HLSCC has served as a mechanism for both sides to manipulate economic and social structural changes in the other country. Maybe more importantly, the HLSCC and other institutional arrangements that regulate and facilitate the
cooperation among the non-state actors and entrepreneurs from both sides (e.g. free trade agreement, joint business council and economic forum) have worked to change the very structure of Turkish-Syrian relations. After putting the new face of foreign policy into force, Turkey introduced many new opportunities and extended the range of choices open to Syria that favored a cooperation vs. a conflict-ridden relationship as being in Strange’s (1994: 31) idea of exercising structural power. Those steps towards cooperation also gave Turkey the power to shape and redirect the ties of interdependency, along with the activities of a wider range of non-state economic actors. Furthermore, Turkey’s new foreign policy enhanced its soft power capability since the state began to be perceived as a benign regional power in the Middle Eastern states.

All these developments were accompanied by increasing security cooperation between Ankara and Damascus. In April 2009, Turkey and Syria concluded a technical military cooperation agreement to provide collaboration between the national defense industries. Furthermore, the first joint military exercise in the history of two sides was staged on April 27, 2009 (Ari and Prinççi, 2010: 11). It was also interesting to see that desecuritization of the Hatay issue and the water dispute became gradually evident within this rapprochement period in accordance with Davutoğlu’s prospects in his Strategic Depth doctrine. As Fuller suggested, in Erdoğan’s visit to Damascus in 2004, the two sides announced that there was no border problem between the two (Fuller, 2008: 180). On the other hand, the free trade agreement signed in Damascus also included provisions for mutual recognition of the borderlines (Hürriyet, 2005). However, for the eventual resolution of the problem, Assad stressed that they would need time to explain this to the Syrian people. From then on, the issue was dropped from the official lexicon, although the Hatay continued to be shown as a part of Syria on many Syrian maps (Altuğ, 2010: 153). The water dispute has also been de-linked from the security and sovereignty matters and turned into more of a technical issue that has to be dealt with through cooperation and political dialogue. In 2004, Turkey agreed to ensure the flow of more water from the Euphrates into Syria. What is more interesting to note is that the two states agreed on building a joint dam at the Turkish-Syrian border over the Asi (Orontes) River in the December 2009 meeting of the HLSCC (Mağden, 2011). The foundation of that “Asi Friendship Dam” was laid in February 6, 2011. In this ceremony, Erdoğan indicated other targets for furthering cooperation with Syria such as establishing a common bank, building a common custom border gate in Nusaybin and connecting networks of natural gas distribution between Turkey and Syria (Star, 2011).

Regarding all these efforts in Turkey’s new approach, it can be obviously argued that since 2004 Turkey has changed from dealing with its neighbor in the traditional sense, and instead has sought a strategic cooperation through restructuring the ground for economic and social relationships between the two sides. In fact, Turkey’s new foreign policy, guided conspicuously by the Strategic Depth doctrine, resonates with the structural foreign policy’s approach to the core concepts of the FPA (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008). First of all, it deals with a wide range of governmental (e.g. ministries of finance and interior) and non-governmental actors like business chambers and societies. Turkey’s new approach also takes into account the other side’s interest and calls for a desecuritization of the main problems. Furthermore, while Turkey has drawn on structural and soft power in its relations with Syria in the recent years, Ankara’s policy has become ‘context-’ and ‘structure-’ oriented in line with the idea of a structural foreign policy, contrary to the strategy in 1990s that was driven by ‘events’ and ‘crises.’ Observing these changes, one can also argue that Turkey’s regional policy now aims at restructuring the whole Middle Eastern neighborhood into a liberal-peaceful zone. Turkey’s changing foreign policy approach has already expanded towards its other neighbors. Ankara has also concluded agreements
with Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan to establish HLSCCs with them. However, designating Turkey’s policy as a comprehensive structural foreign policy may still be interpreted as an overstated argument that is likely to attract academic criticism because the concept was created by Keukeleire and MacNaughtan regarding the EU’s foreign policy making. The EU’s structural foreign policy exerts influence at any level of the structures, including the legal systems and the public administration besides the economic and social realms through the attractiveness of a full membership status and the conditionality in the process of accession that is spelled out in certain official documents. Therefore, Turkey’s structural power is more limited and seems not to be as influential as the one the EU holds especially towards the states with strong membership prospects. These limits in Turkey’s new approach are examined in the next section. However it can be easily argued that Turkey’s new foreign policy towards Syria could embrace the spirit of Beriker-Atiyas’s article (2001). In accordance with her prospects, while seeking to create new procedures in its near environment, Turkey has also embraced the instruments of complementary diplomacy and mediation.

Although this paper has focused on Turkey’s cooperation with Syria that has culminated after 2004, during this period Turkey has also sought ways to improve relations with all the actors in the region. This fact has transformed Turkey into a special country in the region that could play a mediation role between Israel and the Arab world. Specifically after the Lebanese war of 2006 the need to restart the Israeli-Syrian peace talks became evident since Syria was looking to overcome the international isolation by showing the West that it could be a serious partner in the peace efforts in the region, at the same time Israel had interests in breaking the Syria-Iran-Hezbollah link (Kirişçi et al., 2010: 9). Turkey was ready to initiate a mediation process to enforce its peace building vision in the region. Syria proposed indirect talks using Turkish mediation in 2007. The Israeli President Olmert accepted the offer and, in February 2008, a secret mini-conference took place in Istanbul to set the framework of the negotiations and its content. Five rounds of meetings were organized in the following period. However, four days after the last Istanbul meeting, while Ankara was waiting for message exchange from both sides and an explanation of the discussions, Israel began its Gaza offensive. (Altunışık, 2010: 159). The process was broken and the Turkish side felt betrayed. It was followed by rising tensions between Turkey and Israel. The first stage in the crisis became the Davos meeting in January 2009 in which Erdoğan clashed with the Israeli President Peres; it was followed by some other events such as the ‘lower-level sofa crisis’ and the Mavi Marmara incident. (8) Facing those developments, Erdoğan called Israel the main threat to peace in the region. The Turkish-Israeli relations rapidly deteriorated. Turkey first appealed to cancel some joint military training programs with Israel, while holding its demand on an official apology for the Mavi Marmara incident. Israel’s rejection of Turkish demands, on the other side, caused further breaks in political, diplomatic and military relations between the two states, as Ankara imposed certain sanctions on Israel in September 2011 (BBC, 2011). In this sense it can be argued that Turkey’s active stance in the regional politics somehow led to problems with Israel who preferred to maintain its relations with Ankara in line with the former traditional logic of alignment. And this fact enforces the observation that the regional conflicts feeding realist parameters represent formidable obstacles for Turkey’s new peace building approach through regional cooperation.

THE LIMITS OF TURKEY’S NEW ‘STRUCTURAL’ APPROACH

As observed above, the persistence of chronic conflicts in the Middle East seems to be the most important obstacle to Turkey’s expanding its new approach to the region-wide scale. The Middle East is maybe the most fragmented region in the world as it includes the controversial axes such as Arabs
vs. Israel, Iran vs. the Gulf States and Shiites vs. Sunnis. Ahmet Davutoğlu himself has suggested that it is the geo-politic, geo-cultural and geo-economic fragmentations that spark alliance politics regarding the balances of power and accordingly push Turkey to a periphery role (Davutoğlu, 2001: 450-451). There are always worst-case scenarios such as the possibility that the instability in Lebanon may again increase, that Israel could sharpen its policy against Syria and that the US might seek extraordinary measures against Iran’s nuclear program. On the other hand, there are many global and regional powers involved in the geo-political struggle in the region, and the Middle Eastern autocratic regimes tend to look for external allies who could support them to balance internal threats by domestic opposition groups (David, 1991). As a result the picture in the Middle East is more complicated than that of the Balkans where Russian influence declined as the regional states turned to accession processes in the EU. In the Middle East, it is questionable yet whether Turkey has the means and prestige to hold the states together within its regional vision if there would be further fragmentation.

Regarding the developments in Syria since the “Arab Spring,” the autocratic character of the Middle East regimes and their low level legality in the public opinion can be taken as a second impediment against the successful implementation of Turkey’s new foreign policy vision. In fact, Turkey has long been recognizing the fact that those undemocratic state structures can not be maintained in the long term. That is why the Turkish President Abdullah Gül called on the Arab world to take the reins in implementing necessary political and economic reforms in 2004 and warned that if the leaders in the Middle East do ignore domestic problems, other foreign powers will try to solve them in their own way and interfere in those countries’ domestic affairs (Gül, in Murinson, 2006: 953). As noted above, since 2004 the Turkish side has also induced Damascus to make the necessary domestic reforms. Even after the domestic unrest broke out in March 2011, Turkey has maintained its long preference for close contacts with the Assad regime, in the hope that the latter would take into consideration Ankara’s advice for democratization reforms (e.g. lifting of emergency rule and permitting foundation of multi-parties) and would manage the process successfully. Turkey has favored a prudent and healthy transformation towards democracy in the state, rather than a violent revolution or a civil war that would negatively influence the bilateral political and economic cooperation and integration that, to some extent, had been achieved in the first decade of the 2000s. However the Syrian government’s reform efforts appeared only in rhetoric, while the Assad regime continued to confront the civil opposition using heavy arms through the year of 2011. The events have led to hundreds of casualties (see NY Times, 2011). After Davutoğlu’s visit to Damascus in August which failed to provide the expected results, Turkey has seemed to lose hope in the current Syrian government. Thus cold winds again blow between the two states.

In this context, one can conclude that the material benefits brought by the new Turkish foreign policy which restructured economic and social dimensions of bilateral relations did attract Damascus, yet Ankara’s other inclusive objective of creating a sustainable and stable political structure in Syria by and large failed because the Syrian government considered that the change in political structure would undermine the regime’s power and lead to its fall. At this point, the deterioration of Turkish-Syrian relations again in 2011 confirms Keukeleire and MacNaughtan’s (2010) suggestion that a successful structural foreign policy needs to focus on all relevant structures (e.g. political, legal, and economic structures) together. Otherwise, the authors argue, “neglecting one or more relevant levels or sectors can undermine the achievements at other levels and structures” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2010: 5). Turkey’s structural power, in this sense, faces huge challenges when dealing with the decades-old autocratic political traditions. Ultimately the current political tensions between Ankara and Damascus
may well push Turkey into turning to some coercive methods (i.e. arms embargo and economic measures) again in its foreign policy implementation.(11)

In the aftermath of the Arab revolts, Turkey’s and the Western powers’ approaches towards the Arab world, along with the internal dynamics in those states, will be determining factors in shaping the future political structures in this region. It is even clear that economic restructuring will remain at the top of the agendas of outside powers. But still, the Western powers’ structural power capacity to contribute a healthy transformation towards democracy in those states will be limited if they continue to shape their regional policies based on the security paradigms. For long years, even the EU, the leading actor in manipulating democratic transformation in its periphery, has adopted the securitization perspective towards the region. The EU has supported the autocratic leaders in those states as long as they cooperated against illegal migration, fundamentalist and terrorist movements and provided trade liberalization (Kutlay and Dinçer, 2011). Following the Arab uprisings, the EU as well as the US should now adopt a more comprehensive foreign policy that focuses on the political structures themselves for fostering long-standing stability in the region, rather than pursuing their short-term security needs. On the other hand, many analysts argue that Turkey’s increasing soft power capacity in the recent years now enables Ankara to guide the transformation processes in the Arab world by sharing the Turkish historical experiences of democratization with those states. This might spark a new concept of partnership between the Western world and Turkey in the aftermath of the Arab revolts (see Kutlay and Dinçer, 2011).

Last but not least, the third limitation of Turkey’s new foreign policy approach that draws on soft and structural power seems to be the dependence of its attractiveness in its Western vocation. Back in 2004, Turkey’s institutionalized relations with the Western world became the main factor that attracted Damascus and induced its orientation towards Ankara when it was facing a campaign of political isolation (Tür, 2010: 169-171). Also today, the rising sympathy towards Turkey in the Arab countries has partly been fed by the belief that Ankara would stand for their rights and legitimate interests in the international organizations and platforms. In addition to that, some scholars have suggested that the foreign policy change became possible through the Europeanization process that led to domestic reform in the civilian-military balance and eliminated ‘hard power’ as an instrument in dealing with the neighbors (Aras and Polat, 2008; Aydın and Açıkmeşe, 2007). Accordingly it means that Turkey should give considerable importance to its relations with the EU, while encouraging a liberalization process in its neighborhood.

Still, the disappointment in the EU membership prospects in Turkey since 2006, and Ankara’s increasing partnership with its neighbors has fed the anxiety in the Western world about a shift in the axis. It was coupled with the crisis in Turkish-Israeli relations and Turkey’s moves to seek a balance between Iran and the Western states in dealing with the nuclear problem (see Çandar, 2009). Under these conditions, some even argued that Turkey now “could opt for a more nationalistic and authoritarian path that seeks closer relations with the sometime rivals of the United States such as Russia, Iran, China, and Syria” (Gordon and Taşpınar, 2008: 4). However, this paper has exposed the content of the new approach as not a new orientation in alignment policy, but a strategy to seek a sustainable partnership with the regional states through economic integration in line with a globalization perspective that would reduce the costs of conflict-ridden relationships. The new approach of Turkey, in this sense, could sometime lead to more independent behaviors that give privilege to developing interest with the neighbors as in the case of its relations with Syria in 2004. Although it would contrast with the prospects of those
who used to observe Turkey’s close alignment strategy with the West in a traditional realist sense, here it is argued that Turkey’s constructive approach would serve for peace building and liberalization efforts in the region. Nonetheless, if Turkey could manage to avoid tensions with Israel and to enforce the partnership with the EU, these would only positively influence the successful implementation of Turkey’s regional peace building vision.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined Turkish foreign policy change towards Syria in a globalization perspective. Although the challenges of globalization to traditional foreign policy making became influential in shaping the new approach by Turkey, the other reasons that facilitated the foreign policy change, such as the shifting regional dynamics, are underlined. At first, it may seem that the neorealist perspective that focuses on the balance of power and the distribution of threats could explain the foreign policy change. But the literature on neorealism remains limited in covering significant aspects of our subject due to its sole concentration on power politics. Therefore, examining the changing nature of Turkish-Syrian relations covering the economic and social realms required a reference to some theoretical approaches on globalization’s challenge to traditional foreign policy formation. In this respect, the AKP’s foreign policy making covers many significant elements based on an understanding of the new conditions in the globalization process. Turkey did not content itself with security cooperation with Syria after 1998, but sought an enforced partnership with its neighbor that was based on a relationship of interdependency. That promoted many new opportunities for collaboration among the wider range of economic and political actors from both sides which favored cooperation vs. conflict. Unfortunately, the Turkish-Syrian relations deteriorated again in the face of the domestic crisis in Syria in 2011. However, Turkey’s recent experiences of restructuring economic and social processes in its neighborhood will likely facilitate Ankara’s other foreign policy maneuvers towards the Middle East in the future. It is also not to be forgotten that the foreign policy change seems to increase Turkey’s soft power capacity in the Middle East because the new Turkish foreign policy vision has been generally welcomed by the Arab word. This fact would introduce many opportunities for Turkey to influence the political, economic and social transformation processes in the Middle East in the aftermath of the “Arab Spring.”

