Reincarnating the Sacred and the Profane

An Overview of
the Historical Evolution
of Turkish Foreign Policy
& Current Trends under
the AKP Government
(2002-2004)

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Kutsal ve Dünyevi Olanı Yeniden Düşünmek

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▪ ABSTRACT

Since its establishment, the Turkish Republic assumed a cautious, non-adventurist approach to foreign policy. Modern Turkey's initial neutral and non-partisan attitude was replaced, after the end of the second World War, with a strong commitment to the West, although the previous policy patterns remained in place. The ensuing Cold War era provided for foreign policy stability, amidst a bi-polar world structure, which was not seriously challenged until the first post-1981 coup elections. The challenges and opportunities that the demise of the Soviet bloc brought about, increasingly urged Ankara to assume a pro-active foreign policy. After 1999, with Turkey's closer engagement to the EU, the domestic order experienced an extensive transformation, as the country embarked on a large-scale democratization process.

This period coincided with the transformation of the Islamist movement, engendered through the establishment Justice and Development Party (AKP). The AKP's embracing of the EU project and its adherence to Western values strengthened Turkey's Europeanization course and was instrumental in muting the reactions of the Kemalist establishment. Domestic power reconfigurations, induced by an external source - the EU - helped the AKP government to further civilianize state authority. The implications for the foreign policy domain involved a more self-confident attitude, with policy-making tilting towards a 'benign regional power' profile, discarding the old 'coercive' outlook. In its first two years in power, AKP demonstrated its new foreign policy perceptions on occasions like the Cyprus reunification attempt in 2004.

▪ ÖZET

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devleti kuruluşndan bu yana ihtiyatlı ve maceracı olmayan bir dış politika izlemiştir. Modern Türkiye'nin başlangıçta nötr ve partizan olmayan politika duruşu İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra yüzü Batı'ya dönmüş olsa da genel hatlarıyla aynı kalmıştır. Soğuk Savaş Dönemi'nin çift kutuplu dünya yapısı 1981 Darbesi sonrası seçimlerine kadar dış politikada bir süreklilik sağlamıştır. Sovyet Blok'unun dağılmasının getirdiği zorluk ve fırsatlar Ankara'yı giderek daha aktif bir politika izlemeye itmiştir. 1999'dan sonra Türkiye'nin AB ile daha da yakınlaşmasıyla, geniş çaplı bir demokratikleşme sürecine giren ülke iç politika anlamında büyük bir dönüşüm geçirmiştir.

Bu dönemde Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP) ile vücut bulan bir İslam Hareketi dönüşümü de eş zamanlı olarak gerçekleşmiştir. AKP'nin AB projesini benimsemesi ve Batı değerlerine bağlılığı, Türkiye'nin Avrupalılaşma sürecine olumlu katkıda bulunmuş ve Kemalist kesimin tepkilerinin önünü kesmiştir. Bir dış kaynak olan AB tarafından teşvik edilen iç güç dengelerinin yeniden yapılandırmaları AKP'nin devlet otoritesini daha da sivilleştirmesine yardımcı olmuştur. Bunun dış politika alanına yansıması ise "iyi niyetli bölgesel güç" profili oluşturmaya yönelik ve eski "baskıcı" bakış açısını kıran daha özgüvenli bir dış politika duruşu şeklinde gerçekleşmiştir. İktidarda bulunduğu ilk iki yıl içerisinde AKP yeni dış politika algılarını 2004'te gerçekleşen Kıbrıs'ın yeniden birleştirilmesi çabası gibi olayla sergilemiştir.

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Antonios Gkildakis

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PART III

ACRONYMS

AKP	Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)
ANAP	Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi)
CHP	Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)
CTP	Republican Turkish Party (Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi)
CUP	Committee of Union and Progress
DP	Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti)
DSP	Democratic Left Party (Democratik Sol Partisi)
DYP	True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi)
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
EEC	European Economic Community
ESDP	European Security Defence Policy
EU	European Union
FP	Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi)
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan
ITF	Iraqi Turkmen Front
KDP	Kurdish Democratic Party
KRG	Kurdish Regional Government
MHP	Nationalist Action Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi)
MÜSIAD	Independent Industrialists and Businessmen Association (Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NOM	National Outlook Movement (Milli Görüş Hareketi)
NSC	National Security Council
NSPD	National Security Policy Document
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan)
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RTÜK	Radio and Television Supreme Council
SP	Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi)
TAF	Turkish Armed Forces
TGNA	Turkish Grand National Assembly
TGS	Turkish General Staff
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
TÜSIAD	Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association (Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği)
UBP	National Unity Party (Ulusal Birlik Partisi)
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States of America
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction
YÖK	Higher Education Council

■ 0.1 *Introduction*

The most striking characteristic of Turkish foreign policy during the first two year reign of the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) has been the zealous pursuit of the EU integration project. Since 2002, AKP, a party with roots in political Islam, has raised the issue of EU accession to its policy banner. Bewildering the secular/ security establishment in Turkey, as well as the European Union (EU) and the United States of America (US), AKP applied a different paradigm in its domestic and foreign policy approach, departing from the previously accustomed clear-cut categorization of Islam versus secular politics. By repudiating its Islamic origination and focusing primarily on its Europeanization programme, AKP took the lead in furthering Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's vision of a Turkish state and society firmly anchored to the West, and especially Europe. Thus, the fears that Turkey would drift away from the EU or become a 'second Iran' have not materialized.

However, the new government did not follow the same route in its foreign policy conduct as its secular predecessors either. Ankara stopped turning its back to Middle Eastern affairs and, in a sign of breaking off its ties with past foreign policy inactivity, the Turkish government pledged to assume a more active role and promote itself as a credible

interlocutor in regional fall outs. In its foreign policy conduct, AKP employed a novel approach, characterized by its willingness to be proactive and take the lead in multilateral initiatives. This stance heavily contrasted to past foreign policy cautiousness and inertia. Employing a different style, AKP demonstrated its eagerness to engage in the resolution of bilateral disputes. In these undertakings, it preferred to look after mutually-serving solutions, rather than taking refuge to 'hard' measures.

The paradox of the current government's foreign policy does not construe, if looked upon in terms of stereotypic ideology expectations. A pro-Islamist government would expectedly shy away from further entanglement with EU norms and structures. It wouldn't strain its muscles for the sake of democratization, simply because it would not be interested in being awarded with the membership trophy at the end. Consequently, its foreign policy focus would be mainly directed towards the East, the Muslim world. However, the AKP emerged as the antithesis of all expectations. In the case of modern Turkey, the country has been wedded to the West from the very beginning, after its establishment in 1923. Its political culture has evolved since the early Republican years and in the last two and a half decades it increasingly shows strong signs of a consolidated democratic order. An explanation of Turkey's political antitheses lies in the multiplicity of policy actors, and the evolution of their policy expectations. The Kemalist establishment, including the state bureaucracy, the Foreign Ministry and the army, has monopolized the drafting of foreign policy for many decades.

Nowadays, the establishment 'cohabitates' with a political force that brings in a new discourse. The newly-emerging order, which tends to strike a consensus between the secular/ security establishment and the ruling party, points to a more inclusive political scene that aims to reconcile old centre-periphery cleavages. In the Turkish case, the old dichotomy evolved around the exclusive conduct of policy-making by elitist, Western-oriented bureaucrats in Ankara, in their effort to impose the Kemalist project on the traditional-oriented, more religiously observant masses of Anatolia. The representation of the excluded masses was assumed by the Islamist movement, which dates back to the 1970's and has over time been the object of the transformative secular order. While moving from the fringes of the political order to its centre, political Islam, and especially its

more moderate representatives, has ventured to bridge the gap between the ruling elites and the ruled. Moderate political Islam bore due west in its search for legitimization and political survival, as well as a source of inspiration for the transformation of domestic balances. The instrumentality of the Europeanization path initiated not only the transformation of Turkey's domestic setting, but unwittingly affected the correlations of political actors responsible for shaping foreign policy.

The present essay follows this evolution in Turkey's foreign policy trends, from the late Ottoman Empire's days to the rise of AKP and its first two years in power. After the establishment of the Turkish state, notwithstanding its proclamations of neutrality and equal-distances, Ankara's choice of acceding to NATO in the early 1950's proved not to be an exception but an indicator of its foreign policy orientation. Given Turkey's Western vocation and the evolving rift between the world's two superpowers of the time, Ankara's real dilemma evolved around the re-affirmation of its Western inclination or the option of an increasingly isolationist outlook. Turkey definitely opted for the former. Since then, a great amount of policy-making has been bound to the same principles and practices, a traditional approach that has not been challenged until the end of the Cold War.

The main argument of this essay is that Turkey's current foreign policy shift is not merely explained in terms of its Western orientation, a principle which has been firmly consolidated and digested over time, despite occasional setbacks. The exegesis for current policy trends lies in the domestic reconfigurations, which took place after the end of the Cold War. Thus, the essay does not suggest that Turkey experienced a sudden foreign policy turn with the AKP government. Rather, it highlights the binding of existing elements within an alternating social and political context, which enabled AKP to employ a differentiated policy-making style. Elements such as economic and social liberalization, the transformation of the Islamist movement, democratic reformism, the refashioning of civil-military relations and the desecuritization of domestic and foreign policy issues are considered as the backbone of this analysis. The catalyst, however, for the internal reconfigurations, especially after 1999, has been an external force, namely the EU and the Brussels-requested reforms. In any case, the resultant is a new foreign policy, which tends to be more 'democratic' and more Europeanized.

The first chapter of this essay outlines the context, within which the traditional Turkish foreign policy standpoint was developed. Departing from the late period of the Ottoman Empire, it traces the elements that provided for policy continuity into the new Republican era and which imbued the new state with established policy-making practices. The paper's focus then concentrates upon the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the first Gulf War, two historical occurrences that have challenged well-entrenched passivity and urged for a new approach to meet contemporary needs. The study of Turkish foreign policy started to proliferate with end of the Cold War era and especially in the late 1990's[1], that is the time when Turkey started to display a more multifaceted and textured approach in its foreign relations. Therefore, the second part of this chapter deals primarily with the defining shifts in policy-making, brought about during the Özal era.

Besides the decision to align with the US in ousting Saddam Hussein from Kuwait in 1990-1991, elements of economic and political liberalization are identified as the basis of internal transformation Turkey. The transition from a subsidies-dependent economy to an export-oriented one, proliferation of civil societal networks and the formation of a dynamic middle class, are all considered to have challenged the Kemalist monopoly in interpreting domestic and international affairs. Although efforts for democratic and social development have been intercepted in the 1990's by the increasingly expanding political role of the military, which benefited from the lack of a consolidated civilian authority and political fragmentation, the incipience of an alternative liberal discourse had already came off. Thus, in the end of the 1990's and especially after December 1999, amidst a more conducive atmosphere, Turkey was able to display the qualities of a 'benign regional power', assuming a solution-oriented foreign policy posture.

The second chapter concentrates on AKP and its rise to power. In doing so, it follows the transformative path of the Islamist movement during the 1990's and its contribution to AKP's electoral victory in November 2002. It argues that the course of this process helped moderate elements within the Islamist movement to surpass the restrictive nature of the

[1] P. Robins, "The 2005 BRISMES Lecture: A Double Gravity State: Turkish Foreign Policy Reconsidered", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, November 2006, p.199

secular order on the one hand, and navigate through the narrow interpretation of traditional political Islam on the other. By 'secularizing' its outlook and without discarding the liberal demands of a less 'Jacobin' state, AKP managed to sustain its power and associate the future of its political treatise with the country's EU prospects. The Europeanization project, to which AKP committed itself during its first two years in power, boosted the democratization reforms and managed to address, to a certain extent, long-standing policy-making deficiencies, mainly by curbing the military's influential role. This 're-civilianization' process permitted a greater latitude in handling foreign policy issues, away from the securitized approach of the 1990's. It also contributed to the opening of the policy-making process to non-governmental actors, by increasingly taking into account public opinion preferences – a process termed as the democratization of foreign policy-making.

The extent to which the desecuritization process of sensitive foreign policy issues could deliver a novel approach is subsequently examined in the case of the AKP's 'un-orthodox' handling of the latest attempt for the reunification of Cyprus in 2004. Heavily motivated from the acquisition of a date to start its accession negotiations with the EU, Ankara diverged from the traditional Cyprus policy, committing itself to a 'win-win' outcome after taking the lead in re-engaging to negotiations. Displaying an unforeseen degree of mobilization, which resembled little of Turkey's past cautiousness, AKP was successful in persuading the secular/ security establishment to support its new Cyprus policy. Chapter four summarizes the AKP-instigated foreign policy shift; from a 'problem that was solved back in 1974', Ankara shifted to the principle 'no solution is not a solution'. The chapter suggests that Turkey's approach increased the country's favourable image vis-à-vis European capitals and boosted its chances for the initiation of accession negotiations on October 2005.

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Turkish Foreign Policy Outline:
Key Features and Trends in the late Ottoman times and from the Establishment
of the Turkish Republic to AKP's Rise to Power

■ 1.1 *Turkish foreign policy outline*

In the realm of foreign policy, especially when it comes to analyzing and outlining its orientation, tendencies and reflexes in a given country, historical events come in almost as a natural indicator of how past experience delineates and influences the present. Turkey's Ottoman past, the turbulent times of the empire's dissolution and the years during and after the formation of the Republic provide abundant explanations on the current foreign policy outlook. In the case of Turkey in particular, history provides an insight for understanding how the shaping of perceptions of the bureaucratic authorities, political elites and military cadres occurred. This aspect may become an important one while trying to understand emerging trends in the handling of contemporary foreign policy events in the cases where a certain historical perspective has been preserved with sacredness and has been kept up with until recently. Philip Robins puts it succinctly:

> As in so many recently created states, history in Turkey is so much more than
> simply the disparate, collected views of the past. History helps to legitimize the

creation of the state…History is a key determinant of perception in that it helps to form an identikit picture as to make-up of others.[2]

Historical perspectives on events taking place in the geographical area of modern Turkey as well as its vicinity are therefore important tools for building up further analysis on current affairs. Turkey and its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire witnessed a variety of events that influenced and determined its relations with the West, as well as the East. Such an extensive historical presentation though would be outside the scope of the present essay. This chapter will focus on the course of Turkish foreign policy until the first post-Cold War decade, preceding the analysis of chapter two on current foreign policy events as shaped under the authority of the AKP government from 2002 onwards. Finally a recent event will be employed as case study, in an effort to track current trends in Ankara's policy-making patterns.

■ 1.2 *Defining traditional Turkish foreign policy tenets*

Summarizing Turkish foreign policy in a few tenets that both prescribe it and prognosticate it may prove unattainable, as well as inappropriate, since it presumes that policymaking is a static predetermined process, its articulation being confined within rigid doctrinal postulates. Obviously, reality is more complex than such an oversimplified model, and foreign policy is charged with the duty to respond to its challenges. Any attempt to outline general norms should therefore be case-specific, as well as sensitive to the state of affairs and its intrinsic peculiarities.