NOTES

1. Even though Joseph Nye, one of the most prominent contributors to soft power concept, admits that some goals can only be achieved by hard power, he appreciates combining both notions of power (hard and soft) together within the concept of ‘smart power’ (2004).

2. As noted, this paper is based on an earlier draft of a conference paper presented in April 2011. During its preparation, the spillover effects of the Arab revolts into Syria was solely limited to lower scale events in Daraa town, therefore, the implications of the revolts in the country did not make for a special accounting in the plan of the study that focused on the comparative examination of Turkish changing foreign policy. However, through some later work, the developments related to the Arab uprisings were incorporated in the study to the extent they generated implications for our subject, Turkish foreign policy change towards Syria in the last several years. Those implications are mostly discussed in the last section, namely “the limits of Turkey’s new ‘structural’ approach.”
3. Balance-of-threat theory defines alliances as a response to external threat. In this theoretical logic, states facing a threatening power mostly prefer balancing that power with available allies who share common threat perceptions (Walt, 1987). In the 1990s, Turkey faced an imminent threat from Syria appearing as an explicit support of the PKK. Because Ankara had problems with the US and the European powers who had raised their criticism on human right concerns in Turkey’s struggle against the PKK, Israel emerged as the most available ally for Turkey. In this context, Israel also served as a military source for the modernization of the Turkish army in a period when the US was not willing to sell weaponry due to the Greek and Armenian lobbying. (Martin, 2004: 184).

4. It is, in fact, a disputed question over why Turkey waited so long until October 1998 to play the card of a military threat (see Aykan, 1999: 179 and Sezgin, 2002).

5. When Sezer’s visit came to the agenda, Washington declared that “the European states and Egypt were agreed on the implementation of sanctions against Syria, and Turkey was expected to support the decisions of the international community” (Ayhan, 2009: 30).

6. At that point in time, it seemed equally possible that the two states would engage in some formal or informal arrangements of security cooperation in the balance-of-threat perspective since the distribution of threats in the region changed as well as the threat perceptions of both sides that were now converged (Walt, 1987). In neorealism, in general, alliances are also defined as temporary and they tend to be reshaped when the units realize that realignment would serve to benefit of balances of power (Sheehan, 1996: 55-56).

7. I preferred taking the signing of the Free Trade Agreement in 2004 as the starting point of the new approach because the changes in the multiple levels of Turkish-Syrian relations mostly followed this landmark.

8. In January 2010, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon publicly insulted the Turkish ambassador by seating him on a lower-level sofa in front of the TV cameras. Ayalon furthermore said to the cameras that “[Note] that he is sitting in a lower chair and we are in the higher ones, that there is only an Israeli flag on the table.” (Kösebalaban, 2010: 38). The *Mavi Marmara* incident, on the other hand, refers to the Israeli navy’s armed attack on the Turkish vessel *Mavi Marmara* that carried humanitarian aid to Gaza under Israel’s blockade, on May 31, 2010.

9. According to David’s omnibalancing perspective that examines alliance formation in the Third World, internal threats also serve as significant motives in the Third World leaders’ alignment preferences. Because the regime legality is low and internal conflicts and military coups seem to be the most common forms of government change in those states, David suggests the Third World leaders’ alignment strategies are based on the rational calculation “as to which outside power is most likely to do what is necessary to keep them in power” (David, 1991: 235). Therefore here it is suggested that the Middle Eastern autocratic regimes tend to resist the structural changes towards the liberalization sought by Turkey that would weaken their domestic position especially when they can find external allies with significant interests in maintaining their rule.

10. The Turkish PM Erdoğan himself later confirmed that he cut all contacts with the Syrian administration on September 23, 2011 (*Time*, 2011).
According to the press, Turkey has began to impose an arms embargo towards Syria, in late September and already intercepted a Syrian-flagged ship in the Sea of Marmara that was carrying weapons to Syria. On September 20, 2011, the Anatolia news agency quoted from Erdoğan that “We have already made a decision to stop and prevent any vehicle carrying any type of weapon to Syria. We told them our decision as well as shared it with neighboring countries” (Haaretz, September 24, 2011). On the other hand, Haaretz reported from Erdoğan that Turkey might impose economic sanctions on Damascus. However Turkey has not indicated yet what type of sanctions it might impose on Syria (see Haaretz, September 24, 2011).

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BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS AND TURKEY’S FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY: FROM THE ‘ÖZAL MODEL’ TO THE AKP PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

Turgut Özal, former Prime Minister and President of Turkey, has without doubt left a lasting heritage on Turkish politics. His pragmatic and dynamic approach to administrating the country’s affairs has been embraced by several later statesmen and politicians, giving rise to the notion of an “ÖZal model” that found application with respect to several issues in the political and economic realm. Focusing on foreign economic policy as one such issue area, and emphasizing the increasing participation of business actors in policy making process, this paper examines the main tenets of the Özal model, and deals with the question of to what extent Turkey’s foreign policy under the current government can be explained with this model. To that end, the paper compares the Özal period with the AKP period using an analytical framework that evaluates the foreign policy participation of business actors at different levels, i.e. structural level, domestic level, and the individual level. The framework proposed in the paper incorporates the factors of state capability, business power and issue salience as determinants of policy influence at the domestic level, and within this context, a typology of roles assumed by business associations is referred to in order to identify the different policy areas where business is active. As a result, the paper finds that while there are similarities between the two periods in the sense that in both cases business actors are actively taking part in foreign policy issues, there are also significant divergences.

Key words: Özal model, foreign economic policy, business associations, interest groups, policy participation.

İŞADAMI ÖRGÜTLERİ VE TÜRKİYE’NİN DIŞ EKONOMİK POLİTİKASI: ‘ÖZAL MODELİ’NDEN AKP DÖNEMİNE

ÖZET

Türkiye’nin eski Başbakan ve Cumhurbaşkanı Turgut Özal’ın Türk siyaseti üzerinde şüphesiz kalıcı bir etkisi olmuştur. Birçok devlet adami ve siyasetçi, Özal’ın devlet yönetimi konusundaki pragmatik ve dinamik yaklaşımı benimsemiş ve böylelikle ortaya siyasi ve ekonomik konularla ilgili birçok alanda uygulama bulan bir “ÖZal modeli” olgusu çıkmıştır. Bu alanlardan birisi olarak dış ekonomik politikaya odaklanan ve iş dünyasından aktörlerin politika yapım süreçlerine artan katılımını ön

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plana çıkaran bu çalışmada öncelikle Özal modelinin temel unsurları değerlendirilmekte ve daha sonra mevcut hükümetin uygulamakta olduğu dış politikanın açılarından Özal modeli ile ne ölçüde ortuştuğu tartışılmaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Özal dönemi ile AKP dönemi, iş dünyasından aktörlerin dış politika katkılarnını yapışal düzey, yerel düzey ve bireysel düzey olmak üzere üç farklı kademede ele alan bir analitik çerçeve içerisinde karşılaştırılmaktadır. Söz konusu çerçeve dahilinde devlet kapasitesi, iş dünyası gücü ve konu bilinirliği faktörleri yerel düzeydeki analizin temel unsurları olarak işlevleştirilirken ve bu doğrultuda işadamların örgütlerinin üstlendiği rolleri sınıflandırılan bir tipoloji kullanılarak iş dünyasının aktif olarak yer aldığı farklı politika alanları tespit edilmektedir. Sonuç olarak çalışma, mercek altında alınan iki dönem arasında benzerliklerin bulunduğu, her iki dönemde de iş dünyasından aktörlerin dış politika yapım süreçlerine etkin bir şekilde katıldıklarını ortaya koymaktadır, ancak bununla birlikte söz konusu iki dönem arasında önemli farklılıkların da bulunduğuunu altını çizmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Özal modeli, dış ekonomik politika, işadamlı örgütler, çıkar grupları, politika katımı.

The practice of presidents and prime ministers being accompanied by business delegations on official state visits abroad is often associated with the foreign policy stance adopted by Turgut Özal, first as Prime Minister (1983-1989) and subsequently as the President (1989-1993) of Turkey. The so-called “Özal model” implied an emphasis on the economy-related dimension of bilateral relations, which required a diverse range of actors, including the business community’s involvement in the policy making process. In this respect, Turkey’s current foreign policy approach, with the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi - AKP) government in office and with Abdullah Gül as the President, is observed to have similarities with the Özal model; yet given the changes in context within which foreign policy is formulated, one should expect divergences as well.

Associating one practice with an individual politician and the other with a governing party, this paper proceeds from the a priori assumption that the nature of the issue at hand that was initially defined by the individual preferences of a key decision maker evolved over time into a more institutionalized form. This transformation is precisely what this paper aims to demonstrate through systematic investigation. To this end, the study attempts to explain what the Özal model actually is, and deals with the question of to what extent Turkey’s current foreign policy can be explained with this model. The paper compares the Özal period with the AKP period, with an ontological focus on the role played by business associations in the policy making process. An analytical framework is proposed that evaluates the foreign policy participation of business actors at different levels, i.e. structural level, state level, and the individual level, by incorporating the factors of state capability, business power and issue salience as determinants of policy influence at the state level. This model will be used to evaluate the two cases, i.e. the Özal model and the AKP practice, in terms of to what extent and how effectively the business associations are participating in foreign economic policy processes. A typology of roles assumed by business associations, which distinguishes between limited quasi-public roles, policy formulation and policy implementation will be used to identify the different policy areas where the business is active.
FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY AND THE BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

Foreign economic policy is not a new area of inquiry. It has evolved in tandem with studies on foreign policy in general, which gained momentum in the immediate post-war period. In his influential treatise published right after the war, Hirschman (1945: 16) considered foreign trade as a tool of power politics, arguing, “the power to interrupt commercial and financial relations with any country is the root cause of the influence which a country acquires in other countries.” In a similar vein, Cumes (1951) defined foreign economic policy as “the use of economic means to promote foreign-policy objectives.” In those early years, foreign economic policy was foreign policy, and economic means were studied to the extent they mattered for the pursuit of political and strategic goals. Deutsch (1966: 89) argued that when it comes to the national interests in foreign policy making, national security interests predominated in the foreign policy activities of any given nation, and second in importance to security were the economic interests. In a world where increasing concerns for survival and security coexisted with relative economic stability and welfare, economic tools of foreign policy mattered only in their capacity to influence larger foreign policy issues. There was a clear distinction between “high foreign policy” and “low foreign policy,” with the former concerning security issues and the latter involving secondary matters including international economic relations; up until the 1970s there has been a serious scholarly neglect of foreign economic policy (Strange, 1970: 308-309).

This picture began to change in the early 1970s when pressures mounted on the post-war order and the economic stability that had hitherto been taken for granted began to wither away. The international monetary system based on the US dollar backed by gold fell apart and came to be replaced by a new system of floating exchange rates with trade protectionism emerging to the surface as nations struggled to protect their industries. Subsequent oil price shocks made the situation worse. All these developments and the concerns caused thereby helped to push economic issues to the foreground of nations’ foreign policy agendas, not only as means to political and strategic ends but also as ends in themselves, blurring the distinction between “high” and “low” foreign policy. The distinction was a product of the early Cold War period when rising political and security concerns had pushed international economic issues to the margins. As Cooper (1972: 19) stated, “Historically trade issues frequently intruded into, and occasionally even dominated, high foreign policy among countries. But this intrusion was successfully suppressed during the past 25 years by the postwar agreements.” Now that the suppression referred to by Cooper exists no more, international economic relations and foreign economic policy analysis has returned to research agendas.

The study of foreign economic policy gained even more in importance given a greater desire by a larger number of nations to integrate with the rest of the world economy, reflected by subsequent waves of trade liberalization and privatization starting from the mid-1970s, which paved the way to unprecedented levels of international trade and investment. It was the birth of what Rosecrance (1986: 8) termed as the “trading world,” which, in contrast with the perception of a Hobbesian world of “war of all against all” that is shaped exclusively by states’ territorial ambitions and military conflicts, was characterized by economic interdependence as the main feature of inter-state relationships. This new world was inhabited by “trading states” which had to rely on cooperation and dialogue, instead of military capabilities and power struggles for survival, and in such a world, nation-states increasingly based their economic policies towards the rest of the world on rational cost-benefit analyses.
The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the demise of centrally planned economies in the early 1990s accelerated the shaping of this new world. These economies chose to integrate with the rest of the global economy, which meant that the economic interdependence that hitherto prevailed among the liberal economies of the West transformed into “globalization,” implying greater interdependence and interconnectedness encompassing the entire world. Accompanied by simultaneous progress in information, telecommunication and transportation technologies, this development led to a rapid increase in the flows of international finance, trade and investment that rose to levels unprecedented in history, thus leaving the state in a position where it was no more able to formulate policies and shape events on its own.