Mustafa Aydın attempts to list a series of variables that are conducive to shaping Turkey's foreign policy and comes up with prioritizing the following five factors:

1. Its [Turkey's] historical experiences; 2. Its geopolitical and geo-strategic location which provide a unique position in world politics; 3. A number of vulnerabilities; 4. The political ideology of its governing elite (i.e. Kemalism); 5. The demands of systemic, regional and domestic changes on the country's

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[2] P. Robins, *Suits and Uniforms*, 2003, pp. 93-94

external relations at any given period[3].

Aydın's categorization ventures to cover a span of over 70 years of foreign policymaking and seems to apply to the pre-AKP period. Nevertheless, it misses some important factors that surfaced during the 1990's and which accounted for the termination of the Kemalist exclusiveness in the governing elite, like the emergence of the Islamist counter-elite and bourgeoisie[4]. These are relatively new developments in Turkey, but their inclusion provides a better overview of the current realignment in policy-making circles.

While venturing to outline the factors that play a decisive role in shaping Turkish foreign policy, Aydın makes a distinction between 'structural' and 'conjunctural' variables. While both variables have their share in foreign policy formation, structural variables are termed to be more enduring and rather static, defining thus the essential core of ideas motivating a state's external policies. In other words, they transcend the specific agenda of a particular government. On the other hand, conjunctural variables are described as being more short lived and dynamic in their nature, following the shape of contemporary developments in the domestic and/ or foreign relations realm. Additionally, Ferenc Váli maintains that, for a correct understanding of Turkish foreign policy, "it is important to distinguish between the fundamental goals of Turkish national policy and long- or short-range foreign policy objectives."[5]

Aydın, following the previously mentioned categorization, terms as structural determinants of Turkish foreign policy the geographical position of Turkey, its historical experiences, and the impact of Kemalism as the state's ideology[6]. On the other hand, conjunctural variables are multitudinous and more difficult to enumerate; they nevertheless are effective in modifying Turkish foreign policy in the sense of refining it and bringing it more up to date, in order to "meet the requirements of the contemporary

[3] M. Aydın, "The Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy, and Turkey's European Vocation", *The Review of International Affairs*, Winter 2003, pp 307-308
[4] H. Yavuz, "The Role of the New Bourgeoisie in the Transformation of the Turkish Islamic Movement", in H. Yavuz, (ed), *The Emergence of a New Turkey*, 2006, pp.4-5
[5] F. Váli, Bridge across the Bosporus; The Foreign Policy of Turkey, 1971, p.68
[6] See M. Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Historical framework and traditional inputs", *Middle Eastern Studies*, October 1999, Vol. 35 Issue 4

world"[7]. In the way of naming a few of them, Aydın includes the transition from the Cold War; the Cyprus issue in the 1960's and 1970's; the constitutional and political development of the country (e.g. the introduction of a multi-party system); the different views of political parties and groups which came into existence after the 1960 military intervention; the 1961 Constitution; and the changes in attitudes of certain states towards Turkey[8].

A persistent theme in Ottoman as well as Turkish politics is the tendency to affiliate with Europe (or to resemble Europe) as a first orientation priority, instead of assuming an eastward outlook, as someone would expect from a predominantly muslim empire/ country. Modern Turkey has continued to value high its European vocation, despite its territorial contraction to the Anatolian plateau. Thus, from an empire that first established its reign in the European region of Thrace and the Marmara and then expanded eastwards, a Western-oriented affiliation imparted to modern Turkey, even if its European terrain constitutes only 3% of its total territory. Political preference and not geography is thus the key to understand this relentless "Westing" or "modernity-longing" or "becoming-European" aspiration. The political expression of this affiliation with resemblance to Europe is traced in the 19th century Ottoman reforms and was explicitly consolidated with the proclamation of the Republic.

As to the varied articulation of the goal which the Turkish administrations espoused and pursued, sometimes called "the West", or "Modernity" or "Europe", and the differentiation with its connotational bearing, the following quotation attributed to Kemal Atatürk, provides an interesting insight:

> There are many nations, but there is only one civilisation. For the advancement of a nation, it must be a part of this one civilisation. We wish to modernise our country. All of our efforts are directed toward the establishment of a modern, therefore Western, government.[9]

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[7] M. Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns and Conjunctures during the Cold War", *Middle Eastern Studies*, January 2000, p. 103
[8] M. Aydın, *ibid.*, p.104
[9] M. K. Atatürk, *Nutuk*, 1981, pp. 67–8. Translated quotation in M. Aydın, *ibid.*, p.321

Additionally, an earlier statement comes from a founding member of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), Abdullah Cevdet, who wrote that "there is no second civilization; civilization means European civilization, and it must be imported with both its roses and thorns"[10]. By identifying modernity with the West and acknowledging Europe's civilization as the only acceptable, such statements encapsulated the Turkish elite's Euro-centric point of reference for centuries. It is upon these premises that the modern state was later built as a secular, Western-oriented Republic, and they still comprise the ruling principles of the Turkish constitution.

- I.2.I *From Empire to Republic – The historical aspect*

For almost six centuries, before its collapse, the Ottoman Empire increasingly strengthened its presence in the European area, challenging up to the 17th century the hegemony of other European powers. The Ottoman defeat, before the gates of Vienna, subverted the gradual expansion at the expense of the sultan's territories and ushered in a period of protracted decline in favour of the powers in continental Europe. Much of the political dealings of the Ottoman sultan concentrated thereafter on how to manage the decline and cope with Czarist Russia's interference in the Imperial affairs on its way through the Turkish Straits to the Mediterranean, as well as with the subsequent British response for Russian containment. In short, it was the emergence of the 'Eastern Question' and the European Powers' contest for influence that caught the attention of capitals such as London, Paris and St. Petersburg and which brought about the slow but steady decline of the Ottoman state. Nevertheless, the result of the Crimean War reasserted the Ottoman presence in the European system, but with the other European powers sidetracking it to a second-class player, rather than referring to it as an equal partner[11]. France and Britain, being concerned on Russian expansion, decided to stand

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[10] See M. Aydın, *supra* n.8, p.310
[11] The warfare commenced on September 1854. After the victorious battles fought by British, French and Ottoman troops the Treaty of Paris was signed in March 1856, officially recognizing the Port's European status.

by the Sultan, rather than seeing the Straits in the gripe of the Czar.

The support provided to the Ottoman government was one of the reasons of the Empire's protracted survival, despite unfavourable economic conditions. On the other hand, this antagonism among the Europeans (which initiated the Anglo-French support to the Porte) provided a useful tool to the hands of the Ottoman diplomacy; by playing the Europeans against each other, Cengiz Okman notes that the Ottomans could protract their state's survival for several decades:

> The ultimate solution rested on exploiting the balance of power among the main European states and the prevailing fear among them that if either one power or a coalition of powers dominated the Ottoman Empire, this would lead to a major show down with their rivals. This was the conceptual framework chosen by the Empire; and, foreign policy and diplomatic styles were to be adjusted to the systemic/structural imperatives."[12]

Thus, as Aydın observes, "the Empire's decline took three hundred years and its collapse came only with a world war.[13]

Despite the shift in its status, from a conquering Empire to a state striving for its self-preservation, Ali Karaosmanoğlu observes that the general attitude of the Ottoman government displayed a relatively consistent security culture of realpolitik. The difference between the heyday and the decline of the Ottoman state was that the government moved towards a more guarded approach, as it started to loose territory and power: "During the Ottoman Empire, its security culture evolved from an offensive realpolitik to a defensive one. The latter continues to affect foreign policymaking in modern Turkey."[14] In line with this argument, the practice of exploiting the Great Powers antagonism provided eventually for policy continuity from the Empire to the Republic, despite the horrendous events that accompanied that transition. Therefore, this policy was later to be traced again during the Turkish War of Independence after

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[12] C. Okman, "Turkish Foreign Policy: Principles-Rules-Trends, 1814-2003", in I. Bal (ed.), *Turkish Foreign Policy in Post Cold War Era*, 2004, p.6
[13] M. Aydın, *supra* n.3, p. 310
[14] A. Karaosmanoğlu, "The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey", *Journal of International Affairs,* Fall 2000, p.201

the First World War (WWI), induced by the Nationalists under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (later to be named Atatürk), concerning England, France and Italy, as well as during WWII by the government of Ankara – in that case by demonizing the Soviet Russian's influence in bidding for Western European support.

After the end of WWI the Ottoman Empire collapsed and the European powers eager to fill the power vacuum, divided its territory into spheres of interest. Thus, Britain, France, Italy and Greece were to share among them the control of the biggest portions of the territory, leaving to the Turks a desolated chunk of land in central Anatolia. This new order was to be enshrined in the highly unfavourable for the Turks Treaty of Sèvres. Subsequently, the Nationalists, following the National Pact[15] principles under the leadership of Kemal Atatürk, fought against it and managed to invalidate and substitute it with the more favourable Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. According to the latter, Turkey was to become a Republic, founded on the basis of modern nation-building principles. The fear though of loosing territory and having again the land being divided persisted among the Turkish elite, creating an ever enduring 'Sèvres phobia' till modern times. To quote Robins, the Sèvres mentality up to these days "forms a prism through which external ties with a range of different countries, most obviously with those in the West, are perceived and distorted, hence complicating relations"[16]. Or as Kemal Kirişci expressly remarks, it forms "the conviction that the external world is conspiring to weaken and carve up Turkey"[17].

Regardless of the course that events took after the creation of the modern state, the Sèvres Treaty mentality was ever present in the foreign policy bureaucracy to denote everlasting Turkish suspicion towards the West. The trauma that was created may have not been in a position to shelter Turco-Western relations at any time since

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[15] The National Pact which was established as the raison d'être and the first objective of the independence War was developed in the Erzurum and Sivas congresses first and imposed to the Ottoman House of Representatives on 28 January 1920. It delineated the territory for which the war would be waged. See S. Taşhan, "Atatürk's Foreign Policy", 9 November 2001, accessible under: http://www.foreignpolicy.org.tr/documents/stashan_091101_p.htm.

[16] P. Robins, *supra* n.2, p.103

[17] K. Kirişci, "U.S.-Turkish relations: New Uncertainties in a Renewed Partnership', in B. Rubin and K. Kirişci (eds), *Turkey in World Politics*, 2002, p.182

then, its persistent effects, however, continue to haunt both the Turkish foreign policy makers and Turkish society; according to Robins, "[m]any Turks, apparently from all walks of life, regard Sèvres as a moment of clarity and insight into the real attitudes and intentions of the Western Europeans."[18] Thus, the conviction that the "West is not to be trusted" has infiltrated Turkey in its totality, finding periodically occasions to reassert itself, the most salient being that of Turco-European relations.

- 1.2.2 *The ideology of the new state and 'Peace in the world'*

In the early years of the Republic, foreign policy was heavily influenced and guided by Kemal Atatürk, like the rest of policymaking and state-planning activities. The overriding personal approach dominated the handling of foreign affairs during his lifetime. After Atatürk's death foreign policymaking remained limited to the executive and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, excluding the parliament from the process. A first sign of opening up the field of foreign policy came after the first coup d'Etat of May 27, 1960. As Meliha Benli Altunışık and Özlem Tür note:

> After the introduction of the 1961 constitution, which was highly liberal
> in its provisions on civil rights, the media, civil society organizations
> (especially trade unions and universities), political parties and the public
> in general became more interested and involved in foreign policy.[19]

During the early Republican period, while nation-building was still on the process, the ideological foundations of the new state were set on a dual basis, promulgating the indivisibility of the territory and the preservation of the modernist, secular regime[20]. After 1923, Kemal Atatürk was engaged in outlining the leading principles that would delineate the new state of affairs and fend off any resemblance with its predecessor. Such a process had already commenced during the Turkish War of Independence and was intensified in the subsequent years along the efforts to

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[18] P. Robins, *supra* n.2, p.104
[19] M. B. Altunışık and Ö. Tür, Turkey; Challenges of continuity and change, 2005, p.92
[20] See K. H. Karpat, Studies on Turkish Politics and Society: Selected Articles and Essays, 2003. p 509

consolidate modernization reforms. Robins comments on this undertaking and its later course as follows:

> [T]he twin foundations of the ideology of the new state were the notion of Turkish nationalism and the adoption of a variant of secularism. Atatürk's conception of nationalism was a subjective one […] However the existential necessities of the 1920s helped to forge an inflexible notion of nationalism, which both the successful of the project and the normative demands of the post-Cold War period have failed to soften […] Turkish foreign policy tends to reflect and reproduce this fierce and uncompromising notion of Turkish nationalism."[21]

The model Atatürk was espousing for modern Turkey revolved around the adaptation of European standards, away from past theocratic schemes. Secularism was thus equated with modernity, civilization and European values while Islam was contemplated as synonymous to premodernity, superstition, and backwardness[22]. In order for the new state to be able to acquire the 'civilization status' of the advanced European states, a consolidated Turkey had first to be attained and its future to be guaranteed. Therefore, maintaining sovereignty constituted the sacrosanct duty of Turkey's statesmen, accompanied by a preference for pragmatism and an "attachment to a realist approach in foreign policy actions."[23] Realism comprised since then the mainstream attitude of the state concerning its external relations.

The fundamental principle of Turkish foreign policy, 'Peace at home and peace in the world', generally attributed to Kemal Atatürk, has been interpreted by foreign policy makers to support a cautious and inward-looking policy[24]. This came as a result of Turkey's guarded relations with its external environment, with which it had fought to

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[21] P. Robins, "The Foreign Policy of Turkey" in R. Hinnebusch and A. Ehteshami (eds), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East states*, 2002, pp.318-319

[22] P. Robins, *ibid.*, p.319

[23] M. Aydın, *supra* n.3, p.318

[24] Malik Mufti writes that its attribution to Atatürk is being contested by some scholars. He cites the work of M. Gönlübol and C. Sar, *Atatürk ve Türkiye'nin Diş Politikasi 1919-1938* [Atatürk and Turkey's Foreign Policy 1919-1938], Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basimevi, 1963, p.90, footnote 86. For more see M. Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy', *The Middle East Journal,* Winter 1998, p.33

gain its independence. At the same time though, Ankara was keen to advance relations with Western Powers, something that constituted part of Atatürk's modernization project. In order to strike a balance between its apprehensions and ambitions, the consolidation of national sovereignty was of paramount importance. Thus, Republican Turkey is considered a status quo country ever since[25], especially after its acceptance of the loss of Mosul to Iraq in 1926, and the settlement in its favour of the Hatay issue with France in 1939. Due to this 'status quo' approach, the foundational text of the Lausanne Treaty was considered untouchable – with the exceptions mentioned before, plus the 1936 revision by the Montreux Treaty[26] which settled the regime of the Straits, again in Turkey's favour. Although Atatürk's focus at that time prioritized the interior, total isolation from the Great Powers was not an option, especially since most of them were neighbouring Turkey immediately after the conclusion of the Treaty of Lausanne[27]. The Turkish statesman's external activity concentrated thus in forging close relations with Great Britain, France and Greece. Some scholars maintain that because of Turkey's need to normalize relations with neighbouring countries parallel to its internal reforms, Turkey was pursuing a pragmatic policy, rather than an inactive one[28].