For a long time following the end of the Second World War and the establishment of the Bretton Woods order, not only had the world enjoyed substantial economic stability, but also the formulation and implementation of foreign economic policy remained under the monopoly of the state. Classical definitions of the term “foreign economic policy” from this period clearly point to the central position of the state. For instance, Cohen (1968: 10) defined it as the “sum of actions by the nation-state intended to affect the economic environment beyond the national jurisdiction.” Similarly, Destler (1980) defined the concept in terms of the actual impact of the government’s actions on external economic concerns, implying that any kind of policy that had an effect on foreign economic matters was to be considered as foreign economic policy. As evident in these definitions, foreign economic policy was exclusively traced to the state, leaving no room for non-state actors.

This picture had already begun to change in the 1970s with the growing economic interdependence among nation-states and the globalization wave of the 1990s accelerating the process in a rapid and substantial manner. The literature on foreign economic policies continued to develop in this period under the influence of globalization. The global triumph of capitalism meant that the state depended now on the owners of capital more than ever. As Strange (1995) observed, the authority of the state in society and over economic transactions within its territorial borders was now seriously impaired, and the state was coming to share its authority in economy with other entities that possessed the leverage to influence the policies of the state through what Strange called the “new diplomacy.” Globalization has not only increased the range and variety of foreign economic policy aims and tools, it has also brought to the foreground the domestic dimension of foreign economic policy, empowering new actors, both inside and outside the government. As governments witnessed the shrinking of their powers and resources, they needed to involve other stakeholders in sharing their burden and in taking part in the process. This was new diplomacy in the making.

One of the key actors in the “new diplomacy” is the business community. Scholarly literature on state-business relations has traditionally evolved around the group theory, which implied that groups get involved in collective action when necessary to further their common goals, and around its two major schools, pluralism and corporatism. Under the pluralist theory, interest politics is regarded as a “free competition among a variety of organizations in a market for political representation” where “organized interests are tamed by competition and the primacy of public legislation” (Streeck and Kenworthy, 2005: 448). This idea refers to the existence of groups as the basis of a democratic society, and the greater and deeper the competition among groups the more developed is the democracy.

Corporatism on the other hand is similar to pluralism in the sense that groups are central to the political process, yet the difference is that the state is not seen as a neutral player but rather is an arbiter of
group influence that decides which group will get favors and which groups will be excluded (Axford, 2002: 392). In his influential work on corporatism, Schmitter (1974: 93-94) defined the concept as follows: “Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed, if not created, by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports.” Accordingly, in corporatist systems “selected organizations enjoy a representational autonomy” and “political incentives and sanctions make interest groups cooperate with public purposes” (Streeck and Kenworthy, 2005: 448).

A corporatist perspective of foreign economic policy asks the question of how various interests are represented during the policy making process, thus bringing to the foreground the role of business associations that translate common interests into collective action. In their study of state-business relations in developing countries, Haggard, Maxfield, and Schneider (1997) argue that the existence of business associations is necessary to ensure a smooth and effective functioning of state-business collaboration because these organizations promote collective self-governance of business and limit the individual firms’ pursuit of particularistic benefits. It is similarly important to note that the dynamics of globalization has influenced the way in which the scholars of state-business are viewing the business associations as well. Whereas the traditional view referred to business associations as agents transmitting information and expressing opinions in order to influence the policy makers’ decisions, the rapid economic and political transformation that the world is going through has changed perceptions in the sense that business associations, which have conventionally been studied within the larger context of interest or pressure groups, came to be taken as a unique form of organization with particular characteristics, and scholars’ focus began to shift from their functions of transmitting information and expressing the opinion and interests of their constituents to participation in public policy making.

There is a significant literature on the business associations in Turkey. Within the general framework of state-business relations, which is rigorously discussed in a number of studies (Bianchi, 1984; Heper, 1991; Buğra, 1994; Öniş, 1999), several scholars have studied Turkey’s business associations as institutions of collective action. However, these studies have so far exclusively focused on the associations’ roles either in the democratization process (Heper and Keyman, 1998; Bora, 2000; Öniş and Türem, 2001; Bayer and Öniş, 2010) or as agents of class representation (Buğra, 1998; Keyman and Koyuncu, 2005; Başkan, 2010; Hoşgör, 2011). Studies on their participation in foreign economic policy or foreign policy in general are rather few in number (Kirişci, 2009; Öniş, 2011) and this paper aims to contribute to the literature by comparing this role undertaken by business associations in two different periods through an analytical framework designed to assess the dynamics and effectiveness of the business actors’ involvement in foreign economic policy.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Any analysis of business associations’ foreign economic policy participation roles needs to start with an identification of the different mechanisms through which these organizations are taking part in the policy making process. While the specific field of business actors in foreign policy remains largely under-theorized, there is a significant body of scholarly work on how business actors are taking part in
public policy in general, and insights from this general field can be borrowed and adopted to foreign policy procedures. A useful tool in this sense would be Bell’s typology of roles assumed by business associations in public policy. Incorporating the findings of earlier work on the subject and testing these findings in the case of Australia, Bell (1995) proposed a range of possible roles of organized business interests in relation to policy participation:

- **i) Limited quasi-public roles or state service functions:** Associations collect information and transmit them to policy makers; express the opinions of the business community; offer business related advice; explain public policy decisions to their own constituents; help the policy makers to “sell” policy decisions to the business community.

- **ii) Policy formulation:** Associations are entitled to a public status; they play a formal role in the shaping of public policy in collaboration with the government and the bureaucracy.

- **iii) Policy implementation:** Associations assume a formal quasi-public role in implementing public policy.

Bell’s typology tells us what the business associations are doing in terms of policy participation in theory; however to what extent they are undertaking these roles, how they fulfill them, and what influence they have on the policy process in practice depend on the particular context. The model proposed in this paper examines the context at three different levels – structural level, domestic level and the individual level – inspired by Singer’s (1961) seminal work on the levels of analysis in political science. It is argued that the dynamics at all of these three levels, separately and in combination, determine the contours of business participation in foreign policy processes.

At the systemic level, there is an emphasis on the importance of the structure of the international system, the place of the state in this system and its relative material capabilities as the primary determinants of state behavior. The state’s position in the international system is determined by its capabilities and power relative to the other states, and this position creates opportunities and threats at any given moment. Foreign policy, in this sense, is driven by governments’ responses to the opportunities and threats created by the system, which also determine to what extent non-state actors are to be involved in policy making processes. Facing economic opportunities and threats brought about by globalization, governments might need the assistance of the business community, i.e. the owners of capital, to benefit from the opportunities and protect the country against the threats. For instance, if globalization opens up opportunities of wealth accumulation through increasing exports, states would not only have a particular focus on the economic dimension of their foreign policy, but they would also involve the private sector in the process, since – at least in liberal market economies – it is the private businesses that do the exporting. In sum, it is the international system that sets up the context within which individual states determine their foreign policy. Analysis at this level can help us understand the framework within which the policy-makers operate and the set of policy options available to policy makers. However, due to its neglect of national variances, what actually happens inside the framework and how the policy-makers determined which policy option to choose remain unanswered. There are opportunities and threats brought about by globalization, but how the nations respond to them depends on their domestic context. We need to shift the ontological focus from the system to the state, and open up the “black box” of the state in order to obtain a richer in-depth description of the various actors and to investigate the processes through which foreign policies are made (Singer, 1961).
At the domestic level, policy behavior is explained as the outcome of domestic institutional relationships and bargaining, which covers not only the interplay of interests and priorities between different political institutions and bureaucracies, but also the pressures exerted on the state by domestic groups by directly participating in deliberative processes with policy makers in order to influence the policy process by framing issues in ways consistent with their own interests, agendas and preferences. The business community can be regarded as a domestic group interacting with the state in this way, and the nature of this interaction is determined by a series of constraints at the domestic level. In this respect, three factors are taken as the main determinants of the state-business interaction depending on what extent the business associations are involved in foreign economic policy and how influential their participation is:

i) State capacity: The more capacity the state has, the less is its need to engage non-state actors in policy processes. In this sense, a strong state with abundant resources and a Weberian bureaucracy would be well positioned to tackle policy issues on its own. According to Atkinson and Coleman (1989: 50-59), state capacity is measured as the concentration of authority and bureaucratic authority, and at lower levels of capacity the state relinquishes part of its authority to business actors.

ii) Business power: In a similar manner, the more capacity the business has, the more influence it has in foreign policy related issues. Atkinson and Coleman (1989: 50-59) define the capacity of the business as the level of mobilization of business interests; however, to this definition we should add the resources possessed by the business as well. To sum, the extent of business participation in foreign economic policy depends on how well the business is mobilized as an interest group and undertakes collective action, what resources it has under its disposal and to what extent these resources can be transformed into policy influence.

iii) Issue salience: There might be cases when a state with relatively low capabilities would prefer to monopolize certain foreign policy issues and keep the business community out of the game despite the latter’s large resources and capabilities. These are likely to be the cases of high political salience, i.e. issues drawing high levels of public attention and concern, thus being of greater interest for vote-seeking politicians. In such cases, the government is likely to handle the policy issues on its own, whereas in low salience issues, bureaucracy and non-state actors have a greater say. Culpepper (2011: xv) explains the difference issue salience makes as follows: “The political dynamics of low salience issues actually differ dramatically from those of high salience issues. The latter are the stuff of which elections are won and lost, occasioning raucous debates in the media and on the floors of legislatures. The former give rise to what I call ‘quiet politics,’ in which highly organized interest groups dominate the policy process in arenas shielded from public view.”

The third level of analysis in the analytical model is the individual level. States are not real objects, neither is the international system. They are useful objects for understanding world politics, but they do not refer to real things themselves. Wendt (2010: 281) asks a question here: If the state and international system are not really real, then what are they, really? As Wendt states, social objects such as the state and the international system are nothing but the shared or collective intentions of biological
individuals. This is why individuals need to be taken into account, as individuals shape many of the drivers identified as determinants of foreign policy, such as the system, domestic politics and societal groups (Byman and Pollack, 2001: 109).

Studying the individuals’ roles in the economic dimension of foreign policy, Woolcock (2007: 29) argues that in the past, individuals have played a more important role in economic diplomacy, but today one must expect them to remain on the margins because of the larger numbers of actors and the complexity of issues. Individuals, however, still have an impact, and when individuals have an ability to shape outcomes, their motivations must also be taken into consideration. In terms of business participation in foreign policy, attitudes and preferences of individuals in positions of public authority make a difference.

The extent of business participation in foreign policy is determined by dynamics at all the three levels of analysis discussed above. The next part of the paper will discuss these dynamics comparatively for two cases which are two different periods in recent Turkish history each with its own unique characteristics with respect to foreign policy.

THE ‘ÖZAL MODEL’

Turgut Özal was the architect of Turkey’s economic liberalization wave during the early 1980s. In his capacity as the Undersecretary to the then Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, he prepared the structural reform package aiming at empowering the private sector and liberalizing foreign trade in order to accelerate Turkey’s integration with the globalizing economy. After the military takeover on September 12, 1980, the military regime appointed him State Minister and Deputy Prime Minister in charge of economic affairs enabling him to continue with the reforms launched before the coup. The party he founded in 1983, the Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi - ANAP) won the first democratic elections after the military takeover, and Özal became the Prime Minister of Turkey, a post he would hold until 1989 when he was elected President.

Özal’s approach to foreign policy involved a pro-active and dynamic stance in external affairs, emphasizing the economic dimension of bilateral and multilateral relations, with a significant reliance on non-state actors. Özal was a pragmatic leader who deemed bureaucracy a slow and inefficient apparatus. His preference was to work with the business community in his quest to open the Turkish economy to the outside world, and it was for this reason that he granted a series of what Bell (1995) calls “limited quasi-public roles” to the business. Özal took every opportunity to consult with businessmen in economy related issues, encouraged the institutionalization of the collective attempts of the business, and involved the businessmen in foreign policy events. It was Özal himself who started the practice of taking delegations of businessmen to official state visits abroad and personally leading trade missions.

In terms of the policy formulation role of business, Özal’s era again represented a significant break with the past. When Özal took office, there were already several established business associations in operation such as the Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges (Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği - TOBB) founded in 1950, Economic Development Foundation (İktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı - IKV) founded in 1965 and the Turkish Industry and Business Association (Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği - TÜSİAD) founded in 1971. However these organizations had neither the
outward oriented focus nor the necessary legal status to represent the private sector of Turkey in foreign economic policy related issues. Being aware of the lack of an institutional platform, Özal actively encouraged the business community to establish a new organization, and as a result the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey (Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu - DEİK) was founded in 1986 as a legal personality subject to private law, established with the purpose of “pursuing the foreign economic relations of the private sector and assisting the concrete business development activities of the business community.” Its status enabled DEİK to directly participate in the policy formulation process, and DEİK was eventually granted a seat in the bilateral joint economic commission meetings that are held on an intergovernmental basis.

Another important point regarding the Özal model is that the interaction between the state and the business community was of a personalized rather than institutionalized nature. Özal was dealing with individual businessmen rather than organized interest groups, and during the 1980s undertakings of the business associations were largely determined by the personalities of a few individuals who maintained good relations with the government and Özal himself, rather than reflecting the collective will of the business community. In other words, the business community was getting more involved in foreign economic policy and its involvement was needed by the state, although there was still no integrated, systematic and consistent framework for it to influence foreign economic policy.

THE AKP PERIOD

After Özal’s departure, business participation in foreign economic policy issues was relegated to secondary importance. The process that was started in the early 1980s was “interrupted” in the 1990s (Kirişci, 2009: 33). Öğütçü (2002) regards this interruption as a “deficiency (that) reflected badly on the efforts to maintain and advance the nation’s commercial interests abroad.” Paraphrasing Öğütçü (2002: 5), Turkey seemed in this period to have failed to grasp the importance of economic diplomacy in the pursuit of political advantage. Accordingly, attempts to place a comparable emphasis on economic issues, as opposed to exclusively relying on the oft-mentioned “high politics,” are not coherent, well orchestrated and effectively translated from the glossy political statements to actual deeds. As a result, “vital economic interests have been compromised.” One positive development during the 1990s has been the establishment of new business associations such as the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen’s Association (Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği – MÜSİAD) founded in 1990 and the Turkish Exporters’ Assembly (Türkiye İhracatçılar Meclisi - TIM) founded in 1993.