Andrew Mango, in his analysis of Turkish foreign policy, says that that the 'Peace at home, peace in the world' principle consisted of two components:

At home, the orderly implementation of the reforms was paramount. Abroad,

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[25] P. Robins, *supra* n.2, p.6; Ş. Kut, "The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s", in B. Rubin and K. Kirişci (eds), *Turkey in World Politics*, 2002, p.13; On antithetic opinions see *c.f.* H. Dipla, G. Kostakos, N. Ziogas, *Borders; Sovereignty; Stability; The Imia Incident and Turkey's Violations of International Law*, 1996; S. Arapoglou, "Dispute in the Aegean Sea; The Imia/Kardak Crisis", April 2002, p.7

[26] At this point, a difference of legal opinions on the interpretation of the Montreux Treaty exists between Turkey and Greece, concerning the demilitarization status of the Aegean islands. The divergence of views lies to the contention, of whether the Monteux Treaty has substituted the Lausanne Treaty in part or in its entirety. Turkey maintains that the preamble of the Montreux Treaty refers to the substitution of the Lausanne Treaty provisions, solely related to the Turkish Straits and aims at regulating the navigation in the Straits. Furthermore, the Treaty is pertinent to safeguarding the security of Turkey. A different legal opinion though, endorsed by the Greek side, supports the idea, that the Montreux Treaty has replaced the Lausanne Treaty in its entirety. Since there is no explicit exemption clause applying to specific cases, the remilitarization option applies to all contracting parties. For the Turkish point of view see H. Pazarcı, *Doğu Ege Adalarının Askerden Arındırılmış Statüsü* [The Demilitarization Status of the Eastern Aegean Islands], 1986; for a Greek account see *contra* K.P. Economides, *Το Νομικό Καθεστώς των Ελληνικών Νησιών του Αιγαίου* [The Legal Status of the Greek Islands in the Aegean], 1989

[27] Turkey was bordering the Soviet Union on the north-east, Italy in possession of the Dodecanese islands on the west, France holding the mandate in Syria and Britain in Iraq on the south.

[28] M. B. Altunışık and Ö. Tür, supra n.19, p.100

a few simple principles had to be observed for the sake of peaceful order: non-aggression, non-interference, and collective action in defence of the international order established by treaty. He [Atatürk] was a nationalist and a champion of Turkish Independence, without being either an isolationist or a neutralist. He entered into alliances with neighbours and supported sanctions against aggressors.[29]

Additionally, as Mümtaz Soysal puts it, "Strict adherence to the principle 'peace in the world' implied a policy of keeping clear of any adventure in foreign affairs."[30]

Atatürk thus followed a careful approach with all major powers for the sake of normalizing relations with the West, preferring though to display an uncommitted posture on the one hand, but opting for security formations on the other, in order to address Turkey's security considerations in an optimal way. Paradoxically, it was the same need for security assurances that drove Turkey to the West's embrace in the post-WWII period, obliging Ankara to break its traditional non-partisan stance and seek membership to military and political alliances, like NATO.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's death on November 10, 1938 occurred in a crucial period, with Europe being on the eve of war and Turkey facing consolidation uncertainties and once again the pressure of the Great Powers' quest for influence in the wider area. The German-Soviet non-aggression Pact, signed in August 1939, practically pushed Turkey towards the Anglo-French camp, with which the government was already negotiating about the signing of a treaty. The German invasion in Poland the next month accelerated the process and the Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty of mutual support was eventually signed in October 1939. But when it finally become operative the following year, İnönü, who took over the presidency after Atatürk, declined his country's entrance to the war, basing his refusal on a potential Russian aggression. Instead, Turkey assumed a stance of 'active neutrality' in the words of Foreign Minister Menemencioğlu[31], where it tried to

[29] A. Mango, "The modern history of a solid country", in M. Lake (ed.), *The EU & Turkey*, 2005, p.18

[30] M. Soysal, "The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy", in L. Martin and D. Keridis (eds), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, 2004, p.44

[31] For more concerning Turkey's stance during WWII see inter alia S. Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy during the Second World War: An 'Active' Neutrality*, 1989; W. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000*, 2000, pp. 79-105, E.

maintain equal distances from the embattled participants. In this context Turkey signed a non-aggression Treaty with Germany in June 1941.

After the Yalta Conference in 1945 the Soviet pressure began to loom menacingly over the Straits, alarming Ankara to abandon equal distances and seek for a foothold to maintain the gains of not entering the war, i.e. to preserve its territorial integrity and sovereignty. Worried due to defence considerations, mainly because of Soviet demands for revision of the Montreaux Treaty and territorial adjustment in the Northeast, Turkey looked westwards for support, by evoking even the 1939 Treaty, from whose obligations it abstained to keep itself out of war. The British were in no position to extend their protection in the region shortly after having concluded an exhausting war and stepped back for the US to take on. In March 1947, President Truman was delivering his famous speech known as the Truman Doctrine, whereby the US administration committed itself to protect the "free peoples" and to provide among others military and financial aid to Turkey and Greece. The consequence of Turkey's deteriorating relations with the Soviets and its firm placement in the West marked, in the words of Altunışık and Tür, "an important turning point in the history of the Turkish Republic."[32] From a timidly behaving government which during the war professed isolation and struggled through delicate manoeuvres to surface unimpaired, Ankara transformed, in the late 40's, to an authority openly siding with the West. The security aspect may have been only one out of many for explaining the Turkish governments' determination to alter its previous position of sticking to its equidistance policy.

Nevertheless, Turkey was determined to anchor itself to the Western bloc. This was consolidated with its inclusion in the Truman doctrine, the Marshal Plan a year later (which made Turkey a member of the then Organization for European Economic Cooperation, later Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD). These were followed by Turkey's acceptance in the Council of Europe in 1949 and finally its accession to NATO in 1952. The ensuing application for an association agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC, later European Union, EU) in July 1959 can be seen as part of Turkey's

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Athanassopoulou, *Turkey: Anglo-American Security Interests 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, 1999
[32] M. B. Altunışık and Ö. Tür, *supra* n.19, p.103

fundamental goal to 'attain the contemporary civilization level' in its course towards Westernization. The post-WWII developments in the region, along with the gradual emergence and consolidation of the Cold War divisions, would entrench the security setting in the coming four decades, totally altering the world map from a multi-polar to a bi-polar one. As William Hale puts it, "[t]he end of war had brought about a dramatic change in Turkey's strategic environment, which made the continuation of neutrality, or uninvolved dependence on the balance of power to maintain Turkey's security, a defunct option."[33] The US's leadership in promoting NATO in the South-eastern Mediterranean made the alliance conclusion more palatable to the Turks, so far overcautious to manoeuvres of their old WWI European foes.

- I.2.3 *Multiparty politics and beyond*

In the post-WWII era, as Turkey was drifting closer to the Western bloc, the transition to the multiparty political era in 1945-46 did not eventually cultivate to a redirection in foreign policy. Having only two options to consider, to side either with the US or the Soviet Union, opting out of the Cold War was less than an option for Ankara[34]. The emerging bi-polar order provided for a constant international setting, thus circumscribing foreign policy attitudes. The major issue in 1950 was, for example, the decision to send Turkish troops to Korea. Although it was the Republic's first time ever to dispatch troops abroad, the mission was not debated on its essence but rather on the way it was fashioned, signalling the political consensus in Turkey's way out of isolation. The 1,200 Turkish casualties provided the rationale for Turkey's entry into NATO and helped brush off other members' resistance. Furthermore Deringil remarks that "[t]he Korean War and active Turkish involvement in it was the price Turkey had to pay to shake off the stigma of unreliability that still hung over her [Turkey] as a result of her wartime [WWII] policy."[35] To Malik Mufti, a reason that provided for policy steadiness in the new era was the implementation of "an electoral system

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[33] W. Hale, *supra* n.31, p.120
[34] W. Hale, *ibid.*, p.109
[35] S. Deringil, "Turkish Foreign Policy since Atatürk", in C. H. Dodd, (ed.) *Turkish Foreign Policy: New Prospects*, 1992, p.3

that gave victorious parties a disproportionately large number of National Assembly seats [and] ensured that the locus of foreign policy formulation remained in the executive, rather than the legislative, branch."[36] This fact ensured, to a large extend, that foreign policy conduct remained a "one-man show", confined in the inner core of the ruling party rather than being exposed to debate in institutions like the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA). Combined with Turkey's interlocked position within the Cold War setting, these factors ensured a stable Turkish foreign policymaking process without surprises.

A digression of a previous policy attitude came at that time with the Democratic Party's (DP) involvement in Middle East politics, for the first time following years of disengagement, as tutored by Atatürk and practiced accordingly by policymakers until then. In the 1950's, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and Foreign Minister Fatin Zorlu engaged actively in the region by promoting the 1955 Baghdad Pact[37], and again during 1957, in the effort to overturn the Syrian regime. They also watched closely developments in Iraq, as the Hashemite monarchy was overturned in 1958. Additionally, during the same year, Turkey supported the US intervention in Lebanon and agreed to a secret military co-operation with the state of Israel, which Ankara officially recognized in March 1949. Although this policy was later abandoned, following the 1960 coup, engagement in the Middle East provided another example of Turkey's transformed foreign politics. Overall, during the 1950's, Turkey, longing to strengthen its bonds with the West, seemed to accommodate its allies in pursuit of their Middle East objectives, a strategy that accounted for the adoption of controversial policies and culminated in a negative image of Turkey as accommodative to Western causes among Arab countries.

An important issue which arose during the same period (from the mid-1950's onwards) was the political tensions in Cyprus. The response to this thenceforth recurrent problem – the "permanent problematic of Turkey's foreign relations since its inception" according to

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[36] M. Mufti, *supra* n.24, p.43

[37] Philip Robins calls the initiative as the most embarrassing foreign policy debacle of Republican Turkey. Its aim was to prevent Soviet infiltration in the wider Middle East area. See P. Robins, *supra* 21, p.317. Its members besides Turkey included Britain, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan.

Mustafa Aydın – would grant "impetus to a process of reconsideration of the basic orientation of Turkish foreign policy"[38]. Because of Turkey's isolation from the Third World, a corollary of its preference for the West against communism and Arab non-alignment, Ankara would later discover its loneliness vis-à-vis Cyprus, especially while sitting in the United Nations General Assembly benches. In a related event, while Ankara was still pursuing a staunch pro-Western policy, an incident figured as a major blow to Turkish-Western relations. The 1964 US President Johnson letter to İsmet İnönü ushered in an era of disillusionment with the West, by urging the Turkish Prime Minister not to intervene in Cyprus. The US President warned the Turkish government, that in case it would not follow his advice, it should not count on NATO support in the event of a Soviet aggression[39]. The rationale of Turkey's alliance configuration therefore collapsed, causing major disappointment in Ankara. Consequently, the perception of the 'unreliable West' returned to the minds of Turkish politicians and diplomats, even if it concerned a Western power unrelated to WWI events, urging Ankara to pursue a differentiated policy from the one so far. Actually, the letter, which some Turkish newspapers of the time described as "betrayal", "blow to national dignity" or as having "broken the Turkish nation's heart"[40], was not the sole initiator of Turkey's distance in its relations with the US in the years to come. As Feroz Ahmad remarks, the letter "forced Turkey to reevaluate its policy and to diversify it instead of depending entirely on Washington"[41].

Aydın maintains that policy reassessment came before 1964[42]. Furthermore, Váli says that Turkey "realized that all major countries of the Atlantic alliance had, to some extend, mended their fences with the Soviet Union, whereas Turkey had stayed behind as the last inflexible 'Cold Warrior'."[43] General loosening of bipolarity was steadily evident in every country but Turkey, which continued its stringent clear-cut policy and its reliance on the

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[38] M. Aydın, *supra* n.7, p.104

[39] L. Johnson and İ. İnönü, "Correspondence between President Johnson and Prime Minister İnönü, June 1964, as released by the White House, January 15, 1966", 1966, p.386

[40] Responses quoted in F. Váli, *supra* n.5, p.132

[41] F. Ahmad, "The Historical Background of Turkey's Foreign Policy", in L. Martin and D. Keridis (eds), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, 2004, p.33

[42] M. Aydın, *supra* n.8, p.115

[43] F. Váli, *supra* n.6, p.133

US and the Western alliance in general. Turkey had to adjust, since such an over-reliance was out of date and its policy was started to become costly for Turkey in pursuing its interests in the international arena. In passing, one should not omit to note the 1961 Cuban missile crisis, whose outcome, especially concerning the Jupiter missiles stationed in Turkey, gave to Ankara the impression of its government's position being totally disregarded by the US administration. Therefore, the first inter-coup period (during the 1960's) accounted for a significant alteration in foreign policy practices, where Turkey remained anchored within the Western bloc, but was simultaneously somehow aloof. At the same time, Ankara tried to fix problematic relations with all neglected actors in its region, yielding more towards a 'multi-dimensional' foreign policy in contrast to its previous strict adherence to one of the poles. It therefore focused additionally on the Arab world, the Soviet bloc and the non-aligned countries.

In the domestic scene, after the 1961 military-sponsored constitution, which introduced a more liberal political atmosphere, foreign policy issues started to be debated more openly than before, thus introducing, if slowly, another parameter to be considered in foreign policy-making: Public opinion and its impact, to a certain extend, in shaping political decisions. Contrary to previous non-involvement of the general public to matters of foreign affairs, the public debates of the time, reflecting on the missile crisis and the Johnson letter, resulted to the spread of anti-Americanism in Turkish society. Such changes in the social and political realms contributed to a diversified thinking and approach in Turkish society, thus earmarking the adaptation effects which were brought up during the inter-coup period. A significant event during the first military intervention was also the formation of the National Security Council (NSC), creating thus an access point for the security establishment into the realm of politics[44].

Meanwhile, the international context started to allow for more politico-economic diversification, complexity and interdependence, although still sticking to bipolar

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[44] Article III of the 1961 Constitution defined the regulation of the NSC as a body that had to be consisted of certain Ministers of the cabinet, the Chief of the General Staff, and representatives of the armed forces, with the scope to assist the cabinet in the making of decisions related to national security. See F. Ahmad, *The making of modern Turkey*, 1993, p.130; E. Zürcher, *Turkey, A modern history,* 2004, p.245

formations. The new context, beyond suggesting the departure from isolationist policies, advocated a more assertive approach towards the world's leading powers. This approach became vocal through Bülent Ecevit's ascent to power, after he replaced İnönü in the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP) chairmanship in 1972. İnönü and Ecevit resembled the rift between past cautiousness and new political self-confidence. The new thesis was advocating a Turco-centric focus on furthering national interests, wherever these evidently diverged from those of the West, without necessarily breaking traditional ties with the alliance. With regards to Turkish relations with the West, Aydın discerns the first signs of Ankara's detachment:

> While still resting upon the principles of identification and alliance with the West, it [the Turkish approach] was now marked by a trend which stressed the pursuit of Turkey's national interests in its foreign relations and greater independence in decision making.[45]

The September 12, 1980 coup, complicated relations with the European Community, which were already stalled since the signing of the Additional Protocol in 1970, in face of Turkey's failure to implement the Customs Union's timetable. The slow process of Ankara's integration to the EEC, along with the re-intensification of the Cold War, led Turkey to redirect its focus to the US and reengage in the Western alliance. Difficulties with the EEC would further exacerbate during the second half of the 1980's, after the latter's decline to accept Turkey's application for full membership in late 1980's. As international tension rose again, with a series of events occurring in Turkey's vicinity, Ankara increasingly found itself in the midst of bi-polar rivalries and issues of great concern to the US. These included among other things the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, the Iranian Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. William Hale observes that during that time, "global developments heightened tensions between the superpowers, and re-established the importance of Turkey's role in the Western alliance, as well as the Turks' attachment to the West."[46]

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[45] M. Aydın, *supra* n.7, p.132
[46] W. Hale, *supra* n.31, p.163

Besides the international context and Turkey's concerns over its ascending or declining strategic role, during the 1980's, the country has gone through a defining moment in its modern times. In the November 1983 elections, following the three years-long military junta rule, the centre-right Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi, ANAP) unforeseeably emerged as the winner, by outbidding the other two regime-sponsored parties. Overall, Özal stayed in power for one decade, by wining the next elections in 1987 and replacing General Kenan Evren, the 1980 coup leader and subsequent president, after the end of his term in 1989. As Turkey was heading towards the end of the Cold War, its domestic politics were characterized by an unseen stability, strikingly contrasting to the volatile political environment of the 1960's and 1970's. The military regime, by preventing all previous parties from contesting in the elections, thus, had unintentionally contributed to a, more or less, stable political order[47]. Despite the obvious democratic drawbacks of such a decision, the Özal era was characterized by a single-party government rule, free from the hardships of past years' political weakness and public disorder. This opened up the possibilities for the strengthening of civilian control, and the conducting of a more consistent foreign policy.

The charismatic profile of Özal had a considerable influence in foreign policy-making. While in power, he demonstrated an increasing interest for foreign affairs, and especially during his Presidency term, he personally engaged in the conduct of foreign policy. Sometimes, this was done while bypassing institutional procedures and the main Kemalist foreign policy actors, namely the military and the Foreign Ministry bureaucracy[48]. Özal's president-initiated policy-making practice was aptly demonstrated during the Gulf crisis in 1990-1991, leading to several resignations in protest, namely those of the Foreign and Defence Ministers, and the Joint Chief of Staffs. Kemalist tenets of cautiousness and non-involvement in other's disputes, alongside classic bureaucratic practices of procrastination and passivity were for the first time so apparently overridden

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[47] For an analysis of the 1980 coup d'Etat and its wider political and societal implications see *inter alia* M. Heper and A. Evin, *State, Democracy and the Military; Turkey in the 1980s,* 1988; W. Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military,* 1994; T. Demirel, "Lessons of Military Regimes and Democracy: The Turkish Case in a Comparative Perspective", Winter 2005.

[48] M. Ataman, "Leadership Change, Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relation,* 2002 p.122

by an active foreign policy-making President. Commenting on this divergence from the traditional non-adventurist line during Özal's incumbency in the state's highest offices, Deringil says:

> It is only since the mid 1980s and early 1990s that foreign policy has moved away from the basic premises guiding it since 1923, and that occurred despite the best efforts of the professional diplomats of the Foreign Ministry, and was due to the direct intervention in foreign affairs by non-experts in various Motherland Party governments.[49]

Moreover, Muhittin Ataman assesses that Özal's leadership challenged a number of major Kemalist principles and weakened its power: "In the 1980s, the Özal leadership replaced the Kemalist one and introduced a new political identity, alliance pattern, economic foreign policy, and ethnic policy."[50]

The Özal era laid the foundations of the subsequent shift in the Turkish economic model, previously relying largely on etátism (state-owned companies) and favourable relations between the state and a few big business conglomerates. The economic liberalisation policies during the 1980's aimed at integrating the Turkish economy with world markets and enhance Turkish companies' competitiveness by pursuing export-oriented strategies. To that end, a series of policies were promoted, targeting among other things at the decentralization of the administration and the privatization of state companies[51]. This was accompanied by efforts for political liberalization, putting an emphasis on civil society. The endorsement of societal mobilization aimed at redirecting its focus on the democratic values that uphold the state structure. This in turn could be seen as an attempt to motivate the society to play its civilian role of 'checks and balances' against the authoritarian practices of the establishment. According to Ataman:

> A process of creating a civil society began with Özal's policies against authoritarian elite groups. Özal tried to break down the status quo and the

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[49] S. Deringil, *supra* n.35, p.5

[50] M. Ataman, *supra* n.48, p.124

[51] For a summary of ANAP's economic liberalization policies see M. B. Altunışık and Ö. Tür, *supra* n.19, p.68-87. See particularly chapter 3 on the Turkish economy.

superiority of the 'oligarchic structure' in the country working in favour of the Kemalist leadership.[52]

The economic and societal transformation that began in the 1980's would further intensify after the end of the Cold War. Its importance lies in the gradual introduction of a robust and vocal middle class, which would increasingly challenge the Kemalist domination of political elites. The manifestation of a counter-elite in the 1990's and 2000's, advocating a liberal discourse on identity and religion issues, is deemed to originate, or at least to have been bolstered in the Özal era. Its role would grow in importance along the rise of political Islam in the mid-1990's.

Alterations in the conduct of foreign policy would soon not be the only preoccupation of Turkish policy-makers. With the major shockwaves of the Soviet Union's disintegration and the collapse of the Communist bloc and of the former Yugoslavia causing regional and international concern, disorientation and policy bafflement in the beginning of the 1990's would follow suit. The collapse of the Berlin Wall, signifying the formal ending of bipolar configurations that shaped hitherto the course of almost forty years of world history, launched a global retrospection for impact appraisal and repositioning assessments. Turkey was in more than one ways directly affected by what was happening in the global scene. It was not only experiencing changes on its borders or close to them, and more importantly it had to re-evaluate the essence of its association with the West in a totally new environment, with forty-year old assumptions taken for granted not in place any more. The initiation of the post-Cold War era was contemplated both with anxiety and anticipation for the new prospects it was creating.

■ 1.3 *Turkey in the post-Cold War era*

Turkey's strategically important position inevitably linked the country's security to stability in its environment. Thus, after the collapse of the Soviet bloc, systemic modifications in its region played, as Burry Rubin argues, a "major reassessment role of

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[52] M. Ataman, "Özal and Turkish Ethnic Policy", *Middle Eastern Studies,* October 2002, p.134

Turkey's strategic role", which caused the country to "become a far more active international player"[53]. Volatility in the immediately neighbouring area inevitably brought policy uncertainty and increased the difficulty for policy-making circles to predict the developments. A series of subsequent regional crises during the first post-Cold War decade brought the country to the fore, with the Gulf War representing the rise of a new era. Since then, further transformations as well as crises in the unstable Balkans, but also in the vicinity of Turkey's north-eastern borders, opened new prospects, created new challenges, mounted public opinion pressure and urged the political elite to be present, rather than aloof, in regional and international affairs.

Some scholars believe that the end of the Cold War led to fundamental changes in the country's approach on external issues due to a novel attitude concerning the 'national security culture'. Karaosmanoğlu detects this transformation in the way civilian and military elites responded to international affairs. He remarks that "Ankara began to exert influence in Central Asia, the Black Sea region, the Caucasus, the Middle East and the Balkans", denoting a trend which constituted "a significant shift from its previous policies of non-involvement."[54] The impact of such a 'pro-active' attitude manifested itself in Ankara's preference for regional cooperation initiatives, targeting at enhanced security through multilateralism and the development of closer external interactions. The Gulf War was a vocal example of Ankara's predilection for multilateralism. Further more, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) launched by Özal was yet another example aiming at consolidating regional security by establishing closer economic ties with neighbouring countries[55].

It would not be overstating it to compare the profundity of changes initiated with the end of the Cold War in Turkey's surroundings to those after the end of WWI and WWII. The Russian threat could not be a major preoccupation since there was no direct bordering of the two countries anymore. Instead, due to Soviet disintegration a series of

[53] B. Rubin, "Turkey: a Transformed International Role", in B. Rubin and K. Kirişci (eds), *Turkey in World Politics*, 2002, p.3
[54] A. Karaosmanoğlu, *supra* n.14, p.210
[55] For more on the topic see E. Özer, "The Black Sea Economic Cooperation and Regional Security", *Perceptions*, 1999

new states had emerged in between, putting an end to the security rationalization of Turkey's refuge to the West. The precarious but straightforward security implications dominating the Cold War period collapsed at once, confusing policymakers accustomed to different modes. Putting it simply, there seemed to loom a totally different world order replacing the previous state of affairs, urging for a general reconsideration of the country's role and priorities in its regional and international correlations.

The momentous changes in Turkey's vicinity did not inhibit the country's age-long direction towards the West, although serious adjustments to sustain its firmness in the new environment had to be made. Nevertheless, in the beginning of the decade, the dilemma as to which direction to follow was pertinent to NATO's future and its eventual downgrading or promotion, since the 'threat from calculated aggression' had by then eclipsed. The focal point concerning policy elites could thus be summarized in the search of the country's future role amidst brand new occurrences. On the one hand, occurring developments seemed to suggest the devaluation of the country's strategic and political role, in a NATO that seemed to lose its reason of existence and vis-à-vis an EU that appeared reluctant to develop closer relations with Turkey, at least until 1999.

On the other hand, Turkey seemed to move also from a Cold War period peripheral player position towards the centre of developments. The developments concerning both ex-Soviet and ex-Yugoslav territories were all taking place close to Turkey. Additionally, the Middle East continued to constitute a salient part of Western and US policy preoccupations. As Robins argues, Turkey became simultaneously of less and of more strategic importance, where old strategic aspects declined, while others emerged. Consequently he concludes that Turkey as a state "has literally gone from flank to front."[56]

However, an emerging gap of another nature widened between Turkey and the West. Increasingly Turkey started to seem different, in essence not due to religion and culture but mainly over issues concerning liberal values and institutions. Internally, this conservative and increasingly outdated outlook had to do with the Kemalist persistence on sticking to political definitions of the 1920's. Civil society was forthcoming, but still

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[56] P. Robins, *supra* n.2, p.12

nascent and the formation of a middle class had only started a few years ago, with Özal's liberalization policies. Additionally, amidst the early post-Cold War confusion, the secular/ security establishment's apprehensions led to the maintenance of its predilection for emphasizing the strategic links that Turkey shared with the West in the previous forty years. The absence of a civilian counter-discourse, emphasizing more on democratization instead of security concerns, allowed the Kemalist conception to prevail. This led Turkey to differentiate its position from that of the other NATO allies after the end of the Cold War. Again, according to Robins, while others celebrated "a decisive victory for the liberal values of democracy, co-operative institution-building and the free market", Turkey missed an opportunity to join and reaffirm "core European values like human rights, civil society and real, as opposed to formal, democratisation."[57]

Cold War era bipolarity had served both Turkey and its Western partners to stick together in a decades-long alliance and align their security perceptions, even if they were looking at them from a different perspective. The estrangement of the late 1980's was not the first of its kind. In fact, there were several periods of divergence, followed by periods of convergence and closer cooperation. Predictably enough, these periods were conversely related to the level of approximation between the West and the Soviet Union. In times of tension with the Soviets, the West approached Turkey, either to reaffirm its support to their alliance or seek Turkey's backing against the Soviet Union. This was for example the case during the implementation of the Marshal Plan, the eruption of the Korean War in the 1950's, the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan in 1979 and the 'Second Cold War' in 1980-1984. The end of the Cold War though, maximized Ankara's fears for a definite detachment from the West, due to Turkey's sidelining in face of international and security reconfigurations.

The assessment seemed to be rather premature, as attested by the events leading to the first Gulf War. When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in the summer of 1990, Turkey found the opportunity to side with the US in its efforts to restore order. More importantly, the crisis provided Ankara a first-class opportunity to reaffirm its continuous geopolitical

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[57] P. Robins, *ibid.*, pp.12-13

importance in the new unipolar world system. During the Kuwait crisis, Turkey proved to the advocates of the country's diminishing importance that its geography still mattered. Beyond geopolitics, Ankara comprehended that the demise of bipolarity would complicate security issues. A more unpredictable world underlined the need to prioritize the solution of more pragmatic threats, by focusing on a regional scale, instead of conceiving security in 'Star War' terms. Ankara was confronted with such a problem during to the Gulf War crisis. The Kurdish population of northern Iraq posed a challenge to Turkey's internal security, due to the possibility of the country's disintegration along ethnic/ sectarian lines. The fear of a potential release of Iraqi Kurdistan from Baghdad's grip also motivated President Özal to help the US in isolating Saddam Hussein's regime[58]. His decision was conceived as a political success in underpinning Turkish-US relations, even if this mainly underlined the strategic aspect of such cooperation.

Faced with pressure to implement the UN Security Council Resolutions, asking for the implementation of sanctions against Iraq and especially the severance of Iraqi oil flow through the Turkish and Saudi pipelines, the Kemalist establishment's response was rather slow and cautious, mindful of a direct confrontation with Baghdad and the ensuing economic coasts. President Özal's personal intervention, with his decision to immediately close the two oil pipelines transcending Turkish territory, dominated policy-making in an unaccustomed manner, brushing aside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the military. The President's response introduced a change of style, whereby "[t]he traditional low key, cautious, diffident approach was regularly replaced by a new confident and high profile style"[59]. Özal's overriding personal approach, taking the lead among Turkish policy-making actors, proved instrumental in underpinning close bilateral cooperation with the US, apparent in the frequent telephone diplomacy among Presidents Özal and Bush. According to Robins, Özal's motion not only drew the attention of policy insiders in Washington, but more significantly it "marked the end of the conventional wisdom that

[58] For more on the first Gulf War see P. Robins, "Turkish Policy and the Gulf Crisis: Adventurist or Dynamic?", in C. H. Dodd, (ed.) *Turkish Foreign Policy: New Prospects*, 1992; W. Hale, "Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis", *International Affairs*, October 1992
[59] P. Robins, *op.cit.*, p.85

Turkey need not be an actor in the Middle East subsystem, either as a function of the Kemalist disdain for the region or part of the post-Baghdad trauma."[60]

Turkey's prospects seemed positive after the end of the Cold War. However, the new era also signalled a period of political instability in Turkey's interior scene. During the three general elections of the 1990's (held in 1991, 1995 and 1999) no single-party government could be formed. In fact, after Turgut Özal's shift to the Presidency, it took more that ten years for Turkey to re-elect a strong government, not depending on coalitions, and that was not until AKP won the 2002 elections. In the era following Özal's death, in April 1993, a period of prolonged political instability period begun, marked by failed attempts at building coalition governments, coupled with periodic economic crises and frequent allegations on corruption, all of which all together, slowly but steadily, finally led to the downgrading of the old political leadership elite.