With the AKP government taking office after the parliamentary elections in 2002, Turkey’s political scene began to change in a drastic manner and the foreign policy realm was not immune to change. Under the AKP government Turkey’s foreign policy began to be transformed towards a more assertive, proactive and multi-dimensional paradigm that involved “constructive engagement in its neighborhood and beyond” (Davutoğlu, 2009: 14). This “new” foreign policy approach has a significant economic dimension, not only in the sense that improving relations with the near neighborhood and regions hitherto neglected in Turkey’s foreign policy such as Africa and East Asia is motivated by the aim to access new markets for Turkish products, but also in the sense that economic statecraft, i.e. the use of economic policies to pursue non-economic goals, is increasingly utilized by foreign policy makers in their attempts to increase the influence and leverage of Turkey in global/regional affairs. Economic factors began to shape Turkey’s foreign policy more than ever before, and it is, in Kirişci’s (2009) words, the “rise of the trading state” that Turkey is witnessing.
As economic considerations are increasingly in the foreground as determinants of Turkey’s foreign policy and as the government uses greater volumes of trade and investment as an instrument of its foreign policy, new actors from the economic sphere, including business associations, entered the scene as participants in the policy making process. Kirişci (2009: 33) states that a wider range of actors have come to participate in the foreign policy process and the interests and priorities of these actors were not necessarily the same as those of the traditional foreign policy-makers. After an interlude during the 1990s, the business community, through its institutional channels in the form of business associations, has re-emerged as one of the new actors in Turkey’s foreign economic policy, and in contrast with their immediate predecessors, both President Abdullah Gül and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan adopted a model of active state-business partnership in foreign relations.

COMPARING THE TWO CASES

The Özal model involved greater participation of the business community in the foreign economic policy process and the AKP appears to be adopting an expanded version of this model. There are, however, not only convergences but also divergences between these two versions. For a systematic analysis of the similarities and differences between the two, we need to ask the question of through what kind of mechanisms a structured pattern of interaction is established between the state and the business associations, and to employ Bell’s typology of policy participation roles of business associations in order to establish an analytical basis for the comparison.

As discussed earlier in this article, Bell’s first item was “limited quasi-public roles or state service functions,” wherein business associations collect information and pass it on to the policy makers, express the opinion of the business community, serve on state advisory bodies, explain the public policy decisions to members, and propose new legislation. This is, in fact, the basis of the Özal model, which relies on the dialogue between the state and the business community. During Turgut Özal’s time, the dialogue was carried out mainly through individual businessmen’s direct communication with Özal himself and with other high-ranking state officials, as well as through the business associations’ participation in political leaders’ official visits to other countries.

Both channels, direct correspondence with state officials and participation in official overseas visits, are widely utilized by the AKP. Senior executives of business associations frequently visit high-ranking political leaders, i.e. the President, Prime Minister as well as relevant ministers, in order to brief them on the business community’s opinions and suggestions related to Turkey’s foreign economic policies. At such meetings, business executives can take the floor and convey opinions and suggestions both on general foreign economic policy issues and issues specific to certain countries. A relatively recent example is DEİK’s meeting with President Abdullah Gül on February 15, 2008, where a total of 48 business representatives have taken the floor and general policies as well as specific issues related to Turkey’s economic policies vis-à-vis 32 different countries were discussed (DEİK, 2008). It is also a common practice of high-ranking political leaders to visit business associations’ general assembly meetings where they address the associations’ constituents. On the other hand, both President Gül and Prime Minister Erdoğan continue the practice of taking businessmen to official state visits abroad. Those points that distinguish their visits from those made by Özal is that they are travelling more frequently and they are accompanied by much higher numbers of businessmen. For instance, President Gül alone has carried out 70 official state visits abroad during his first three years in office and these visits were attended by a total of 2,670 businessmen and created a business volume of around 20 billion dollars (Munyar, 2010). Erdoğan, on the other hand, made 243 official visits to 84 countries.
during his eight years in the office (DHA, 2011) and these visits were most often accompanied by delegations of businessmen and trade missions.

The main difference in AKP’s approach is that business associations now have greater resources at their disposal and therefore have the capability to create more efficient platforms to pursue the dialogue between themselves and the state. A good example is the large-scale international business events that bring together the executives of business associations, as well as representatives from member companies, together with policy makers, both from Turkey and abroad. Every year, business associations organize several business events which are supported by the official foreign economic policy-makers of Turkey in the sense that the state recognizes the business associations as partners and has their senior bureaucrats participate at these events. The government is almost always represented at these events and it is also often the case that intergovernmental agreements related to economic issues are signed during these events. This high-level participation by the state gives the business associations the opportunity to report problems experienced by the Turkish business community and to convey their policy suggestions directly to the statesmen and bureaucrats of Turkey. Additionally, through these events, business associations also provide the opportunity for the state officials and bureaucrats of both sides to exchange opinions and ideas with each other within a semi-formal and business-oriented setting, usually with senior business executives being present at meetings between representatives of the Turkish government and their counterparts.

The second item in Bell’s typology is “policy formulation,” wherein the business association is given public status and plays a formal role in shaping policy. Due to its legal status, this area was and still is monopolized by DEİK, and the main mechanism is the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meetings which are held on a bilateral inter-governmental basis with other countries. These meetings offer a platform for the two countries to negotiate a blueprint for the future of their economic relations, formulate their policies, and find solutions for their common problems. As specified in related legislation, DEİK is always represented at JEC meetings, and in this respect there is no major difference between the Özal model and the AKP version. In both cases, the public status provided for business associations is limited. It must be noted, however, that Turgut Özal had intended to expand the scope of the public status given to business associations, and one way for doing so was to place JEC meetings under the sole responsibility of the associations. He had to give up the idea in the face of a strong negative reaction from the state bureaucracy. What Özal wanted was to transfer part of the state’s administrative functions to a business association, but the foreign affairs and foreign trade bureaucracy resisted, and no transfer took place. As seen in this example, the bureaucracy recognizes the capacity of the business community, yet it is also determined to maintain control by limiting the public status given to business associations. As a result, instead of transferring its functions, the state subcontracts them to business associations in the expectation that they would perform these duties in a more efficient manner with the state determining the conditions of the contract itself. This had been the case under Özal, and is still the case under the AKP. Under this corporatist setting, the state chooses the associations to work with, and the answer to what extent they get involved depends on to what extent the state needs them to do so. For example, the DEİK regulation states that the organization is to represent the private sector in international or intergovernmental negotiations if and when it is invited to do so. This conditionality clearly illustrates the limits imposed on the involvement of the business associations.

Bell’s third item, “policy implementation,” remains the weakest link in the Turkish business associations’ participation in foreign economic policy. Whereas they actively take part in the process
of formulating policy, implementation is undertaken by the relevant public institutions. The quasi-public status entitled to business associations does not cover the realm of implementation, and it is the state which puts the policy into effect and enforces the policy. In other words, Bell’s third item is excluded to a great extent from both the Özl model and the AKP adaptation.

We can now turn to reasons behind the differences between the Özl model and the AKP version. As stated earlier, there can be no one single theory of state-business relations, as the way the two agents interact depends on the particular context, which, in turn, is shaped by the interplay of dynamics at three different levels, i.e. system level, domestic level and individual level. The question is then: How did the context change over time causing variations between the two cases?

At the systemic level, what distinguishes the AKP period from Özl’s time is that the former is associated with greater interconnectedness and interdependence among nations, particularly in the economic realm. When Turgut Özl was at the helm, Turkey had only recently begun to liberalize its markets and open itself to the rest of the world. In contrast, the current period is marked by an intensive web of economic relations between nations, which makes the economic dimension of foreign policy one of the most, if not the most, important aspect of diplomacy. Furthermore, globalization has also accelerated the transnationalization of business, not only big conglomerates but also small and medium scale enterprises. The Özl model was centered on a small number of large companies and/or conglomerates that had an export capacity, and one single business association that was established for the purpose of coordinating their efforts to be open to world markets. The current period, in contrast, involves a much larger number of companies of any scale which produce, export, and take advantage of opportunities in markets that had hitherto been beyond the scope of Turkey’s foreign economic relations. All of these companies have an interest in influencing Turkey’s foreign economic policy through the business associations they join for this purpose.

At the domestic level, three different variables need to be consulted: state capabilities, business power, and issue salience. Turkey has traditionally been a strong and dominant state with a high level of authority. During the early 1980s, the state authority was perhaps at its peak, since the entire state apparatus was ruled by a military regime and there were strict constitutional limits on the activities of societal groups. Moreover, at the level of government, there was also a concentration of authority, considering that during both terms of Özl as the Prime Minister of Turkey, one starting in 1983 and the other in 1987, his party, ANAP, formed a single party government with a parliamentary majority. Over the past three decades, Turkey has taken profound steps towards democratization, which, together with the effects of globalization, has resulted in a diffusion of authority, albeit without undermining the central position of the state in Turkish political life. However, the AKP government is currently in its third term as a single-party government which provides a significant degree of capability for political action. In the meantime, Turkey’s high economic performance over the last ten years means that state capability is also reinforced by material resources. In sum, it is possible to argue that in both the Özl and AKP cases, the state capability has been high.

There is, however, another story with respect to business power. The two periods under investigation are completely different in this respect. During the Özl period, business was poorly organized, relying on individual/particularistic connections rather than institutionalized collective action, and it lacked the ability to mobilize around common goals. Moreover, during the 1980s the Turkish business was at the infantile stages of export orientation; it was mainly inward oriented and therefore lacked
access to global sources of income, which meant that business power in terms of material resources was relatively low. This picture changed dramatically over time, and business power during the AKP period has been significantly greater than in the Özal period.

Buğra and Savaşkan (2010) provide a picture of the Turkish business community after thirty years of continuous transformation. The authors define the period starting with Özal’s reforms until today with: i) transformation from an autarchic statist economic model into an open market economy; ii) spatial restructuring of economic activities and the rise of local capital; and iii) periodical overlap between the transformations in the business scene with increasing importance of religion in social and political life. All of these changes have served to expand the business power in Turkey. Globalization of the Turkish private sector meant greater resources and better organizational capabilities for business, whereas the simultaneous rise of new industrial centers in Anatolia and the increase in the importance of religion in social and political life gave rise to a new business class representing the conservative bourgeoisie which established its own business interest groups such as the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (Türkiye İşadamları ve Sanayiciler Konfederasyonu - TUSKON) founded in 2005.

The most evident difference between the two models is related to the number of actors involved. DEİK was the institutionalized offspring of the Özal model which emerged as a business association born through a public-private partnership with the purpose of providing an institutional platform for the business community to have its say in the policy making process. Under AKP, we see a wider range of business associations which, despite having the same purpose, exhibit a greater variety in terms of legal/institutional structure, membership base, and aims. To sum, the AKP period is marked by a larger number of business actors involved in the policy process, and the spaces of interaction are now larger in the sense that there are more communication channels between the state and the business, and the business associations are involved in a larger number of issues.

The third variable at the domestic level of our analysis, issue salience, offers a similar picture for each of the two cases simply because foreign policy is a high salience issue in Turkish politics. Voters are concerned about foreign policy issues, and this is why governments prefer to deal with these issues on their own instead of delegating them to the bureaucracy and/or non-state actors. This explains why in both the Özal and AKP cases, there are strict limits to the extent to which business is involved in foreign economic policy. Referring back to Bell’s typology, in both cases business associations are active in limited public roles, but they have only minor stakes in terms of policy formulation and no involvement whatsoever in policy implementation. In both cases governments are keen to engage the businessmen in policy processes, yet neither Özal nor the AKP government would want to see businessmen actually implementing foreign policy as this would be political suicide.

At the individual level, Turgut Özal’s personality played a crucial role in shaping the state-business relations in Turkey. He was a business-minded politician who could work with anyone regardless of ideology as long as the interests were served. Laçiner (2009: 158) details Özal’s background as follows: “He was not only a successful businessman, and a religious person with good relations with religious sects; he was a successful bureaucrat and had very good relations with the IMF, the World Bank (between 1971-1973 Turgut Özal was adviser to the World Bank on special projects) and the US administration. He was a religious, nationalist, conservative, liberal politician, businessman, economist, and bureaucrat.” While Laçiner’s characterization might appear paradoxical in the sense that it juxtaposes incompatible ideologies like political liberalism and nationalism, it actually offers a clear description of Özal’s personality, which can be summed up in one word: pragmatism. It is
beyond doubt that both Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as the Prime Minister, and Abdullah Gül, first as Foreign Minister and then as President share the same business-minded pragmatic approach. It is therefore possible to assert that in both cases, there has been a favourable environment for state-business relations to develop in terms of the approach of the individuals in positions of public authority.

CONCLUSION

Referring to the transformation of the Turkish foreign policy during the AKP period, Ziya Öniş (2011: 56) argues that foreign policy in Turkey is no longer monopolized by diplomats and politicians, but it is increasingly being driven from below by economic and civil society actors. This is actually a process that started in the 1980s under Turgut Özal. It can be argued that the AKP has adopted the Özal model, albeit an expanded version of it. This expansion can be found in what Stephen Bell calls the “limited quasi-public roles or state service functions” assumed by business associations, while in other areas of policy participation the business associations’ role is still limited. According to Heper (1991: 6), each pattern of business-state interaction has a “particular logic behind it, which closely fits one type of state, or government, and not others.” Turkey has a strong and dominant state, which has led to a particular form of state-business relationship where the state maintains its central position, exercises its authority, determines the rules of cooperation, and effectively uses the business associations as instruments to advance the nation’s interests. This is the basis of both the Özal model and the AKP adaptation, and explains why in both cases the policy formulation role of business associations remains limited and the policy implementation role is almost non-existent.