In a significant development that paved the way for future political reconfigurations, the Islamists were able to increase their clout and score first in the 1995 general elections. The Refah party government, headed by Necmettin Erbakan could finally, after much procrastination from the secularists, form a cabinet in June 1996. Although Erbakan had to rely on Çiller's True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi, DYP) to build a coalition, nevertheless the 'Refah Yol'[61] government was the first ever headed by an Islamist Prime Minister and the ultimate excuse for the army's indirect intervention in Turkish politics, notoriously called since then as the 'post-modern coup'[62].

After the 1999 elections, due to the determination of the Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti, DSP) leader, whose party scored best in the polls, Bülent Ecevit took the initiative to subside ideological differences and patch together a controversial coalition with a large majority in the TGNA, for the sake of political constancy. Although the political aim was never fully attained, the government was able to manifest its determination to pass

[60] P. Robins, *supra* n.21, p.326

[61] The term stems from the junction of the two coalition parties' names.

[62] The term was first used by the prominent columnist Cengiz Çandar and by the *Radical* newspaper journalist Türker Aklan in articles published in June 1997. Since then, the term was broadly used to describe the forced resignation of the Erbakan government through an orchestrated campaign, led by the military, using the media, NGO's and academics as a lever, instead of directly intervening into politics.

through parliament a series of important reforms, and enhance Turkey's bid for EU membership. This came after the 1999 Helsinki EU Summit, which granted Turkey candidate status, but urged for more democratization before starting accession negotiations.

In the foreign policy realm, more quandaries were to arise for policy-makers during the 1990's, due to post-Cold War destabilization and territorial rearrangements in regions surrounding Turkey. Questions arose as to how to cope with the new opportunities surfacing due to the emergence of the new Turkic Republics in central Asia and the Trans-Caucasus. As Kostas Ifantis remarks:

> For the first time in Turkey's post-Ottoman history, the country's foreign policy elites attempted to revise the traditional Ataturkist precepts regarding the dangers of international activism […] With the disintegration of the Soviet Union and turmoil in the Balkans, Ankara was poised to play a leading role across a vast region, from Eastern Europe to Western China.[63]

This paradigm shift in Turkish foreign policy, introduced by Özal, and which was effectively called neo-Ottomanism[64], reflected the effort of assuming a more hegemonic role for Turkey to preside all over the Turkic World. Initial enthusiasm for the project was replaced by a more pragmatic approach in the mid-1990's, when Ankara realized the economic restraints in materializing its hegemonic ambitions and the Turkic world's reluctance to distance itself from Moscow[65]. Turkey's response was also tested in a series of regional tensions, like the ones in Nagorno-Karabakh, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Chechnya, Abkhazia and Kosovo, regarding the extend to which its old-standing Kemalist reflexes to events outside its borders were to become more resilient.

After a mainly problematic relation during most of the 1990's, Turkish-US relations reached their peak in November and December 1999, when President Clinton visited

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[63] K. Ifantis, "Greece and the USA after the Cold War," in K. Featherstone and K. Ifantis (eds), *Greece in a Changing Europe*, p. 154, quoted in A. Gündoğdu, "Identities in Question: Greek-Turkish Relations in a Period of Transformation?", *MERIA*, March 2001, p.108

[64] On Turkish foreign policy during Turgut Özal see M. Ataman, *supra* n.48. On the concept of neo-Ottomanism see M. Ataman, *supra* n.52

[65] For more on Turkey's relations with the Turkic Republics see G. Winrow, *Turkey in Post-Soviet Central Asia*, 1995; P. Robins, *supra* n.2, pp.270-311

Turkey to take part in the OSCE Summit in Istanbul. By underlining Turkey's strategic relationship with the US in front of a warmly applauding audience at the TGNA and lending his government's support in favour of Turkey's cause in the Helsinki EU Summit the following month[66], the US President managed to transform the climate of distrust that prevailed in the mid 1990's. Nevertheless, with the change in government in 2000 and George Bush's agenda on Iraq, relations would re-enter a difficult phase, as strategic considerations would again increase in Washington's expectations of Turkey's confirmation of its valuable role in its surrounding area, essentially in a unidimensional fashion.

Implications to foreign policy conduct were not just emanating from Turkey's external environment, but were also relevant to developments in the domestic realm. After the era of President Özal's overriding personal approach to foreign policy issues, the management of external affairs increasingly started to open up to a variety of policy actors. Two main reasons explain the rise of domestic preoccupations to the fore of the country's relations to its neighbours and the world in general: the Kurdish issue[67] and the escalation of the Kurdistan's Workers Party (PKK) separatist activities; and the rise of political Islam. In both cases the interference of the EU in Turkish domestic affairs was inevitable, as the country was striving for establishing close links with the European bloc and was therefore compelled to pull through the democratization reforms required. The expressed aspiration for Turkey's integration into EU institutions and practices turned a variety of domestic affairs into objects of immediate concern for the EU member states, thus blurring the boundaries of a clear-cut categorization between the management of domestic and foreign policy issues.

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[66] Regarding US lobbying during the Helsinki Summit, Alan Makovsky notes that it would be doubtful that the EU would have acted, had not Washington vigorously lobbied for Turkey's candidacy. See A. Makovsky, "Turkey: Europe-Bound?', WINEP, PolicyWatch, 15 December 1999. Additionally, Sabri Sayari argues that intensive pressures by high-ranking Clinton administration officials on their European counterparts figured prominently in the modification of the EU's policy towards Turkey. See A. Sayari, "Turkish-American relations in the post Cold War Era: Issues of convergence and divergence", in M. Aydın and Ç. Erhan (eds), Turkish American Relations, 2004, p. 102

[67] For Turkey's Kurdish problem see D. McDowall, A Modern History of the Kurds, 1996; K. Kirişci and G. Winrow, The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of Trans-state Ethnic Conflict, 1997; H. J. Barkey and G. E. Fuller, Turkey's Kurdish Question, 1998; K. Kirişci, The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy, in L. Martin and D. Keridis (eds.), The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, 2004

With regard to the PKK issue, during the 1990's Ankara indexed its foreign relations according to other states' positions on the Kurdish secessionist campaign. In particular, Turkey valued the extent to which neighbouring countries shared its apprehensions for PKK. Conversely, relations with countries, which Ankara suspected of supporting the Kurdish armed campaign, aggravated. Especially Turkey's relations with Syria were marred for almost a decade over support for PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan. Although President Özal took some steps towards an agreement with the Syrian regime by using the contested Euphrates and Tigris waters issue as a leverage, Turkey soon realized that Syrian President Hafez al-Asad's toleration of the PKK never ceased to exist. After occasional fluctuations in the bilateral relationship, events escalated to a major military showdown on the Turkish-Syrian border on October 1998, forcing Damascus to oust Öcalan from the country[68]. The Kurdish issue, with its broader implications, had an impact in wider Turkish-Middle East relations since apart from Syria, Iran and Iraq were also directly concerned, along with other countries like Greece, Russia, Cyprus and Armenia[69].

After the rapprochement with Syria in 1998, and particularly in the aftermath of the second Gulf War, Turkish apprehensions focused exclusively on northern Iraq and consumed their energy in trying to constrain the emergence of an independent Kurdish state. This issue had a direct impact on Ankara's interaction with Washington, underlying the restraints of the strategic relation in face of lack of public support among the Turks. Cumulative experience in Turkey, since the first Gulf War, regarding economic, security and policy hurdles, was suggesting a more careful approach of Washington's war plans against Baghdad. But the most significant aspect of a new war, an eventuality progressively becoming more and more imminent in the course of 2002, was the day after Saddam Hussein's overthrow.

Apart from the Kurdish issue, political expression of Islamist parties in Turkey also had an impact on the country's foreign policy, towards both, the Middle East and the West. It

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[68] For an account of the events see Y. Sezgin, "The October 1998 Crisis in Turkish-Syrian Relations", *Turkish Studies*, Autumn 2002

[69] These countries were accused by official, military, and other prominent Turkish sources to aid PKK. See Robins, *supra* n.2, p.173

was due to the December 1995 general elections and the subsequent so-called 'Refah Yol' coalition, in June 1996, that Refah party leader Necmettin Erbakan become the first Islamist Prime Minister of Turkey, relying upon DYP, the staunchly pro Kemalist party of Tansu Çiller, to retain his post. In general terms, the DYP assumed responsibility in the foreign policy domain. This secured the secularist grip over the portfolio and alleviated, to a certain extend, the fears of the military. The Turkish military, which considers itself to be the guardian of Kemal Atatürk's secular tradition, viewed Erbakan's rise to power with suspicion, fearing that his government would try to Islamize the county.

Premier Erbakan seized the opportunity to embark on two contested foreign tours, including in his itinerancy solely major Muslim countries[70], in the name of a multi-dimensional and more balanced foreign policy. This activity accentuated foreign policy as a contested domain, threatening to disrupt delicate balances within the coalition government, as well as between the government and the military. The disappointing results of the Erbakan trip, during which he listened to Libyan leader Qadhafi's criticism on Turkey's demeanour towards its own Kurds and on growing relations with Israel, provoked the rage of the opposition and the media and endangered the survival of the coalition. With political instability looming and the military having its suspicions on political Islam affirmed, the foreign policy realm could not remain out of domestic debates and frictions.

Finally, the rising importance of public opinion, especially since the Gulf War, was demonstrative of the addition of policy players and their potential influence of the policy-making process. Certainly, the most decisive factor accounting for the increasingly active public opinion is the rise of independent media in the country. Yet, another aspect of it concerns the action of lobbies on behalf their ethnic kindred in Turkey's environs, in an effort to influence public opinion and use it as a leverage to manipulate foreign policymaking. All regional conflicts, from Bosnia and Kosovo to Nagorno-Karabakh, Chechnya and Abkhazia have mobilized certain groups within the Turkish society, which

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[70] His two major trips comprised of an Asian part to Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia and Singapore and an African tour to Egypt, Lybia and Nigeria

tried, through the media, to sensitize the public, raise sympathies for the cause of ethnic minorities abroad, and urge for a more active policy on behalf of Ankara. Although the bottom line is that Ankara never bended to pressure asking for unilateral intervention to assist ethnic groups residing outside its borders, this activism was nevertheless indicative of the public opinion's rising importance on issues that, in the past, only elites had a saying.

- 1.3.1 *Heading towards Helsinki: An assessment of the post-Cold War era*

It is suggested by scholars that the decade following the fall of the Berlin Wall was a crucial one in orchestrating a decisive change of mindset among policymakers in Turkey. Kemal Kirişçi maintains that Turkish foreign policy throughout the 1990's entered a transitional phase that gradually led to the discarding of the old "national-security centred" approach[71]. Although the process can not be seen yet as complete, tangible results in a series of issues are suggesting that a great deal is changing in Turkey, incorporating into the foreign policy realm elements that diverge from the old 'win-lose' mentality or include concepts like regional stabilization, genuine democratization, and mutual benefit sharing. This change, which altered the country's 'Weltanschaung', i.e. its understanding of security, to a great extend, did not occur over night. It was rather a gradual process, owing to the steady adjustment of part of Turkey's policymaking elite to a more "benign" approach, while dealing with traditional or novel foreign policy issues. The degree of policy transformation may have never reached a level of fundamental digression from the old Kemalist paradigm, nevertheless it was instrumental in allowing the handling of (especially) traditional foreign policy issues in a more accommodating fashion, away from the conventional hard-liners' approach. This departure from an entrenched way of dealing with foreign affairs, largely shaped during the Cold War years, constitutes in itself a revolution, if not in essence at least in style. Such cases were, for example, the initiation of regional rapprochements with Syria and Greece, and a novel approach to the

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[71] K. Kirişci, "Turkey's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times", *Institute for Security Studies, Chaillot Paper,* September 2006

Cyprus issue during the 2004 referenda by the AKP government.

The basic elements in Turkey's traditional foreign policy preferences evolved around the concept of national security supremacy, which dominated the handling of external affairs for most of the Cold War era. Delicate issues, to which only elite policy-makers had access, were cut-off from public debate. In spite of a good start, in the beginning of the 1990's, concerning political and economic liberalization efforts, Turkey performed rather poorly thereafter, barring itself from benefiting from the new arrangements that would allow it to develop further. An exponent of the national security mentality, Sükrü Elkdağ was appraising Turkey's position after the Cold War as one being excluded from profiting from the "piece dividends" that other countries had. In the mid-1990's he was arguing:

> Turkey […] cannot receive her share of the 'peace dividend' despite the fact that she is in dire need of it […] The threats facing Turkey are so diverse and acute that Turkey can only maintain peace by adhering to the age old adage, 'Those who want peace, must be prepared for war.'[72]

This security approach, that infiltrated foreign policy after the collapse of the Soviet bloc, prompted the Turkish scholar Ziya Öniş to describe the Turkey of the 1990's as a 'coercive regional power', in contrast to its potential for becoming a 'benign regional power'. According to Öniş, the former is "much more willing to use force to impose its presence in its surrounding region", whereas the latter strives to develop economic and political ties with its environs, adopts a balanced approach in parochial conflicts and sets itself as a model for others to imitate[73].

Nevertheless, Turkey espoused an increasingly securitized approach in order to deal with problems that emerged in the dawn of the new era, namely the PKK insurgency and the rise of political Islam. Through the emergence of an Islamist counter-elite and the Islamist parties' electoral success in regional and general elections, the demand of a more liberal application of secularism became vocal. In response, the security establishment labelled Islamist assertiveness along with Kurdish demands for cultural and education

[72] S. Elkdağ, "2 ½ War Strategy", *Perceptions*, 1996
[73] Z. Öniş, "Turkey and the Middle East after September 11", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Winter 2003, p.2

rights, as the two main threats that the Turkish Republic had to confront[74]. Internal strife and external flux combined, aggravated Turkey's reflexes and increasingly steered the country towards adopting an offensive stance. Therefore, Kirişçi maintains that Turkish foreign policy during the 1990's was security-centred and confrontational, in part projecting a 'post-Cold War warrior' image and that of a coercive regional power to the world:

> The instability and insecurity reigning in Turkey and Turkey's immediate neighbourhood culminated in the 'national security-centred' understanding of foreign policy reasserting itself. A very important consequence of this was that the military, especially through the National Security Council, acquired a greater say in foreign policy, and indeed in domestic politics too.[75]

As a result, the encirclement mentality, owing its roots to the annulled Sèvres Treaty and boosted by post-Cold War uncertainties, re-emerged, along with a sense of being abandoned by Europe. Ayten Gündoğdu maintains that Turkey's, as well as Greece's, uncertainty in its strategic orientation, "was a natural result of the post-Cold War international environment"[76], with the Imia-Kardak crisis of 1996, an incident in the Aegean Sea concerning territorial claims over a pair of rocky outcrops that brought the two countries in the verge of war, marking the culmination of their foreign policy ambiguities.

The security approach and the implication that the country was likely to use force were attested to numerous cases. The anti-PKK campaigns were followed by a hardened stance towards Turkish Kurds, and Syria was threatened with a military confrontation if Öcalan was not extradited. Greece was also warned with war in June 1995, were it to extend its territorial waters from 6 to 12 nautical miles[77]. Furthermore, relations further soured in

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[74] The role of the National Security Council in securitizing all aspects of social and political life throughout the 1990's is evident in the editing of the 'National Security Policy Document', which laid the principle guidelines in foreign and security policymaking since 1961. In October 1997 a revision of the document added radical Islamism to Kurdish separatism as the two major threats to national security. See G. Özcan, "The Military and the Making of Foreign Policy in Turkey", in B. Rubin and K. Kirişci (eds), *Turkey in World Politics*, 2002,pp.28-30

[75] K. Kirişci , *supra* n.71, p.12

[76] A. Gündoğdu, *supra* n.63, p.108

[77] Greece claims its right to do so, following the ratification of the 1982 UN Law of the Sea Convention. So far it has not undertaken such a step. Following the debate over Turkey's reaction in that case, some Turkish deputies used in their

1996 after the Imia/ Kardak incident. And as a *coup de grace* in the already badly impaired Greek-Turkish relations, the crisis in the Aegean was followed by tensions over the installation of an air defence missile system, known as S-300, in Cyprus, in January 1997, and the arrest of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, in February 1998, after his short tenement in the Greek ambassadorial residence in Nairobi, Kenya. By and large, relations with Greece, Cyprus and the EU gradually deteriorated, as the emergence of bilateral problems and disputes increasingly intermingled with Ankara's European prospects and overshadowed its EU bid.

An example illustrating the growing perplexity among traditionally fairly distinctive foreign policy issues is demonstrated in Turkey's effort to establish a Customs Union with the EU. The agreement, which was finally signed in March 1995 and came into effect the year after, had to overcome Greek objections. A trade-off was agreed with Greece, whereby the Union committed itself to start accession negotiations with the Republic of Cyprus within six months after the end of the Intergovernmental Conference set to review the Maastricht Treaty[78]. Thereupon, as soon as December 1997, in the Luxembourg European Summit, member states decided to start accession negotiations with Cyprus, simultaneously excluding Turkey from the list of prospective candidate members.

Turkey's option for full membership throughout the 1990's was fraught with controversies. First of all, the bloc was giving Turkey inconsistent signs of its decisiveness to include Ankara in the enlargement process, thereby standing inconclusive on its promise emanating from the decades-old Ankara Agreement. The Agreement was concluded in 1963 and affirmed Turkish eligibility for membership. After the EU's 'polite rebuff'[79] to Özal's application for membership in 1987, Turkey was recovering from the initial shock, while gathering all its forces to implement the Customs Union, coming thus a step closer to EU integration. The EU seemed to be caught in a similar mood, or at least

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speeches in the TGNA the term 'casus belli', asking for an armed response.

[78] W. Hale, *supra* n.31, pp.235, 254-255

[79] This is the way William Hale describes the EU's negative response to Turkey's application, although Turkish assessments varied at the time. Michael Cendrowicz on the other hand remarks that the refusal to open accession negotiations was received as a shock, for which the Turkish public was very ill prepared. See W. Hale, *supra* n.31, p.178 and M. Cendrowicz, *The European Community and Turkey. Looking Backwards, Looking Forwards,* in C. H. Dodd, (ed.) *Turkish Foreign Policy: New Prospects*, 1992, p.19

wanted to prove to Turkey that the application rejection did imply a shelving of the case and not the abolition of the integration project. In December 1995, after the signing of the Customs Union agreement, Prime Minister Tansu Çiller was stating that "[t]he Customs Union is not enough for us, our basic goal is full membership of the European Union."[80]

Amidst such atmospherics, the Luxembourg European Summits decision to ignore Turkey from any of the Union's future designs was a major blow to Turkey's European aspiration. The 'Agenda 2000', published by the European Commission in July 1997, had already provided for inimical relations, by envisioning two waves of enlargement, with Cyprus figuring in the first wave and Turkey in neither. Therefore, instead of a positive sign, especially after the conclusion of the Customs Union, Turkey was offered a 'European strategy', in order to bring the country closer to the union, intensify the Customs Union and financial cooperation and change its laws[81].

The Turkish government's response was a move towards introversion, since it decided to suspend the political dialogue with the EU and refused to take part in EU meetings. This gesture seems to comply with the exegesis of the 'national security mentality' as reflected in the waning EU-Turkish relations. Considering the domestic situation in Turkey, the period leading to the Luxembourg EU Summit was fraught with events suggesting a more rigid security approach on policy issues, like the conclusion of the military agreements with Israel, the February 28, 1997 'soft coup' and the final ousting of Erbakan from premiership. The Luxembourg outcome was only the tip of the iceberg for the advocates of the 'security mentality', or merely a moment of truth where Europeans revealed their 'hidden intentions'. The Turkish response to the trade-off concerning Cyprus' accession negotiations was to harden its policy by establishing a partnership council with the internationally unrecognized breakaway state in the northern part of Cyprus, the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Thereby Ankara threatened to mirror Cyprus' EU integration progress in a parallel pace, fully incorporating the northern part of the island to the 'motherland' on the day the southern

[80] Quoted by Milliyet on December 17, 1995, cited in W. Hale and G. Avci, "Turkey and the European Union: The long way to membership", in B. Rubin and K. Kirişci (eds), *Turkey in World Politics*, 2002, p.52

[81] W. Hale and G. Avcı, *ibid.*, p.42

part would celebrate its accession to the bloc.

In the period between the Luxembourg and the Helsinki EU Summits and beyond, some scholars observe the first signs of a transformation in foreign policy, whose adoption was closely related to the EU prospect. Initially, though, policy transformation was inflicted due to a very different reason. The arrest of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in February 1998, which Kirişci calls "a blessing in disguise"[82] was the primary cause in inducing change to Turkey's external attitudes, with multi-fold repercussions in its relations with neighbouring countries. The impact of the arrest was immediately felt in the abatement of fractious relations with the Syrian regime. Turkey's Kurds also benefited by the PKK leader's apprehension, something that gradually led to the improvement of the state's approach to its domestic Kurdish population. As Ziya Öniş puts it, the capture of Öcalan "paved the way for a more balanced approach towards the Kurdish population based on civilian initiatives and the extension of cultural rights of the Kurds within the territorial limits of the Turkish state"[83]. On the other hand the Öcalan affair also managed to bring about a positive outcome for the much strained Greek-Turkish relations.

Since the disclosure that Greek circles were involved in providing sanctuary to the fugitive separatist leader, Greece could not eschew Turkish accusations of harbouring terrorism. In spite of expectations to the contrary, relations in the inter-state level improved when Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou responded in the affirmative to calls made by his Turkish counterpart İsmail Cem, to cooperate in the fight against terrorism. Bilateral cooperation evolved and owing to the calamitous earthquakes in August and September 1999 in both countries and the public sympathy they evoked towards each other, it led to a thaw and to a wider collaboration in a series of non-confrontational issues. Arguably, in the period following Öcalan's capture, the instigation of 'regional rapprochements' with Syria and Greece can be observed as the initial rationale behind this transformation in traditional foreign policy issues, as manifested much later with the novel Turkish approach towards Cyprus.

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[82] K. Kirişci, *supra* n.71, p.22
[83] Z. Öniş, *supra* n.73, p.3

The Helsinki EU Summit in December 1999 was the next important milestone in generating policy change. The EU's volte-face from Luxembourg to Helsinki, apart from a change of heart[84] was also accompanied by a change of mind, concerning the rationale of Turkey's integration. Athens' new approach towards that end, induced by the Simitis government, while hoping to anchor Turkey within European norms and make thus its responses more predictable, was instrumental in avoiding the usual Greek veto rhetoric. This time Greece did not threaten to use its veto right, while it welcomed Turkey's candidacy. Athens assured that its acquiescence is going to be accompanied by a commitment on Cyprus' unhampered accession process (with or without a settlement of its political problem) and an encouragement towards solving the Aegean disputes through the International Court of Justice, if other options prove futile[85]. The formula elaborated in Helsinki granted to Turkey candidate status, revitalising thus Turkey's interest to the EU, which undoubtedly would think twice in reapplying for membership in light of a renewed rejection. Greece also walked out of the Summit having satisfied its major points of concern, having simultaneously introduced a new spirit of inclusion instead of its traditional inflexible attitude.

The impact of Helsinki's decision was certainly multifaceted, in the sense that it introduced a series of incentives and initiatives to Turkey aiming to transform the domestic as well as the external policy realms, with the motivation of EU membership. According to Ziya Öniş, Turkey, for the first time after the 1999 European Summit, "faced a balanced set of conditions and incentives to undertake radical reforms, notably in the democratization arena."[86] On the one hand it initiated the reform process, which was launched by the Ecevit coalition government as a response to the 'Accession Partnership Document'[87] (APD) issued by the EU Commission in November 2000, albeit in a rather

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[84] According to Robins, the first reason the EU altered its excluding attitude towards Turkey was a growing understanding among EU leaders that Luxembourg had been a disaster. Additionally he maintains that public sympathy vis-à-vis the earthquake victims of August 1999 also played a significant role towards that end. See P. Robins, *supra* n.2, p.110

[85] See paragraph 4 in Helsinki European Council, *Presidency Conclusions*, 1999

[86] Z. Öniş, *supra* n.73, p.4

[87] For the details of the Accession Partnership Document see "Proposal for a Council Decision, 8.11.2000", *Commission of the European Communities*, Brussels, November 2000

slow pace. The APD was specifying the essential reforms Turkey had to undergo before accession negotiations could commence and was dividing them into 'short term' and 'medium term' targets. The Ecevit government had now to strike a balance and overcome internal resistance in order to be able to push through with the crucial changes that would satisfy the Copenhagen criteria.

Externally, Turkey's bid for EU membership created a challenging atmosphere in its interactions with its surroundings, calling upon Ankara to tackle old problems in a new fashion, commensurate with the aesthetics of Brussels. Internally, the most important implication was that the required reforms were essentially asking for the relinquishment of the old 'national security mentality', since previous 'orthodox' Kemalist practices in a series of topics were being rendered useless. Long-pursued policies concerning the areas of freedom of expression, human and minority rights, broadcasting in other languages than Turkish, or the lifting of the capital punishment, which were subdued to the domination of the 'security mentality', had to change.

In October 2001, the TGNA took a bold step and succeeded in passing through parliament a package of 34 amendments to the constitution[88]. Thus, Bülent Ecevit, although the head of a relatively weak government due to its controversial coalition, was to become the Prime Minister who managed to garner support even from the opposition and push through with the democratization reforms in the most steadfast manner than ever before. In a way the initiation of reforms and the ensuing economic crisis of 2001 paved the way for the political developments in the years to follow and assisted in clearing the political landscape. As stated, support for the reforms (met with resistance from some policy circles, like for example the ultra-nationalist party and minor coalition partner MHP[89]) was finally secured even from opposition parties, which wished to avoid being regarded as opponents of the democratization process. The vigilance in advancing

[88] The amended text of the Turkish constitution can be found at the TGNA website under:
www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/constitution.htm
[89] Ziya Öniş comments that the MHP has been playing a major role as in blocking some of the major political reforms needed to meet the EU's democratic norms. See Z. Öniş, "Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki Era", in A. Çarkoğlu and B. Rubin, *Turkey and the European Union*, 2003, p.14. For further reading on the MHP see H. Yavuz, "The Politics of Fear: The Rise of the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) in Turkey", *Middle East Journal*, Spring 2002

with the adoption of reforms was to be repeated during the summer of 2002, when, just a few months before the elections, the TGNA was able to pass another package of controversial harmonization laws considerably smoothly. After the pro-EU mood had dominated the country following the Helsinki Summit, very few politicians were eager to appear publicly as opposing those changes. While this ensured a relative commitment on the reform-minded policy direction, backed by public enthusiasm, the economic crisis on the other hand provided for clearing the imminent electoral scenery in favour of new, unstained political formations.

When on February 19, 2001 Ecevit was walking out of the NSC meeting clearly frustrated after President Ahmet Necdet Sezer's criticism for coping inefficiently with corruption, the economic situation of the country was already in bad shape. The row between the President and the Prime Minister proliferated anxieties of political instability and of subsequent government inability to yield its previous commitments to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The ensuing collapsing of the financial markets' confidence, the massive outflow of capital and the heavy devaluation of the Turkish lira had a big societal impact, as inflation and unemployment rates were rising and the political establishment was appearing unable to tackle the situation. While the country was slowly recovering from the crisis, the public confidence to the coalition government was shattered and could not be restored again. The heavy toll Turks had to pay while enduring extreme economic predicaments had a great impact in the electorate in the following elections. Erik Zürcher notes that, "[a]s the elections of November 2002 showed, the political elite was not forgiven for this failure."[90]

- 1.3.2 *New contours of Turkish foreign policy*

From the Gulf War to Helsinki and the December 2004 European Summit, Turkey experienced a wide range of policy predicaments, challenges and opportunities. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, a series of scholars argued for visible signs of Turkish foreign

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[90] E. Zürcher, *supra* n.44, p.315

policy transformation that were more of a qualitative nature rather than a mere multi-faceted response to a globalized, multi-fold environment. Burry Rubin says that although Republican era-old isolationist patterns receded, in face of its NATO commitments and the 1974 Cyprus events, Turkey managed to retain "the basic principle of limiting international entanglement"[91] until the 1990's. But further pursue of the same policy line would progressively prove difficult during the 1990's and beyond[92]. Alan Makovsky illustrates Turkey's external attitude during the 1990's as one espousing activist elements, in practice with the commencement of the Gulf War, which thereafter was able to break long-standing taboos of traditional policymaking. He declares the activist trend as being essentially not an adveturist one, but one that includes a wider scope for imaginative diplomatic initiatives along with a readiness to use or threaten to use force. In his words: "Turkish foreign policy at the end of the 1990's bears little resemblance to the staid, cautious policy of years previous."[93]

Furthermore, Malik Mufti notices a policy characterized both by daring and caution, shaped through contradictions as the outcome of conflicting poles within the policy-making process, some advocating daring practices and some rather cautious ones.[94] Mufti maintains that there is no clear-cut distinction in Turkey's external behavior, and that elements of dare or caution are dispersedly encountered throughout different periods of time. Thus, Turkish passive and cautious policies were adopted with regards to the Balkans and the Caspian region during the 1990's but the opposite was true for more assertive policies towards Hatay and Mosul, and in Cyprus in the early Republican period and during the summer of 1974 respectively.