Although the motivation for the state to enter into dialogue with the business community and allow the latter to play a role in the policy making process remains the same, what is different in the case of the AKP is that there are a larger number of business actors involved in the process and the spaces of interaction are now larger in the sense that there are a larger number of communication channels between the state and the business and the business associations are involved in a larger number of issues. The reason behind what we can call the “expansion of the Özal model” is related to the fact that the state-business relations during the AKP period are undertaken within international and domestic contexts that differ significantly from the Özal period.

At the systemic level, what distinguishes the current period from the 1980s is the increasing degree of interdependence among nation states which not only opens up channels for business actors to participate in their respective country’s foreign affairs by bringing the economic dimension of international relations to the foreground, but also increases the power and capabilities of the business. At the domestic level, on the other hand, two broad differences can be found between the Özal period and the AKP period. First, in a general sense, the transformation of the Turkish economy and the consolidation of Turkey’s democracy, both of which were facilitated by the EU accession process, changed the rules of the game, empowering non-state actors and opening the doors of policy-making to them. The second difference is directly related to the interlinkages between domestic and foreign policy. During the AKP period domestic politics have become significantly intertwined with foreign policy, and foreign policy has in turn emerged as a major instrument for gaining a competitive edge in domestic politics. The AKP government is using foreign policy initiatives as a strategic tool for consolidating and extending its domestic coalitional base. During the Özal period, the economic opening up to world markets was meant to be a tool for engaging Turkish economy with global markets and increasing exports to gain the export dollars much needed by the economy. Now during the AKP period these kinds of active foreign economic policies have become tools of domestic politics.
as well. Özal was handpicking companies and deciding which products they were to export to which markets; today AKP is getting all the exporters of any size onto the bandwagon, strengthening its domestic support base.

On a final note, it should be remembered that whereas business associations have now a greater role in Turkey’s foreign economic policy-making process compared to the Özal period, their role is to a large extent instrumental rather than executive because they remain within the policy framework set by the state and refrain from acting autonomously or challenging the policy objectives of the state. Foreign economic policy, and foreign policy in general, are high salience issues where the governments prefer to maintain control and act on their own as much as possible; they involve other actors in the process only to the extent that they are needed. This was the case in Özal’s time and it still is. But it does not necessarily mean that the role of business in foreign economic policy is irrelevant. By establishing a platform of interaction between the state and the business community, business associations transmit the private sector’s interests, demands, needs and preferences in different issue areas to the state as a crucial input for the formulation of policy. What distinguishes the AKP period from the Özal period in this respect is that there are more actors involved, more channels of interactions and more issue areas where business is actively taking part. However, the subject remains relatively understudied and we are still far from being able to see the full picture. Questions such as which business associations are using which channels of interaction to what degree of efficiency, and what determines the extent to which they are granted quasi-public roles all require more systematic research based on empirical investigation. As business associations have an increasingly greater influence in foreign policy related issues, the subject demands greater attention by students of both state-business relations and foreign policy.

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A NEW SECTOR IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY: MEDIATION

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ABSTRACT

Recently, Turkish policy-makers defined Turkey as a ‘natural born mediator’ and called Turkey’s engagement in good offices and mediation part of a new vision in Turkish foreign policy. This was also characterized by the media as a ‘new sector’ in Turkish foreign policy. Although Turkey’s new role was subject to extensive public and media debate, academic literature did not cover it adequately, rather using it as further evidence for their diverse theoretical frameworks. This paper attempts to open up a debate on Turkey’s newly adopted role as a mediator and analyzes it from a rational choice institutionalist point of view. It concludes that the EU conditionality has been an instrumental but not a driving factor in Turkey’s newly adopted role. It has been used by governments since 1987, as the timeline of this paper indicates, as a way to demonstrate Turkey’s adherence to the policy of good neighborly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Even after the EU suspended negotiations, Turkey’s active involvement in good offices and mediation missions did not diminish nor did its reduced credibility result in the reversal of the process.

Keywords: Turkey, Foreign Policy, good offices, mediation, peaceful settlement of disputes, good neighborly relations, rational choice institutionalism.

TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASINDA YENİ BİR SEKTÖR: ARABULUCULUK

ÖZET

Son zamanlarda, Türkiye ‘de siyasi karar alıcılar, Türkiye’yi ‘doğuştan arabulucu’ olarak tanımladılar ve Türkiye’nin arabulucuk ve iyi niyet misyonlarını geniş bir vizyonun bir parçası olarak ilan etti. Bu aynı zamanda medyada da Türkiye dış politikasında ‘yeni bir sektör’ olarak kabul gördü. Türkiye’nin bu yeni arabuluculuk ve iyi niyet misyonları kamuoyu ve medya tartışmalarına konu olmasına rağmen, akademik literatürde hak ettiği yer almadı ve daha ziyade farklı kurumsal çerçeveler için kanıt olarak kullanıldı. Bu makale Türkiye’nin yeni arabuluculuk girişimleri üzerine bir tartışma açarken bu çabaları rasyonel tercih kurumsalcılığı baktı açısı ile analiz eder. Sonuç olarak bu makale Avrupa Birliği’nin siyasi koşulluğunun, Türkiye’nin yeni edinilen rolünde araç olarak kullanılması, ama

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On November 3, 2009, Sami Kohen, Foreign Affairs Specialist of the daily Milliyet, made an interesting point in his column. He titled his writing as ‘A New Sector in Turkish Foreign Policy: Mediation.’ Sami Kohen’s point is illustrative. He is one of the prominent columnists and his point was timely and wise. Indeed, whether it was named as mediation and good offices or not, Turkey has clearly made a move towards bringing conflicting parties closer to compromise. The recent peaceful moves by Turkey have been subject to extensive media debate. However, academic debate has been limited in this context. Scholars have used good offices and mediation as examples, and as additional evidence for their studies. However, as Sami Kohen noted in his column, Turkey’s recent efforts towards building peace in the region need closer attention.

Interestingly enough, this recent change in Turkish foreign policy and its declaration of itself as a ‘natural born mediator’ became apparent at a time when Turkey was coming closer to the EU. Turkey has been a candidate for membership since December 17, 1999 decision of the Helsinki European Council, followed by the start of accession negotiations on October 3, 2005. In a period when scholars talk extensively about the Europeanization of foreign policy and when ‘mediation and good offices’ are also extensively used by the EU for conflict prevention purposes, we find it valuable to study whether the EU accession process might have contributed to this self-declaration by Turkey.

Considering the fact that the EU is one of the most powerful economic, political and legal institutions in the world, it is uniquely positioned to positively impact armed conflict situations. Indeed, it actively promotes the principles of conflict prevention and resolution (Herrberg, 2008). The EU’s mediation activities range from political and financial support to actual mediation activities. Although mediation as an EU foreign policy tool was adopted with the concept paper by the Council only in 2009, it has long been an established practice, albeit on an ad-hoc basis. The EU is considered a ‘multi-track’ mediator as it harnesses and co-ordinates the resources and capabilities of States, NGOs, and organizations. (1)

By observing the progress of Turkish foreign policy, this paper tries to understand the extent to which EU conditionality has been effective in transforming its adherence to soft power instruments, mainly its involvement in good offices and mediation. Considering both intention and action as the evidence for mediation, this paper tests the effectiveness of EU conditionality in seven phases which allow for variation of the independent variables. It concludes that the preferences of the political parties in government and the degree of their convergence with the EU’s demands have been keys for understanding the change in Turkish foreign policy. A favorable domestic capacity has also been significant in turning the policy-makers’ intentions into actions and has helped them defend their intentions more decisively. This study posits that domestic capacity and a pro-EU government have been both individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for compliance and that the EU’s credibility has been of secondary importance.
MEDIATION AS A NEW SECTOR IN FOREIGN POLICY

Mediation and good offices are the two methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes identified by the United Nations (2) as well as by the Hague Convention of 1899 (3) being exclusively ‘third party interventions.’ In legal terms, good offices and mediation are usually referred to as different mechanisms although they are similar. Both approaches are employed for dispute settlement. (4) In fact, the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 did not differentiate them. Especially in the domestic context, one can find states refusing to identify themselves as mediator. They prefer terms such as ‘facilitator,’ or ‘message carrier.’ Sometimes they even avoid taking these positions and they just refer to a ‘constructive contribution’ in the peace process. This is particularly the case for Turkey. Nevertheless, the literature on mediation does not make such a distinction. In its most apparent form, ‘facilitation’ is one type of mediation. In general, there are three basic styles in the mediation literature that are relevant to this study. These are ‘facilitation,’ ‘formulation’ and ‘manipulation’ (Bercovitch and Houston, 1996; Princen, 1992; Touval and Zartman, 1985). (5)

Mediators try to bring the parties in the conflict to the point where they are willing to talk to each other (Curle, 1986), and try to correct misinformation and provide a channel of communication between the parties without being blinded by such emotions as anger, fear, and suspicion (Curle, 1986; Miall, 1992: 77). When the positions of the parties appear to be rigid, the mediating state can also act as a ‘facilitator’ during the negotiations. Hence, acting as a ‘facilitator’ represents a further stage of mediation and it involves the good offices mission. The facilitator listens to the process, asks questions, and seeks to keep the discussion constructive and analytical (Miall, 1992: 74). In order to avoid any confusion, I refer to mediation here in general terms, and I define mediation as any kind of act that is aimed to bring peace between the disputed parties. Within this framework, I include in my definition both ‘message carrier,’ ‘facilitator’ and ‘constructive contributor to peace.’ I sometimes use these terms interchangeably within the merits of this definition.

As defined, this paper uses good offices and mediation as indicators of foreign policy which provide evidence to assess the change. As the change in Turkish foreign policy is a hot debate at the time of writing this paper, good offices and mediation offer an invaluable opportunity to indicate the existence or absence of change. This assumption is derived from Touval’s (2003) conceptualization of mediation as part of foreign policy which allows the researcher to bring the debate from a limited perspective of techniques in influencing dynamics to the broader framework of strategic action within the international domestic political systems. Studying mediation as an independent activity simply focuses on how the mediator influences the relationship between the disputants. With the alternative conceptualization of mediation as part of foreign policy, this allows the researcher to evaluate the goals and strategies of states that lead them to mediate in a conflict. From this perspective, the effectiveness of mediation is not limited to ending the conflict, but, in broader terms, it is related to the extent to which the mediator satisfies the foreign policy objectives which motivated it to adopt such a role (Touval, 2003: 92). (6) These foreign policy objectives might be the expansion of the mediator’s geographical influence and the advancement of the world order. Thus, this alternative approach allows us to identify mediation as a policy instrument and to test the influence of diverse domestic and international factors that shape the mediating state’s behavior.

The hypotheses tested here are that the contributing factors in the development in Turkey’s foreign policy sector are its candidacy for full membership in the EU, the continuous pressure from the EU
to adopt the ‘peaceful settlement of disputes’ and to adhere to the principles of ‘good neighborly relations,’ and the recent declaration by the Turkish government of itself as a ‘natural born mediator.’ Is Turkey adopting such an approach in order to please the EU and to convince its partners that Turkey is adhering to such principles? Or is Turkey adopting such an approach in order to boost its regional importance? Or does Turkey have economic interests to satisfy that motivate it to act as a mediator? Apparently, answering all these questions would be an ambitious project. Here I will offer a more modest one and test whether Turkey’s new sector in its foreign policy appeared due to the continuing pressure from the EU.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical assumption to be examined here derives from the ‘external incentives model’ which is also linked to March and Olsen’s (1989) ‘logic of consequences.’ The assumptions of the model rest on the arguments of rational choice institutionalism. According to the model, states comply with the EU’s requirements as a result of a strategic calculation and on their belief that the benefits of compliance exceed the costs. According to this model, the EU level factors are filtered and mediated through domestic level factors. It starts with the identification of ‘misfit’ between the national level norms on the one hand and the EU level norms on the other hand (Börzel and Risse, 2003; Cowles et al., 2001).

Among the EU level factors, ‘conditionality’ is the major instrument used by the EU in order to influence applicant states (Hughes et al., 2004: 524). This refers to general or country-specific conditions that the EU formulates through a number of documents and reports, and requires candidate countries to comply with them (Grabbe, 2001, 2003; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004; Smith, 2003). If the candidates fail to comply, then the EU acts as a ‘gate-keeper’ in order to embarrass the applicant governments, and prevent them from proceeding to the further stages of integration (Grabbe, 2001: 1021). Nevertheless, apart from the publicly stated preconditions, The EU’s Commission has wider leverage in its policy recommendations when the *acquis* is thin in a policy area. This is referred to as ‘informal conditionality’ by Hughes et al. (2004: 526), and it is significantly important for foreign policy due to the thinness of the EU in this area. Although it is argued that the lack of clearly formulated demands diminishes the effectiveness of the EU conditionality (Checkel, 2005; Grabbe, 2001, 2003; Hughes et al., 2004; Schimmelfennig, 2004), it is wise to argue that uncertainty leads candidate countries to invent their own ways to convince the EU that they are adopting the requirements set out as conditionality.

Apart from the clarity of demands, and the possibility of informal conditionality, compliance with the EU requirements by applicant states is determined by the size of the rewards (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004). Incentives may be material such as financial aid and market access, or social, such as international recognition, legitimacy, high status or a positive image (Schimmelfennig et al., 2003: 498). Above all, the possibility of full membership is proved to be the strongest reward when this framework is applied to Central and Eastern European States (Schimmelfennig, et al., 2003) and the absence of full membership perspective significantly diminishes the EU’s external leverage (Kelley, 2006). The credibility of the EU’s incentives is another important factor determining the EU’s leverage (Schimmelfennig, 2004; Schimmelfennig and Scholtz, 2008; Schimmelfennig et al., 2003).

Schimmelfennig et al. (2003: 514) highlighted that together with a credible membership promise the low costs of domestic adaptation are defined as individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions.
for compliance by candidate countries. It is argued that domestic political actors are motivated by a logic of consequences (March and Olsen, 1989) and they follow an instrumentalist approach by trying to maximize their benefits (political or material ones) in complying with the EU conditionality. It is also the domestic adaptation costs that determine the number of veto players who might resist change (Börzel and Risse, 2000; Cowles, et al., 2000; Schimmelfennig et al., 2003; Vachudová, 2001). This in the end determines the reform capacity of a country which depends on the number of veto players and the strength of the political leadership (Héritier and Knill, 2001; Hughes et al., 2004; Radaelli, 2000).

In this paper, it is assumed that the EU’s formal conditionality on the peaceful settlement of disputes is also perceived as an ‘informal conditionality’ by the Turkish policy-makers. Hence, following the practice of the EU foreign policy, Turkish policy makers, who are under constant pressure from the EU, will find ways to demonstrate their adherence to the principles of good neighborly relations and peaceful settlement of disputes. Without doubt, undertaking the mediation and good offices mission is a good way for this and this is what this paper is using as an indicator of foreign policy behavior.

Hypotheses

On the basis of this discussion of the mechanism of conditionality, I put forward hypotheses about the varying effectiveness of the EU’s pressure on Turkey with regard to the peaceful settlement of disputes. Following this model, once the EU formulated demands for the peaceful settlement of disputes in the 1989 Commission Opinion (Avis) on Turkey’s application, it would remain constant. Hence, the clarity of the EU’s demands appeared as early as 1989. From then on, the effectiveness of EU conditionality has depended on the credibility and the adoption costs.

Hypothesis I: The EU conditionality is likely to work when the EU membership perspective is credible.

The credibility of incentives varies with the size of the incentives. Hence, the more the EU’s incentives are close to the full membership reward, the more likely that it will lead to the effectiveness of conditionality.

Hypothesis II: If the EU conditionality is effective, the likelihood of the adoption of the EU’s rules depends on the political costs to Turkey in satisfying the EU pressure on the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is assumed that these costs will increase the more the EU conditions negatively affect the security and integrity of the state. Hence, the lower the domestic costs of compliance for Turkey, the more likely conditionality will be effective.

In order to test this hypothesis, a number of variables need to be set out. To begin, three kinds of veto players are identified. The preferences of the political parties in government are the first one. If the government is pro-EU, supports Turkey’s membership in the EU and adheres to the EU norms of a peaceful settlement of disputes, it is not expected to be a veto player. Next, as Turkish foreign policy is traditionally in the hands of diplomats and the military officials whose power is exerted through the National Security Council (NSC), the autonomy and opinion of these elites become important in order to support or resist change. Lastly, domestic capacity is important. If the country is suffering from
political instability, economic problems, or facing threats of Islamic fundamentalism or separatism, the response to EU conditionality will be negative.

In line with this background information and the hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework, the test case will be seven phases of Turkish foreign policy which will be indicated by the good offices and mediation roles adopted by Turkey since its application to the EU membership. Because it indicates the desire to change, I take 1987 as the starting date with its application for full membership.

**METHODOLOGY**

This section first makes explicit the advantages and pitfalls of the research design, then highlights the considerations made during the data collection process and outlines the problems encountered and the steps taken to overcome these problems. This paper is based on the assumption that good offices and mediation in general are invaluable indicators of foreign policy behavior in which a change can clearly be observed. Such behavior indicates a change towards a ‘soft power’ approach by shifting to peaceful instruments in conducting foreign affairs and ruling out the use of force. Nevertheless, there are limitations to this approach as the decision of a state to involve itself in mediation might be motivated by a number of other factors, i.e. protecting the economic and security interests of the country. The state undertaking a role as a mediator might give second place to peace, but might be more motivated to achieve peace due to its direct economic or political benefits to the state. These considerations will be highlighted in the empirical section.

As for data collection, a number of factors need to be highlighted. First, both intention and action were considered as evidence for mediation and were then analyzed through different lenses, such as whether the actor offered mediation or was invited to it, whether its role as a mediator was confirmed by other actors, and what procedures were followed in order to start and conduct the mediation and good offices missions. The data was collected mainly from secondary sources such as newspapers, and two methods were followed in order to do that. The first part of the data collection, from 1987 to 1997, was started with the *Milliyet* newspaper because it has an archive dating back to the 1950s and allows comparison over time. It also has a keyword search which is accessible through the Internet. When the evidence was found in *Milliyet*, the dates corresponding to that evidence were searched in four other newspapers, *Cumhuriyet*, *Hürriyet*, *Tercüman* and *Sabah*. These newspapers were selected for pragmatic reasons due to the availability of the data because their archives could be reached in the library of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) in Ankara where the microfiche of these newspapers are provided.

For the second period, from 1997 to 2011, all the newspapers are accessible in digital format through a keyword search that can be obtained upon a freedom of information request to the library of the TGNA. There are three difficulties in accessing this data. The first one is because the news was coded into the word document by the staff working in the TGNA library and there were no page numbers as it appeared in the newspaper. With that also, the information can only be collected upon official request. Third, some of the news was not coded when it appeared in two newspapers on the same day. Nevertheless, the system ensures that the news appeared at least once.

Additionally, other data sources such as statements, press releases, governmental documents and other newspapers were also used on a complementary basis in order to trace the process of mediation.
Governmental papers and press releases from 1997 onwards are also readily available via the Internet and are authentic in the sense that they are official and can be used to make general observations both over time and across different actors. The same documents corresponding to earlier periods can be obtained with the freedom of information request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

Data has been analyzed carefully in order not to allow the politicization among the newspapers to affect the analysis. For that reason, only facts were traced rather than opinions. Even when using the articles as a data source, the same considerations applied. Considering the fact that mediation was not always used as the term, this thesis does not disregard the fact that different terminologies might imply the same meaning that mediation entails. For that reason, apart from ‘mediation,’ other terms are also used in order to do the keyword research. These are ‘good offices mission,’ ‘negotiation,’ ‘good office and dialogue,’ ‘good sense’ and ‘peaceful settlement.’ Sorting the data through these keywords allows the researcher to confirm that the data is valid and that the relevant information has been added into the datasheet with an assessment of whether the mediation was invited or offered, whether it is accepted or refused, and whether it was conducted or not. Hence, both intention and action are taken into consideration rather than merely the actual action. Finally for referencing, Milliyet is given as the source in order to allow the reader to trace the data.

PHASES OF TURKISH MEDIATION


Among the EU level factors, the clarity of the EU’s foreign policy has been hard to discern since the EU had a very loose foreign policy coordination within the framework of the European Political Cooperation (EPC); moreover, it was not even applicable to third countries. Nevertheless, as Turkey applied for full membership in 1987, the first Commission Opinion in 1989, generally known as Avis, emphasized the peaceful settlement of disputes and good neighborly relations as areas that need attention. However, the EU did not offer a membership perspective, and therefore it did not have much credibility. Among the domestic level factors, the preferences of the Motherland Party (ANAP) government converged with the EU’s preferences in general and it was a pro-EU government as indicated by its application for full membership. Other domestic factors had mixed results. The veto position of the military bureaucracy was low as Özal chose a candidate of his liking to be Chief of Staff, General Necip Torumtay. Nevertheless, the veto position of the civil bureaucracy was high. Both of these veto players were skeptical about the security dimension. Hence, they were against Turkey’s mediation in general as they considered it risky. The domestic capacity was low due to both Kurdish terrorism and the poor economic conditions in the country.

Regarding the outcome, Turkey showed an interest in involving itself in good offices and mediation. There were some other favorable factors as well. Due to the fact that Turkey followed a policy of ‘active neutrality’ towards the Iran-Iraq war, this provided room for Özal to express his intention and grasp the opportunity to offer to mediate between Iran and Iraq. As the conflict expanded to include the US as well, with the same intention and decisiveness, Turkey offered to mediate between Iran and the U.S. However, this could remain an offer only because the US position was completely against Turkey’s mediation. While Turkey declared its intention to mediate, the U.S. asked Turkey to become involved in its military operations and criticized Turkey because while Kuwait and other Muslim countries openly supported the U.S., Turkey was asking for ‘good faith’ although it was a NATO member (Yavuz, 1987).
 Özal also wanted to mediate between Palestine and the U.S. but this plan was soon abandoned because of the harsh criticisms raised by the Foreign Service bureaucracy. Diplomats believed that Turkey had no chance of being successful in such a controversial issue. Turkey’s neutrality was already questioned by its acceptance of Waldheim and its recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), thus weakening the relations with the Jewish lobby and Israel. Diplomats believed that not Turkey but the EC could take such a role since Turkey was not in a position to pressure an international conference on Israel. Hence, they believed that such an attempt would have a detrimental effect on Turkey’s prestige in the international arena and would damage Turkey’s carefully calculated and balanced policies towards the Arab world and the Islamic Middle East (Yalçın, 1988).

These outcomes indicate that Turkey had been interested in playing a role as a mediator and that this had been purely motivated by the preferences of the ruling party, ANAP. Additionally, the effective veto position of the civil bureaucracy, and the US as an external actor were significant. However there was no data to test the military bureaucracy’s veto position. These veto positions hampered Turkey putting its intentions into action. An extension of this analysis can clearly identify that economic factors motivated the Özal administration more than peaceful purposes. Considering the fact that the Turkish economy really benefited from ‘active neutrality’ during Iran-Iraq war, this strategic calculation seems to be quite rational.

President Özal’s response to an Armenian invitation to mediate over Nagorno-Karabakh issue by saying that “Armenia should be coerced” indicates that peace was not a priority. While Armenia was open to dialogue and accepted Turkey’s role without questioning its neutrality, Özal’s declaration led Armenia to start considering Turkey as a party to the conflict (Birand, 1991). Lastly, Özal’s decision to involve Turkey in the Gulf War and his emphasis on the economic benefits of being involved was just another confirmation that a peace-making role was not a priority in this time in Turkish foreign policy. Mediation was considered an opportunity for boosting Turkey’s interests. If Turkey was motivated by peace-making, it would have offered mediation to Iraq rather than leaving such a role to Norway. Hence, this period clearly indicates the importance of domestic factors alone and without conditionality.

Phase II: 1991-1995

The EU level variables remained constant. The EU still did not provide a membership perspective, but, rather, continued to pressure Turkey to adhere to the principles of a peaceful settlement of disputes. At the domestic level, there was a change of government. Turkish politics entered an era of coalition governments with the election of the government consisting of the Social Democrat People’s Party (Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti-SHP) and the True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi – DYP), in short, the SHP-DYP coalition which later turned into the Republican Peoples Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi-CHP) and the DYP coalition when the SHP joined the CHP.

Nevertheless, this was a coalition of like-minded parties and they were both supportive of Turkey’s integration into the EU. In general they also shared the principles of a peaceful settlement of disputes. Among the other factors, the military bureaucracy held a higher veto position after 1993 when an economic crisis hit the country and inflation reached 100%. This domestic situation was aggravated by the intensifying PKK activity. In such a troubled domestic environment, the military adopted an influential role and its veto position increased. The end of the Cold War created an uncertain environment with newly emerging threats in Turkey’s neighborhood.
When we look at the outcome, Turkey became more active as its foreign policy horizons expanded with the end of the Cold War. This was highlighted by its more active, although hesitant, involvement largely due to the fear of refusal and of being blamed for interfering in the internal affairs of other states. Hence, it did not seek to adopt such a role when the conflict was not between two independent states. A good illustration of this would be Ankara’s refusal to mediate between Gorbachev and the Turkic republics, a position which was also shared by the Foreign Service bureaucracy (Bila, 1990). A similar approach was adopted towards Chechnya’s invitation which was not confirmed by Russia. Nevertheless, when Turkey’s security was at stake, Turkey started to adopt such a role, but it did so by refusing to be named as a ‘mediator.’ This was apparent in Turkey’s approach to the conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia (Sazak, 1994), and between Albania and Macedonia (Doğan, 1995) where in both cases Turkey sought to adopt a ‘friendly mission’ or ‘message carrying’ position rather than acting as a ‘mediator.’ Hence, its peace-making role was not very visible.

This was nowhere more apparent than in Turkey’s Iraq policy. When Turkey was invited by Saddam Hussein to mediate between himself and the UN for the removal of the embargo (Artı-Haber, 1995), it was immediately accepted by the Turkish authorities because the Turkish economy suffered from that embargo. Security considerations also became clear when Turkey abandoned its traditional Saddam-oriented Iraq policy and offered to mediate between Barzani and Talabani. It displayed an even more uncertain and hesitant approach when it offered to mediate between Barzani and Saddam Hussein. Even though both Kurdish factions accepted this invitation, Turkey withdrew its proposal later on and a Kurdish Summit was held in Dublin under U.S. mediation and Turkey’s supervision. Turkey aimed, with the presence of the U.S., to inform Kurdish leaders about the definite necessity of respecting Iraq’s territorial integrity and about Ankara’s security concerns caused by the PKK’s infiltrations into Northern Iraq (Diş-Haberler-Servisi, 1995a; 1995b).

Nonetheless, when the conflict was between two independent states, Turkey was more assertive and did not hesitate to be named as a ‘mediator.’ A good example of this was Turkey’s mediation between Azerbaijan and the Turkic Republics in order to convince them to adopt the Istanbul declaration, supporting the UN-OSCE mission in Karabakh (Çalışkan et al., 1994). Similarly, Turkey hosted a meeting between the Croatian and Bosnian leaders which resulted in an agreement (Batur, 1994; Yinanç, 1994). As the Serbian attacks continued, Turkey offered its ‘good offices’ mission in order to encourage the idea of a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual federation to empower the Bosnians against the Serbs (Bereket, 1995; Kohen, 1995a). President Süleyman Demirel also offered to mediate between Israel and Palestine and started a shuttle diplomacy for this purpose that involved Egypt also in the process (Bila, 1994; Çınar, 1995). Nevertheless, in most of these cases, there were apparent economic benefits to Turkey. This was clear from Turkey’s mediation between Israel and Palestine, which was realized by the establishment of Turkish-Israeli Business Council (Özkaya, 1993). An invitation from the Libyan leader Qaddafi to mediate between him and both the neighboring countries and the West also reminded Turkey of its tardy role and was immediately accepted by Prime Minister Tansu Çiller (Doğan, 1996). However, here too, Turkey tried to collect the money Qaddafi owed to Turkey, to end his support to PKK terrorism and stop the money transfers to the mosques which the Islamic Welfare party had been receiving.