Sabri Sayari finally acknowledges a more activist and assertive post-Cold War foreign policy, but also maintains that moderation and caution that have traditionally characterized Ankara's handling of international and regional affairs never ceased to exist. As he puts it:

[91] B. Rubin, *supra* n.53, p.4
[92] B. Rubin, *ibid.*
[93] A. Makovsky, "The New Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy", *SAIS Review*, Winter- Spring 1999, p.94
[94] M. Mufti, *supra* n.24, pp.48-49

On some issues, particularly those concerning northern Iraq and Syria, Turkey did adopt policies that were daring and carried considerable risk. On others, however, including its response to the ethno-national conflicts in the Balkans and the Caucasus, Turkish activism was noticeably cautious and moderate, despite considerable domestic pressure for greater military aid to beleaguered Muslim and Turkic communities."[95]

Overall, the fundamental foreign policy tenets during the 1990's seem not to shift dramatically towards another direction. There seems to be a consensus that a lot remains the same, like Turkey's western orientation, its cautiousness, it's preference for multilateral cooperation, its predilection for international community-backed policy legitimisation. The Erbakan paradigm, faintly favouring the East to the West, was both short-lived and inefficient in bringing about a change in the country's professed orientation. Hence, Şule Kut underlines the continuation of the main policy line of Turkey as being a status quo country after the Cold war[96].

Concerning Turkey's multiregional access from the prism of full membership to the EU, an arising prospective role of great benefit to the EU becomes visible. By taking into account the country's continuous transformation in political and economic terms and its closer association with Brussels (which may not follow the quick tempo Ankara would desire, but nevertheless remains on track), foreign policy behaviours towards its surroundings are also affected in a novel way. The approach towards the Middle East becomes more balanced, especially after normalizing relations with Syria and ending conflict with the PKK[97]. Turkey's pursue of an impartial approach to the problems in the Middle East seems to ease past tensions with the Arab and Muslim World, as it continues its strategic cooperation with Israel, managing at the same time to keep it at a low profile and not aggravate relations with surrounding Arab countries.

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[95] S. Sayari, "Turkish foreign policy in the post-Cold War era: The challenges of multi-regionalism", *Journal of International Affairs,* Fall 2000, p. 170

[96] Ş. Kut, *supra* n.25, p.13

[97] Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that there have been indications to the contrary. In 2003 Ankara granted a limited amnesty for Kurdish activists and in June 2004 it released four Kurdish MP's, including Leyla Zana. But in June 2004 the PKK has revoked its unilateral ceasefire and since then claimed several times responsibility for attacks in various holiday resorts.

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Domestic Shift of Balance and International Implications:
AKP, the Turkish Military and Foreign Policy

■ 2.1 *The lead up to the electoral outcome of November 2002*

During the late 1990's the Islamist discourse in Turkey underwent a major transformation, significantly altering its position on such issues as democracy, human rights, globalization and the EU. This shift, commonly attributed to an effort of survival amidst a restrictive secular environment, carries profound connotations of a much deeper transformation as a result of critical reconsideration. Declarations of Islamist politicians in Turkey as recent as in 1996-7 were coloured with anti-Western expressions and were defined by a non-integrationist attitude concerning the EU project. Submission to Western culture and its 'derivatives', like democracy and human rights, was held responsible for eroding the values of the traditional Muslim society in Turkey. This discourse had an impact on Turkish foreign policy as well, as the short-lived Refah government showed during its term in 1996-1997. During the Islamist-led coalition government headed by Necmettin Erbakan, EU membership was not pursued wholeheartedly, while special stress was laid in enhancing relations with the Muslim

world[98]. Apart from the effort to differentiate Turkey's exclusive adherence to the West in its external affairs, more important was an effort to 'Islamize' the domestic realm, affecting both societal and the state structures.

As a counteraction to the Islamist activity, the 1997 'soft coup', instigated by the army, constituted a critical point in precipitating the forces of transformation within the Islamist movement, resulting to its gradual renovation. Known as the '28 February Process', this indirect intervention of the military in politics came in the form of recommendations presented to the government in an NSC meeting. The military high command was asking the government for their implementation in order to fight off reactionary Islam, known as *irtica* in Turkish. The 18 point to-do-list handed over to the coalition leaders was referring to a wide range of issues pertinent to social, economic and political life.

The military's initiative was generally perceived by Muslim individuals as an arbitrary attempt by the secular establishment to limit their freedom of expression. Simultaneously, it brought about changes in the political sphere, as it resulted to the dissolution of the Refah-DYP coalition and Erbakan's resignation from Premiership on June 1997. A few months later, in January 1998 the Constitutional Court banned Refah and barred Erbakan from politics for five years. After 2001 a rift among traditionalists and reformists from among the ranks of the old party began to surface, especially during the rally for the secession of Erbakan in the successor Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi, FP) leadership. The candidate supported by the old guard, Recai Kutan, was seriously challenged by Abdullah Gül, who belonged to the reform-seeking wing of the party. Finally, during summer 2001 the reformists established the AKP as a splinter party from the Islamist movement, whereas adherents of Erbakan founded the Felicity Party, (Saadet Partisi, SP).

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, along with Abdullah Gül and Bülent Arınç were among those who formed the new party on August 14, 2001. From the very beginning AKP tried to break free from the Islamist image, repudiating the Refah legacy in an attempt to rejuvenate its outlook and augment its chance for survival. AKP's stump speeches employed no religious references, and were focusing mainly on non-divisive issues.

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[98] On Refah's foreign policy see P. Robins, "Turkish Foreign Policy under Erbakan", *Survival*, 1997

Mainly by denouncing corruption, the AKP presented itself to the electorate as a new and untried option[99]. It promised to focus on EU membership, not only because it represented the means of a reform strategy, but also, as Ümit Cizre and Menderes Çınar note, as a result of "a realistic acknowledgement of the historical roadmap of Turkey and as a way of transforming the domestic power balance"[100]. Controversial themes like the headscarf issue were not given priority.

In November 2002 AKP came first with 34,43% of the vote, wining 363 of the 550 seats in the TGNA. Besides AKP, CHP was the only party that managed to bid the 10% electoral threshold and enter the TGNA. AKP won the elections on the ticket of economic reforms and EU accession. The party's large majority in the parliament allowed it to build a single-party government, the first since 1991. Erdoğan could not become the country's Prime Minister until March 2003, when he entered parliament after a by election in the province of Siirt, replacing thus Gül who held the post until then. AKP's emergence and rise to power underlined a significant development in the country's Islamist movement. This included the transformation of the Islamist discourse towards a moderate version, which espoused Western ideas alongside its conservative ideology. Although AKP is regarded as a party with roots in political Islam, and a majority of its deputies has served in previous Islamist parties, the party is not proclaiming itself as Islamist. Some scholars say it represents a moderate form of an Islamist party, others try to label it as a 'Muslim Democrat' party, in proportion to Europe's Christian Democrats[101]. From its point of view, AKP prefers to be called by the term 'Conservative Democrat'[102].

AKP's emergence is attributed to the liberal economic policies instigated by Turgut Özal in the 1980's and the invigoration of Anatolian economic development, that brought to the fore a new conservative and religiously-observant bourgeoisie. As this constituency

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[99] The party acronym 'AK' has also the meaning of white/ pure in Turkish.

[100] Ü. Cizre and M. Çınar, "Turkey between secularism and Islam: The Justice and Development Party experience", *ISPI Working Paper*, February 2007, p.4

[101] For some works pertinent to the debate see *inter alia* S. V. R. Nasr, "The Rise of 'Muslim Democracy'", *Journal of Democracy*, April 2005, pp.13-27; Z Öniş, "Globalization and Party Transformation: Turkey's Justice and Development Party in Perspective", in P. Burnell (ed.), *Globalising Democracy: Party Politics in Emerging Democracies*, 2006

[102] Y. Akdoğan, "The meaning of Conservative Democratic Political Identity", in H. Yavuz, (ed), *The Emergence of a New Turkey*, 2006, pp.49-65

never really shared the Western links of the secular elite and remained proud of its Ottoman past and Muslim identity, even while being loyal to the Republican state, it continuously supported parties that were sensitive to these features. Fuller remarks that AKP's electoral support largely relied on this lively and remarkably dynamic section of the society[103]. Öniş underlines at this point that "the party has been extremely successful in constituting a cross class electoral alliance incorporating into its orbit both winners and losers from the neo-liberal globalization process."[104] The party could also draw the support of parts of the business world, which profited from Özal's policies in the 1980's. These included small-scale family businesses in Anatolian cities, which founded the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen Association (MÜSIAD). The Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association (TÜSIAD) on the other hand, representing Istanbul businessmen owing large conglomerates, which was considered to be closer to the secular establishment's ideas, also supported the AKP's EU-oriented policy[105].

Throughout the 1980's and 1990's, the steady emergence of a conservative middle class with religious sensitivities in Turkey contributed to the construction of a counter-elite, challenging the omnipotence of the secular establishment, and articulated an alternative intellectual discourse. Certainly, a series of other issues played a key role in the rise of AKP, as, for example, the ongoing economic crisis that erupted in 2001, and charges of corruption against parties of the 1999 coalition government. As a result, all three parties, taking part in the 1999 coalition, were not able to re-enter Parliament in 2002[106]. After November 2002, Turkey's secular/ security establishment's wariness with regards to AKP's commitment to secularism, reflected the need to decidedly categorize AKP, in order to try to predict its policies. The present essay is closer to the argumentation that regards the reformative output of the secularist political culture to be so effective in the case of AKP, to the extend that the party ends up denying its political Islamism in favour of a new

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[103] G. Fuller, "Turkey's Strategic Model: Myths and Realities", *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2004, p.53

[104] Z. Öniş, *supra* n.101

[105] See M. B. Altunışık and Ö. Tür, *supra* n.26, pp.82-82

[106] Soli Özel observes the beginning in a sequence of events, which eroded the credibility of existing mainstream parties and led to AKP's victory, in the Susurluk affair on November 3, 1996. He also includes the 'February 28 Process', the lethal earthquake of August 1999 and the dual economic crises in November 2000 and February 2001. See S. Özel, "After the Tsunami", *Journal of Democracy,* April 2003, pp.86-91

discourse, that embraces neo-liberal economic and political values. As Hakan Yavuz puts it, in the case where "an Islamic political movement actively hinders the articulation of arguments in the basis of Islamic values, it is no longer Islamic"[107]. Another term that is indicative of the Islamist movement's transformational process, as engendered by AKP, and which is also widely employed, is 'post-Islamism'. As Philip Robins argues, "[t]he addition of the prefix 'post' to that of 'Islamist' acknowledges the rejection by the JDP [AKP] of this political handle."[108] By rejecting any political argumentation that would polarize society and venturing to widen political participation for marginalized groups, i.e. enhance the process that started with Turgut Özal, the party relies on external legitimization sources, as well as an internal redeployment of power balances, especially focusing on the settlement of its co-existence with the secular/ security establishment.

AKP stressed in its party programme the importance of joining the EU, fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria for that aim, underpinning relations with European countries as well as asserting Turkey's commitment to NATO. Nevertheless, as an expression of diversifying external relations, it did not omit to stress relations with the Muslim world, the Turkic Republics and the Caucasus region. Notwithstanding, EU accession was granted priority consideration, largely due to the implications of EU membership in the consolidation of democratic rights and freedoms. The Islamist movement's volte-face concerning the EU was explained as an effort to shield itself from a potential second 'February 28 Process', i.e. from the secular/ security establishment's effort to marginalize the Islamist movement's presence in the political arena.

Moreover, since the domestic secular order viewed AKP's rise to power with suspicion, EU membership represented an external source of legitimization; by prioritizing Turkey's EU prospects and emphasizing the need to undertake democratization reforms to that end, AKP ventured to consolidate its own position as the rightful holder of public authority that emerged through democratic procedures. The same causation is being employed in

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[107] According to Yavuz' argumentation, a movement can be termed Islamic as long as it is making political claims on religious/ Islamic grounds. See H. Yavuz, *supra* n.5, p.2.

[108] P. Robins, "Turkish Foreign Policy since 2002: Between a 'post-Islamist' Government and a Kemalist State" *International Affairs*, 2007, p.291

the government's undertaking to curb the army's political influence and limit its ability to mingle in civilian affairs. Since balanced civil-military relations comprise a part of the preconditions to start accession negotiations, the pro-Western security establishment found it difficult to reprobate reforms, without risking to be seen as fighting against its own cause.

Unfolding the same line of thinking, the AKP government, in utilizing EU membership and the Europeanization/ democratization process, ventured to promote the re-civilianization of Turkish politics and moderate the rigid secular discourse on a wide range of socio-political issues. This involved a series of controversial themes between the Islamist and secular points of view, related to religious rights, education, economy, minority rights, human rights etc. The problematic symbiosis of these antithetical viewpoints pertains to the state ideology in Turkey, which is presented in absolute terms. Kemalism, a top-to-bottom project imposed from the elite to the masses, requires peoples' conformity with its tenets, leaving little space for differentiation. Thus, religiosity and ethnic identity are becoming problematic, in case the two do not fit into the state-sponsored interpretation and deviate from the Kemalist unitary concept. Devout Muslims, minority groups and Kurds were therefore experiencing a difficulty in complying with the authoritarian principles of secularism and nationalism.

What is more, the secular establishment, with the military in the forefront, views political Islam and Kurdish ethnic identity with suspicion and reacts by employing a securitized discourse in order to constrain them from altering the 'orthodox' secular/ unitary definition of the state. According to Philippos Savvides, 'securitization' concerns the process of defining an issue as "an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure."[109] Their application to the aforementioned issues aimed at barring the acknowledgement of diversification among what the Kemalist elite prefers to see as a homogeneous Turkish population. According to this point of view, identity themes lead to the fragmentation of

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[109] P. Savvides, "Legitimation crisis and securitization in modern Turkey", *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, Spring 2000, p.59

the population and may thus endanger the most venerated Kemalist postulates, namely cohesion and territorial indivisibility. Increasing religious acknowledgement in the public sphere is also seen as a threat to secularism. These fears explain the reasons behind the securitized policies pursued by the security establishment vis-à-vis the Kurdish issue and political Islam.