The results indicate that Turkey was not motivated by resolving international conflicts primarily, but by maximizing its economic and security interests. Even at times when it was motivated by peace-making interests, such as between Israel and Palestine, it also tried to enhance its economic interests. In the overall sense, it adopted a hesitant approach to mediation and tried to avoid the blame of interfering
in the internal affairs of another state. When there were no clear benefits to Turkey, mediation offers faced resistance from the Foreign Service bureaucracy fearing that it might have a detrimental effect on Turkey’s interests. Hence, the EU had no visibility; only domestic factors shaped Turkish foreign policy during this time.

**Phase III: 1995-1997**

Among the *EU level* variables, the EU’s credibility increased slightly with the establishment of a customs union, but none of the documents promised full membership to Turkey as it desired. Despite its low credibility, the EU continued its political conditionality with regard to the peaceful settlement of disputes. Even though the EU referred to the Cyprus dispute and relations with Greece, this was combined with an informal conditionality on other matters. Hence, the size and credibility of the incentives were low. The *domestic level* variables highlighted a tension between the coalition partners inside Turkey. In particular, the True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi* –DYP) and the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi* –RP) coalition was marked with differences in opinion due to their different ideological orientations. Although the coalition program supported Turkey’s membership, it was without emphasis. Other domestic problems such as intense PKK terrorism, economic problems and the threat of Islamic fundamentalism were prevalent as well. In such a troubled environment, the military had a strong veto position.

As for the *outcome*, Turkey continued with its hesitant approach in an even more visible way. It declared its intention to mediate only when its security was under threat; it avoided doing so alone, and tried to involve other countries as well. Turkey’s approach in supporting a ceasefire among the Kurdish leaders was a good example when it sought the U.S. involvement as before (Kohen, 1996). Since it did not produce any progress, Turkey invited Iran to take a joint action in order to bring the Kurdish leaders into an agreement (Güven, 1996). Turkey also deafened its ears to Saddam Hussein’s invitations to mediate between Iraq and Israel, but rather offered to mediate between the U.S. and Iraq in order to prevent the possibility of a military operation by the U.S. At the same time Iraq also sent some signals asking for Turkey’s mediation (Emirlioğlu, 1997). All these indicated a strong focus on a security approach. Decision-makers preferred not to adopt the sensitive roles which they considered detrimental to Turkey’s security. This was also apparent from Turkey’s refusal to act as a mediator in the peace process, but simply passed messages, without naming itself as such, even though improved relations with Israel gave Turkey a better chance to involve itself as a mediator (Bila, 1996; Yazaroğlu, 1997).

Turkey also refused to take such a role in Afghanistan in order to stop the Islamic fundamentalism of the Taliban regime. The Foreign Service bureaucrats believed that Turkey’s prestige would be hurt since it did not have any chance of being successful while there were other strong actors in the region (Çakırözler, 1996; Kohen, 1996). Referring to the territorial integrity of Afghanistan, Çiller declared her willingness to host a meeting for peace talks on Afghanistan if it were under UN auspices (Yinanç, 1996). If collective action was to be taken, Turkey declared its willingness to engage in shuttle diplomacy in order to convince the conflicting parties to sit at the negotiating table (Report, 1997). The same hesitant approach persisted. Turkey missed an important opportunity by deafening its ears to calls for mediation from the Chechen leader Dudayev and from his widowed wife Alla Dudayeva, knowing that it would not be accepted by Russia. Turkey was also concerned that its mediation would mean the abandonment of the Turkish policy which recognized the Chechen problems as an ‘internal
affair,’ although acceptance of such a role by the Kremlin would confirm Turkey’s role as regional player (Başlamış, 1996).

The results indicate that Turkey was not influenced by the EU conditionality whatsoever. Security considerations clearly prevailed and the positions of the Foreign Service bureaucracy did not leave any room for elected representatives to engage in such a role. The domestic situation was aggravated by PKK terrorism, and added to this the Syrian support of the PKK and the conflict over Kardak/Imia islets pushed Turkey to become an inward-looking country. Turkey was slowly missing the golden opportunity created by the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc and was stepping back while Russia and Iran were taking important steps in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Other problems included the slow process in the formation of the government after the 24th of December elections that took more than six months. Due to the fragile domestic environment, important international problems that required urgent attention failed short of the agenda. Turkey was almost pushed out of the region with the steps taken by Russia and Iran. In terms of regional substance also, Turkey pulled back from the Balkans and did not involve itself as a mediator. Security problems alone dominated the agenda.

Phase IV: 1997-1999

Among the EU level factors, the EU continued to formulate clear demands. However, the credibility of the incentives declined with the Luxembourg European Council’s exclusion of Turkey as a candidate country. At the domestic level, coalition governments serving during this period had a higher degree of convergence with the EU. All the parties serving in the government were supportive of Turkey’s membership with the EU. However, domestic capacity continued to be low due to the continuing intensity of PKK terrorism. On the other hand, the veto position of the civil bureaucracy and the military bureaucracy continued to be high.

As for the outcome, Turkey’s mediation attempts were motivated by protecting its security by trying to stop the regional conflicts and achieving peace. This was apparent in Turkey’s willingness to mediate between the U.S. and Iraq in order to convince Saddam Hussein to comply with the international demands so as to stop an American invasion of Iraq. Such an intervention would clearly have detrimental effects on the Turkish economy as the first Gulf War demonstrated. Achieving peace was clearly of secondary importance. Turkey was decisive in ending the conflict by offering its mediation. When the reactions became apparent from the U.S., Turkey called its role not ‘mediation’ but ‘facilitation’ and a good offices mission. In reality, Foreign Minister İsmail Cem was no more than a ‘message carrier.’ He aimed to convince Iraq to comply with the UN decisions (Çakıroğlu, 1998). Due to the concerns over the consequences of the war on Turkey, all the domestic actors supported Turkey’s mediation efforts in consultation with the regional countries such as Iran, Egypt, and Jordan as well as the UN, rather than taking a unilateral approach (Kohen, 1998). However, there was an extreme concern by the policy makers regarding Turkey’s role in visiting Saddam Hussein. This concern became clear when the Prime Minister declared that İsmail Cem took this initiative on behalf of his party and that as the Foreign Minister he did not represent the government (Report, 1998).

Turkey was also invited by Arafat to mediate between Palestine and Israel: but İsmail Cem called attention to the U.S. dimension and to Israel’s internal dynamics. It was clear that Turkey needed the U.S. to confirm such a role for Turkey (Yılmaz and Yazaroğlu, 1998). However, İsmail Cem wanted to include Jordan and Egypt in the peace process and take a collective initiative. He offered a regional cooperation and security forum similar to OSCE, as a mechanism (Yınanç and Yazaroğlu, 1998).
In other cases, Turkish mediation involved only the Caucasus which included mediation between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan regarding the natural gas and oil pipeline issues. However, this role was also far from being motivated by either a peace plan or normative considerations. Contrary to its ambivalent position in the Middle East, the U.S. was entirely supportive of this mediation as it wanted to push Iran away from the game. On the other hand, Turkey was trying to mediate between Iran and the U.S. Turkey had obvious economic benefits for involving itself in such mediation. In fact, as a result, Turkey managed to sign an agreement with Chernomyrdin. Turkey also undertook consultations with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Iran and involved the U.S. in the plans that managed to bring the process to a stage of feasibility studies on an energy agreement (Bila, 1999; Doğan, 1998).

The results indicate that Turkey continued to balance its economy and security. Although peace-making was included in the intentions of the policy makers, the low domestic capacity due to high security risks required it to give priority to ensuring its security. Nevertheless, one can also highlight the fact that Turkey was influenced by the reduced credibility of the EU membership perspective due to its exclusion as a candidate in Luxembourg European Council. This was quite visible compared to the earlier period. Despite the fact that the government’s ideology was closer to the EU norms, Turkey was less involved in mediation. On the other hand, domestic constraints and the veto position of the civil bureaucracy were very effective because Turkey was involved in mediation only to ensure its security and economic interests.

**Phase V: 1999-2002**

During this process, there was a significant change in the EU level variables. Turkey was declared a candidate country in the Helsinki European Council in 1999 which made the EU membership perspective credible for the first time. The EU also continued to formulate demands, albeit clearly aimed at the peaceful settlement of disputes and good neighborly relations. At the domestic level, there was a change of government, and the coming into power of the ANASOL-M government, a coalition of ANAP-DSP-MHP parties that had a highly converging ideology with the EU. Despite the fact that the MHP was a nationalist party, they did not deviate from the general pattern of supporting the EU. As for the domestic capacity, the PKK terrorism was minimized with the arrest of its leader Abdullah Öcalan. On the other hand, an economic crises hit the country badly during this whole phase.

As for the outcome, the peace-making role started to appear slightly as can be observed by Foreign Minister İsmail Cem’s self-declared ‘facilitator’ role in the Middle East peace process by partially abandoning his fears. Again, there was controversial domestic debate on the role, and the title ‘facilitator’ seems to be a compromise in order to avoid using ‘mediator.’ It was referred to as a ‘constructive contributor’ for achieving peace in order to avoid challenging the Camp David process (Report, 2000a). However, Foreign Minister İsmail Cem acted more decisively by warning Arafat not to hinder the peace process and by declaring his good faith by allowing Jewish worship in the Harem El-Sharif (Yinanç, 2000b). İsmail Cem acted constructively and declared that he wanted to bring new ideas based on the experiences of ruling Jerusalem for four hundred years. In order to avoid hindering the balanced relations with the Middle Eastern neighbors, Cem acted cautiously in his statements that could have had a negative influence in the Arabic and Islamic world, in the U.S. and Christian world and in Israel. He also sought to coordinate Turkey’s policies and to consult the U.S. as well as other regional countries (Kohen, 2000; Payzın, 2000; Yinanç, 2000a).
İsmail Cem also wanted to initiate a peace committee, also invited by Israel, to end the violence. However, Prime Minister Ecevit did not want to be involved directly, mostly due to the ongoing American initiatives and the belief that Turkey’s prestige would be hurt if it was not successful. Therefore, Ecevit suggested that peace committee should involve volunteers from both sides at the civil society level; this could also create an environment for dialogue between the parties rather than Turkey’s sitting in at the official level (Yılmaz, 2001). These efforts paid off later and President Demirel was invited by American Foreign Minister Albright to participate in the mediation committee which was interpreted as a confirmation of Turkey’s weight (Report, 2000b). During his involvement in the Middle East Examination Committee, Demirel sought further initiatives such as hosting the second meeting of the committee and the participation of two Turkish citizens on the expert committee that would be sent to the region (Report, 2000c).

With regard to the Caucasus, President Demirel started to mediate between Georgia and Azerbaijan during his visit to Tbilisi over the conflict regarding the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline. Turkey had obvious gains from this mediation as Demirel also met Clinton’s advisor and informed him about the importance of the pipeline issue for Turkey. With regard to the dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia, a Caucasus Stability Pact was initiated by Turkey but its active involvement was limited by the lack of diplomatic relations with Armenia (Eralp, 2001). Later on, Foreign Minister İsmail Cem made a step forward and offered for Turkey to mediate negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia. However, the Armenian Foreign Ministry immediately rejected Turkey’s mediation on account of Turkey constituting a party to the conflict. Armenia considered the lack of diplomatic relations between the two countries as an obstacle to such a role (Eralp, 2001). It is important to note that Demirel’s visit to Georgia after visiting Azerbaijan also signaled that Turkey put a value on Georgian territorial integrity which was under threat from Russia. Additionally, Turkey was also involved in passing messages from Pakistan who sought to start dialogue, to India during his visit to Pakistan and India (Yılmaz, 2000).

Overall, the results indicated that Turkey continued to follow an isolated approach with the exception of a more active involvement in the Middle East peace process. Hence, the EU’s increasing credibility did not translate into a more active involvement by Turkey in the peaceful activities in its neighborhood. This clearly indicates the importance of domestic factors such as low domestic capacity due to economic crises and the perception of a high threat from PKK terrorism. Perceptions of Prime Minister Ecevit and the Foreign Service bureaucracy prevailed. Hence, when Turkey did not gain any direct benefits from mediation, it did not seek such a role.

**Phase VI: 2002-2006**

In this phase, the EU level factors remained constant. The EU continued to formulate clear demands for peaceful settlement of disputes. The size and credibility of the incentives remained constant. With the Copenhagen European Council decision in 2002, the possibility of opening accession negotiations appeared. Hence, the EU kept the process alive despite negative statements from Sarkozy, and public opinion supported the EU membership. At the domestic level, the election of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) to the government highlighted a dramatic change. Despite the new AKP government being a moderate Islamic one, its support for Turkey’s membership in the EU was the highest among all the governments since the periods I have examined here. Another dramatic change was perhaps the strength of the government. Although the AKP got only 34% of the votes, due to the characteristics of the electoral system, it managed to get 66% of the seats in the Parliament. Therefore,
the government was able to take decisions fairly quickly without being vulnerable to the opinions of other parties. Simultaneously, domestic capacity improved considerably. The IMF-imposed economic program in 2001 by the ANASOL-M government started to yield fruits and the economy stabilized. PKK terrorism was also minimal.

As for the outcome, the immediate benefits appeared in Turkish foreign policy. It broke its isolationist, inward looking policy by actively becoming involved in the resolution of international conflicts. This role was clearly integrated into the foreign policy goals when it declared its role as a ‘natural born mediator’ between the Muslim and non-Muslim world due to its culture and identity. With the progress in the EU membership perspective, Turkey gained self-confidence as its ties with the EU rendered Turkey more acceptable in the region. The chief foreign policy advisor took an active interest in promoting the EU’s policies in which helping in the resolution of the conflicts in the region was one of them. Nevertheless, Turkey’s role as a mediator or facilitator was not greeted with the same interest in all regions.

In the Middle East, a number of steps were taken. Building on İsmail Cem’s initiative of involving regional countries in order to prevent the possibility of a war between the U.S. and Iraq, a meeting of Iraqi neighbors started in 2003. Additionally, Turkey showed a decisive role in reducing tension between Iran and Syria (Onal, 2005; Report, 2003a). Despite the fact that Turkish public opinion was pro-Palestinian and other Arab and Muslim countries were against Israel, Turkey insisted in adopting a political role in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian dispute (Erdoğan, 2005; Öke, 2004). Neither the absence of a request from the parties (Report, 2003b) nor its exclusion from the Middle East Peace Conference held in London (Report, 2005) discouraged Turkey. Turkey’s role was considered only in terms of infrastructure and logistics, rather than as active participation in the political process. Despite these unfavorable conditions, Turkey started to take initiatives at the Track II level by holding an ‘economic summit’ for the reconstruction of Gaza, and it included the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği -TOBB) in the process (Çakırözer, 2005). Within this context, two meetings were held by Israeli and Palestinian businessmen, which were considered as an important peaceful initiative (İdiz, 2005). Additionally, Turkey made a direct investment in the Erez Industrial Zone and set up a hotline to Palestine in order to contribute to the peace process (Report, 2005a).

Turkey’s decisiveness in involving itself in the political process became particularly apparent when it invited Hamas representatives as soon as Hamas won the elections. After consultations with Pakistan and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), it recommended that its leaders put down their arms and work with El-Fetih. Despite being criticized for inviting Hamas, Erdoğan spoke to European leaders arguing that ignoring dialogue with Hamas was not the right thing to do because Hamas was chosen by the Palestinian people and its opinion had to be respected. In a similar vein, Turkey declared its intention to ‘facilitate’ talks between Israel and Syria (Bayramoğlu, 2004) which was crucial for making Turkey’s active foreign policy possible.

Turkey also adopted a diplomatic initiative and mediated between Pakistan and Israel for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries (Report, 2005d). Optimism also came from Caucasus following the statement by Abdullah Gül after his visit to Azerbaijan reporting the plans for a trilateral summit between Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan in order to contribute to the settlement of the 12-year-old conflict over Karabakh. But at the same time, Turkey maintained its traditional policy of not opening its border to Armenia prior to the settlement of the conflict (Report,
However, the plans were later withdrawn when the Armenian Foreign Minister Oskanyan declared Turkey a party to the conflict and argued that its mediation could be effective only if Turkey stopped putting preconditions for the establishment of diplomatic relations (Report, 2005c).

One contradiction was that Turkey did not treat all the regions in the same way. For instance, despite the calls from the civil society, it did not intend to mediate between Chechnya and Russia. It was silent about the Orange Revolution in the Ukraine and the conflict between South Ossetia and Abkhazia despite the ties Turkey had in these regions and despite an open invitation from the Georgian Head of State Saakashvili (Balbay, 2004). On the other hand, when a dispute erupted between Russia and the Ukraine over natural gas, Ankara sought to activate the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) in order to contribute to peace. However, there could be little doubt that Turkey’s main concern was protecting its economic interests due to its heavy dependency on the Russian gas which was transmitted through the Ukraine (Sarıkaya, 2006).

The results indicate that there was a dramatic change in the intentions of the leaders, not just in their interest in boosting Turkey’s economic and security interests but also in contributing to world peace. The actors were clearly motivated also by normative considerations. It became clear that changes in the domestic level variables, namely the low autonomy of the veto players and high domestic capacity had been significant. This period made it clear that credibility alone was not the factor that drove the change, as credibility in the earlier period did not translate into such a dramatic change in the intentions declared. Likewise it is also important to emphasize that the Turkish policy-makers justified their intentions by relying on European norms.

**Phase VII: 2006-2010**

During this last phase, there was a change in the *EU level factors* due to the suspension of negotiations in eight chapters by a decision of the European Commission and the subsequent blocking of five chapters by France and six chapters by the Greek Cypriot administration. The credibility of the incentives was reduced even though the EU continued to pressure Turkey in the same way regarding the peaceful settlement of disputes. At the *domestic level*, the AKP was re-elected for its second term in the general elections in 2007. Other domestic factors remained constant as well, with the exception of the 2009 global financial crisis which did not affect Turkey as much as it affected Europe and the U.S. The military and the Foreign Service bureaucracy remained silent due to their low veto position. Hence, the domestic factors were largely favorable.

As for the *outcome*, Turkey continued to promote itself as a peace builder in a number of regions, e.g. Afghanistan, the Caucasus, the Middle East, and the Balkans. Contributing to ‘peace’ was declared the primary aim, together with impartiality, tolerance and mutual respect. Davutoğlu declared that the mediation and good offices missions that Turkey undertook were part of a vision rather than ordinary policy choices which required Turkey to continue the same approach even in the absence of a conflict (Kohen, 2011). Sami Kohen’s point that he made in 2009 also indicated that ‘mediation’ became a ‘sector’ in Turkish foreign policy. Among the most important mediation incidents were the ones between Syria and Israel, Pakistan and Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, as well as between certain religious and ethnic groups in Iraq and Lebanon. In the Balkans as well, Turkey tried to reconcile Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina with Serbia. Turkey continued to host regular meetings on Iraq and provided substantial humanitarian aid to Palestinians when the conflict broke out between Hamas and Israel.
over Gaza. It also immediately announced its intention of mediating after a series of consultations with the UN Secretary-General, the U.S., the Russian President and the UK Prime Minister.

It also actively took the role as a ‘facilitator’ between Israel and Lebanon following a large scale military operation by Israel against the Hezbollah movement in Lebanon. It deployed its peacekeeping troops under the aegis of the UN, and Turkey’s appropriate proposals were accepted with satisfaction by the UN, the Lebanese government, and the pro-Western Arab countries, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, as well as the EU. Additionally, it hosted a meeting of the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), Mr. Solana, and the Chief Negotiator of Iran’s nuclear program, Mr. Laricani, in Ankara. Perhaps, the most obvious initiative was its initiation of peace talks between Syria and Israel after eight years in 2008 in a meeting which Turkey hosted and acted as a ‘facilitator.’ While Ankara’s reaction to Israel’s offensive in Gaza led Israel to question its role, both the U.S. and the EU still wanted to bring the parties to the negotiation table with Turkey’s mediation. It also intended to mediate between Hamas and El-Fetih in 2009 due to the long lack of progress in direct negotiations between the parties.

A similar role was also adopted in South Asia when Turkey initiated peace talks between Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and Afghan President Hamid Karzai beginning in 2007. This mediation too was offered after consultations with the UN General Assembly and the Secretary General. Also at the Track II level, Turkey invited the representatives of the business sector within the framework of the Istanbul forum founded by the TOBB to meet with its equivalent bodies from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Turkey also wanted to include the Taliban in the political process in Afghanistan and declared its intention to mediate between Afghanistan and the Taliban.

In the Caucasus, when the conflict broke out in Ossetia Turkey immediately declared its objective of mediating, and its policy-makers refrained from making statements that could jeopardize Turkey’s role as such. Turkey believed that conflicts could only be resolved by peaceful means; additionally it initiated the Caspian Stability and Cooperation Platform in 2008 in order to contribute to the peace. To that end, it started to mediate between Baku and Ashgabat over a problem with the gas line and started a ‘good offices mission’ to help resolve a deep-seated dispute between Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan on the status of the Caspian Sea. A similar role was adopted in the Balkans between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia on the one hand and Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina on the other hand; Turkey initiated Consultation Summits with these countries on regional matters.

The results indicate that although the credibility of the full membership reward by the EU declined considerably, Turkey decisively continued to adopt a mediator role in its region. Therefore, it is largely believed that with these initiatives, Turkey tried to improve its position in the negotiations on its membership in the EU. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that Turkey also served its best interests during these negotiations. Its mediation between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan was clearly motivated by clearing the way for Turkmen gas to arrive in Turkey via the same route used in the transfer of gas from the Azeri Shah Deniz field. Its continuing mediation between the Ukraine and Russia can also be added to this. Additionally, Turkey’s role in the Balkans can be considered as a first step toward improving her relations with the EU. This period demonstrated that domestic factors have been more significant than the EU’s credibility.
FINDINGS

The evolution of the intention and action of Turkey’s mediation and good offices mission clearly shows that a credible EU membership perspective has been instrumental in transforming Turkey. But domestic factors have proved to be more significant. The table below provides a summary of the hypotheses and outcomes. It is clear that even in the absence of a clearly formulated EU conditionality, which makes the EU membership perspective not credible, the position of the ruling government’s ideology that converged with the EU has been sufficient to motivate Turkish leaders to take the initiative to mediate conflicts. Even when the demands became credible, Turkish leaders displayed hesitation both in the geographical sense and also at the substantive level. This is to say, Turkish leaders were extremely sensitive not to contradict the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another state, and involved themselves in mediation only when it would enhance their country’s security and economic interests. Phase III has demonstrated that government’s position has also been significant, but, with the low credibility of the EU’s incentives, it was not sufficient. Phase IV, and Phase VII also demonstrated that even without conditionality, the Turkish leaders have been interested in adopting a peace-making role using mediation and good offices. Phase VII was particularly revealing as diminishing credibility did not reduce Turkey’s role nor was the process reversed. It was even further enhanced by an active involvement of Turkey, as opposed to the hesitant approach that could not go beyond declaration of intention, as it had been the case in the previous periods. In this respect, the last phase indicated that a pro-EU government together with a favorable domestic environment was individually necessary and jointly sufficient for compliance with the EU conditionality.

Table 1
Summary of Hypotheses

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Phases</th>
<th>EU-Level</th>
<th>Domestic Level</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>Govt</td>
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<tr>
<td>1987-1991</td>
<td>no</td>
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<td>1991-1995</td>
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<td>low</td>
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CONCLUSION

In sum, Sami Kohen’s point that Turkey adopted a new ‘sector’ in its foreign policy is empirically justified. Even though Turkish mediation was not only motivated primarily by achieving peace, there is significant evidence to claim that in fact a new instrument appeared in Turkish foreign policy which can be actively used. Nevertheless, it is crucially important to stress that it was used as a ‘sector,’ but it is not really new since we traced the intentions of the Turkish policy makers beginning in 1987. It clearly demonstrates that since the Özal period, Turkey has wanted to play an active role in its neighborhood and has considered the good offices and mediation mission important instruments to
achieve that objective. Nevertheless, for some years neither domestic nor international factors were conducive to this. The end of the Cold War provided a significant opportunity, but Turkey entered into a period of coalition governments and was suffering from threats of Islamic fundamentalism and Kurdish terrorism. Added to these were continuing economic problems which were further reinforced by persistent political instability. All these factors forced Turkish policy-makers to take ‘one step ahead and one step back’ and Turkey displayed a hesitant behavior in declaring its desire to act as a mediator. Hence policy makers struggled between protecting security and furthering economic interests which did not allow them to take a more active role.

The Foreign Service bureaucracy has also been significant in such a troubled environment because its veto card was used on several occasions. The diplomats believed that mediation was too risky given that Turkey already had significant problems and did not need anything more. They were quite skeptical about Turkey’s mediation role because they believed that the parties in the conflict might start to consider Turkey a party to the conflict as the case of Armenia demonstrates. The Turkish policy-makers were able to put the long declared intentions into action only after its domestic capacity improved, thus giving the policy-makers self-confidence. This happened largely when the economic situation improved and Kurdish terrorism was minimized. The presence of a strong government holding the majority of the seats in the Parliament also contributed to this to a great extent. Within such an environment, EU membership perspective became only instrumental but did not contribute greatly to the change in itself.

NOTES


2. One of the purposes of the United Nations, set out in Article 1 (1) of the Charter requires “all the members to refrain in their international relations which might lead to breach of the peace.”


4. Collier and Lowe (1999: 27) explain that “the distinction between mediation and good offices is sometimes taken to be that whereas in the former the mediator takes active steps of his or its own, good offices consists of an action taken by a third party, to bring out, or initiate, or cause to be continued, negotiations, without the third party actively participating in the discussions of the dispute.”

5. Bercovitch and Gartner (2006) use slightly different terminology for these styles, classifying them as communication, facilitation, procedural, and directive strategies. Each of these styles entails a different type of mediator involvement and dictates the parameters of mediator behavior.

6. This assumption does not mean that mediating states disregard principles for effective mediation, but rather that effectiveness is usually a secondary consideration, subordinate to the mediating state’s primary domestic and foreign policy concerns (Touval, 2003: 94).
7. The relations between Albania and Macedonia were thorny. Twenty-three percent of the Macedonian population is Albanian, and ethnically Macedonia is a mosaic. Their constitution defines all of them as Macedonian and states that Macedonian nationals include them. However, Albanians do not accept this and they want autonomy. Albania is also very sensitive about the rights of Albanians living in Macedonia. Therefore, the leadership of the two countries came very close to conflict. Demirel’s visit therefore was timely.

8. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan did not want to adopt the UN and OSCE decisions in Karabakh, and Kazakhstan even refrained from declaring Armenia as the ‘aggressor state.’

9. Turkey did not offer to mediate between Bosnia and Serbs as it did not have an ongoing dialogue with Milosevic or Karadzic. Turkey merely mobilized the international community in order to act in Bosnia (Kohen, 1995b; Report, 1995).

10. In support of Demirel’s initiatives, Tansu Çiller also paid a historic visit to Israel and Palestine as the first team at the Prime Ministerial level to visit Palestine (Çınar, 1995)

11. There were two Coalition governments in this period. The first one was comprised of the True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi-DSP), the Democratic Turkey Party (Demokratik Türkiye Partisi-DTP) and the Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi – ANAP). The second coalition government was comprised of the DYP, the Democratic Left Party (Demokratik Sol Parti – DSP) and the ANAP.

12. According to the Camp David Accords which started in 2000, the US was defined as the sole mediator in the Middle East Peace process.

13. Track II level refers to the involvement of non-state actors in international peace mediation. The EU recognizes the importance of Track II actors in mediation. For further information about EU mediation styles, see Herrberg (2008).

14. This is in fact a very important achievement because Israel’s political relations with the Islamic world were limited to Turkey, Jordan, Egypt and Mauritania and its trade relations to Morocco, Tunisia and Qatar. As Prime Minister, Erdoğan played the role of mediator; the meeting was hosted by Bağış and Aydın on behalf of Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül.

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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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