The army, which is regarding itself as the guarantor of the secular regime, is according to its charter[110] entitled to go after threats that may originate in the interior of the country. Through its institutional role in the NSC, the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) were able to push for what it deemed as proper policy in order to restrain whatever activity threatened the secular state. Following the 1997 coup, the fight against *'irtica'*, i.e. reactionary Islam, was prioritized along the containment of Kurdish secessionism. This policy was publicly articulated through a statement by the Turkish General Staff (TGS) spokesman, General Erol Özkasnak, who proclaimed that henceforth the number-one enemy of the state was *irtica*; that *irtica* represented an even greater threat to Turkey than the PKK, and that the same diligence with which the armed forces were striving to eliminate the danger represented by the PKK, would now be directed against the danger represented by *irtica*[111] Such statements revealed the security-oriented mentality of the secular/ security establishment on issues linked to the national security concept, and provided the justification for the subtraction of their management from the civilian authority. Subsequently the role of the NSC and of the army in political affairs was eleveted.

Sencer Ayata says that, according to the liberal discourse that was increasingly employed by the Islamist movement, "the state ideology in Turkey has an exclusive understanding of secularism and nationalism and is intolerant of religious belief and the ethnic identities of the people."[112] The critique stretches to the elite circles who perceive

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[110] Article 85 of the Internal Service Regulation entitles the Turkish Armed Forces to defend the country against external as well as internal threats.

[111] Quoted in H. Lowry, "Betwixt and between. Turkey's Political Structure on the Cusp of the Twenty-first century", in M. Abramowitz, (ed.), *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy*, 2000, p.46

[112] S. Ayata, "Change in Domestic Politics and the Foreign Policy Orientation of the AK Party', in L. Martin and D. Keridis (eds), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, 2004, p.253

themselves as the staunch defenders of the state, i.e. the secular establishment and particularly the army, which rigidly endorses state ideology through its influential role in Turkish politics. These circles, while upholding to the foundational principles of modern Turkey in an elitist manner, have alienated a vast portion of the country's population, which found it difficult to discard crucial cultural elements that were shaped through centuries and which provided for personal identification. Their substitution with a combination of nationalism and secularist ideology for the sake of pursuing the Kemalist modernization project was demanded in an abrupt way, unpalatable to a big segment of the society.

Issues in question, e.g. wearing the headscarf in universities or other public institutions or religious education, emerged in Turkey due to this unsettled incongruity among the 'centre' and the 'periphery', i.e. the perceptions of the Kemalist elite and the people. The EU with its emphasis on human rights was seen to provide an answer to those issues, by stressing those values in a more comprehensive setting, able to transform a society in its totally rather than in a particularistic way. The securitization process of religious expressions has rather failed to suppress those actors that believed in a more liberal society. To the contrary, through the EU option, both Islamists, as well as Kurds, found a way to counterbalance decades of military-backed steerage towards a progressively rigid state ideology. In order to be able to enforce the necessary reforms, AKP was aware of the need to correct the civil-military imbalance of power, so far in favour of the military.

■ 2.2 *Europeanization, democratization and Turkish foreign policy*

Islamist transformation in Turkey was initiated as a multi-layered process, affecting more than intra-party aspects with regards to the political articulation of arguments and propositions. The impact of such a process is felt in the wider Turkish political scene with the increasing electoral power acquisition of the Islamist-rooted AKP. While the new discourse transcends the Islamist movement and increasingly sets the parameters of Turkish politics, it encompasses wide-range projects like the issue of democratizing the polity. AKP, during its 2002 campaign, uphold the issue by fully subscribing to Turkey's

EU accession process, which got on track with the 1999 EU Helsinki Summit decision to grant candidate status to Turkey[113]. The process that was initiated in Helsinki strengthened Turkey's Europeanization process and unfettered reformist-oriented policy-makers to embark on a wide scale political and legal transformation. This in turn committed successive Turkish governments to retain their political orientation within the Europeanization scope and shielded their policy decision immune from domestic pressure.

Although between 1999 and the crucial elections of 2002, Turkey's coalition government took some important steps to promote the EU goal, despite its relative political troubles, this process was particularly intensified during the AKP government. Nevertheless, on October 3, 2001, Bülent Ecevit's government was able to pass through parliament 34 amendments to the Constitution. In the pre-AKP period important steps were made, like the adoption of the constitutional amendments providing for the abolition of the death penalty and the use of Kurdish in public life. These reforms were put through, despite the disenchantment of the ultra-nationalists who were part of the coalition. Another important step was undertaken during August 2002, just two months before the elections, with yet another adoption of a constitutional package, aiming at updating internal legislation to EU standards.

The difference with AKP's approach was that after 2002, the government's commitment to the Europeanization process laid on more stable grounds. Since it was occupying the majority of the seats in the TGNA, it was able to mobilize its deputies more efficiently in order to proceed with the adoption of the constitutional (or 'harmonization') packages in a quicker pace. In December 2002, after revising the Penal Code and undertaking some important corrections in the operation of the State Security Courts, the new government had its first date with the EU member states. In Copenhagen, the Turkish delegation was hoping to get a clear signal from the EU that would encourage it to promote EU reforms in the interior and disburden the party's work load amidst significant international developments that were running in parallel (namely Cyprus and

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[113] The story of Turkey-EU relations dates back in 1963, with the signing of the Ankara Agreement, which aimed at Turkey's full membership in the European Economic Community (EEC). For an account of Ankara's relation with the European Community see A. Çarkoğlu and B. Rubin, *Turkey and the European Union*, 2003

Iraq). The Summit came as a disappointment to the Turks, who had hoped to receive a concrete date for starting accession negotiations. Instead the member states promised to review Turkey's plea in two years time, during which more reforms should be implemented, in order to satisfy the pre-accession criteria set by another Copenhagen Summit back in 1993. The European Council stated that it would review Turkey's case in 2004 and decide, on the basis of a Commission recommendation, on whether to open accession negotiations without delay[114].

Although the Copenhagen Summit decision made it harder for the government to manoeuvre in the interior, it nevertheless provided the impetus for concluding reforms on a specific deadline and thus shifted public opinion in favour of the pro-EU political actors. The administration's decision to follow suit on the Europeanization path could also be seen as an essentially 'one-way' option. If AKP felt like tilting towards the EU to seek for support in the domestic realm, it had in return to conclude the reforms demanded by Brussels. Additionally, it was obliged to strike a balance between its religiously-sensitive constituency and its pro-EU electoral base, which voted for the party due to its promise to further the integration project. In the latter case, the interests of business circles, like MÜSIAD and TÜSIAD, fell within the pro-EU camp, due to their aspiration to advance their economic prospects in the European market and overcome through the integration process existing limitations. Bearing all these diverse reasons in mind, the exegesis of why the most conservative political party was able to engender the role of the most progressive political actor from among Turkey's domestic political scene becomes easier to comprehend.

As a result, between 2002 and 2004, a total of eight legislative packages were adopted, introducing among other things important legislative revisions over sensitive issues, e.g. in the area of freedom of expression, the death penalty, minority rights, education and broadcasting in Kurdish. A critical moment came with the so called 7th harmonization

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[114] Paragraph 19 of the Council conclusions states that the Union encourages Turkey to pursue energetically its reform process. It further says that, if the December 2004 European Council, on the basis of a report and a recommendation from the Commission, decides that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria, the EU will open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay. See European Council, "Meeting on 12–13 December 2002 in Copenhagen", Presidency Conclusions, 2002

package, on August 2003, which regulated the structure and role of the NSC and introduced revisions in favour of the civilian administration. According to the new legal provisions, the NSC was institutionally converted into an advisory body. Certainly, EU-induced reforms had to be fully implemented before having any positive impact in the direction of further democratization. Nevertheless, since AKP's incumbency, the reformist mood attained an unprecedented momentum, even if it could not be sustained with the same fervour at all times. However, the ardent political will to proceed on the European path peaked during the two intermediate years (until the 2004 EU Summit), and was instrumental in furthering both the country's legal convergence to the EU (an external aim with domestic implications), as well as the democratization of the country (a domestic-concentrated effort). This effort culminated to the EU Brussels Summit's decision, in December 2004, to open accession negotiations with the Republic of Turkey in October 2005, thus acknowledging the fulfilment of the pre-accession criteria[115].

The complex dynamics of EU accession, Europeanization/ democratization and domestic power realignment, all answered to the question of why the EU project attained such a crucial role in AKP's search for power legitimization. Without Turkey's orientation in favour of EU membership, AKP's rhetoric for democratization would turn out weak. Subsequently, such an event could lead to the reinforcement of the secular/ security establishment's scepticism and any attempt to break away from arbitrary Kemalist distortions of the Turkish polity would not be feasible. Burhanettin Duran underlines AKP's goal, as essentially aiming to "force the Turkish political system to undertake significant democratic reforms that will make the official ideology less repressive and more inclusive"[116]. Such a task would become unattainable, were the EU momentum to eclipse.

It is important to note at this point that the causal link in the undertaking of reforms should not be regarded as mono-directional, since this would enforce the simplistic view that Turkey was acting (i.e. induced reforms) only at the instigation of an external force,

[115] European Council, "Brussels European Council 16-17 December 2004", Presidency Conclusions, 2004
[116] B. Duran, "JDP and Foreign Policy as an agent of transformation", in H. Yavuz (ed.), *The Emergence of a New Turkey*, 2006, pp.248-249

i.e. the EU. Such a view would fail to asses Turkey's political culture, which for historic reasons is sensitive to external forces trying to impose political agendas over its dominion. The EU prospect certainly acted as an incentive to initiate domestic reforms. On the other hand though, without an initial change of domestic attitudes and a more receptive domestic climate, among (at least some) policy circles, the Europeanization process would have never attained momentum. Turkey's relations with the EU during the 1990's are indicative of such a constraining domestic environment, whereby the process, at some instances, came close to collapsing (as was the case with the Luxembourg EU Summit in 1997). As Nathalie Tocci observes:

> [W]hile the initiation of an accession process was pivotal in the launch of an internal reform process, without the rising strength of genuinely pro-European and reformist domestic forces, reforms were bound to remain limited, superficial and inconsequential.[117]

The paradox that emerges while an Islamist-rooted Turkish government is furthering the Westernization project of the Kemalist state can be understood within the context of a secular state, which works as the setting that imposes the parameters with which the polity functions. In that sense, the secular political order comprises not only a fixation of the Kemalist establishment, but also a feature that has shaped the decades-long Republican life and has set the 'playfield' for political activity. This acknowledgement on behalf of AKP resulted to the party's 'secularization', i.e. its compliance to the rules of the political game, as specified by the secular elite. Paradoxically, instead of causing its extinction, this process allowed the Islamist movement to reform itself and continue its course in the political arena. Ziya Öniş observes at this point that:

> There is no way that liberal democracy can take root in a Muslim society without a strong commitment on the part of the political elites to the principle of a secular political order and firm constitutional safeguards that prevent a violation of the secular character of the state.[118]

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[117] N. Tocci, "Europeanization in Turkey: Trigger or anchor for reform?", *South European Society & Politics,* April 2005, p.78
[118] Z. Öniş, "The Political Economy of Islam and Democracy in Turkey: From the Welfare Party to the AKP", in D. Jung

This is why the seemingly paradoxical event of the EU accession project being currently promoted by the AKP government can be seen as the result of the Kemalist circumscription of the Turkish political culture, that induced the transformation of the Islamist movement and in effect AKP's current flexibility to manoeuvre, after abiding by the rules set.

■ 2.3 *AKP, the Military & Turkish foreign policy*

Efforts to Europeanize, i.e to set the legal system in compliance with EU standards, and democratize preceded the emergence of AKP in Turkey. Even before Helsinki, the adoption of the Customs Union, in 1995, had induced the then government to adopt another package of reforms concerning the state of democracy in Turkey[119]. The following section will focus on the policies of AKP that continued on the reformation path, stressing the impact of this process on foreign policy and the changes it brought about in critical parameters regarding policymaking elites and pertinent powerful institutions, i.e. the army. The centrepiece of this discussion constitutes the effort to shift the power balance towards the democratically elected government within the context of Europeanization/ democratization reforms. It argues that, through external means and domestic power balances, the government's endeavour centred on accrediting civilian institutions, accountable to the people, as the sole legitimate source of policy planning. AKP has built on previous efforts to weaken the means of security-oriented policy articulations that in the past, and especially during the 1990's, had enabled the secular/ security establishment to justify its intervention into politics.

After the new government came to power, it systematically avoided to adopt a strategy of confrontation with the secular/ security establishment. Instead, it tried to keep a low profile, refrained from direct references to religion and stressed its loyalty to the principle

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(ed.), *Democratization and Development: New Political Strategies for the Middle East*, 2006

[119] M.M. Baç, "Turkey's Political Reforms and the Impact of the European Union", *South European Society & Politics*, April 2005, p.20

of secularism[120]. While AKP emerged as an ardent promoter of EU-backed reforms, simultaneously, it endeavoured to normalize civil-military relations and shift the balance in favour of the civilian camp. Ongoing Europeanization since the 1999 Helsinki Summit provided an anchor for the country's democratization efforts and a powerful justification to bypass internal resentment for the required reforms. According to some analysis, the incentive of EU membership appealed equally strongly to Euro-sceptic circles, which generally tended to perceive it as partially problematic for Turkey's national interests. As Tariq Oğuzlu maintains, both those who were voicing their criticism against the reforms, as well as reform-prone circles were acknowledging, that the process of democratization was closely related to the process of Europeanization[121]. Erdoğan and his party emerged after the elections as the actors that were called to continue this evolution in Turkish politics.

Increasingly, the process of Turkey's Europeanization started to become irreversible and, due to a receptive domestic environment, EU conditionality appeared to yield fruits as reforms progressed on the fast track. In the foreign policy realm, Turkey's commitment to integrate with the EU introduced a new era in the country's external attitudes. As Oğuzlu concludes, the commitment to the reforms emanated from the belief that "a more democratic Turkey would in turn adopt a more compromising style, a more multidimensional process and more EU-oriented outcomes."[122] Kirişci also underlines this development, by remarking that "the government made the issue of democratization a foreign policy objective", along the trend of evolving its external interrelations "towards a more 'Kantian' or 'Europeanized' approach to foreign policy"[123]. However, such an evolution is conditional to Turkey's security understanding and its response on pertinent issues, mainly due to the country's geographical position amidst an unstable neighbourhood, fraught with a series of security problems. A critical element at this point, is the security establishment's perception of such issues. The internal logic of the Turkish

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[120] "Erdoğan triumphs – with plenty of help from his enemies", *Economist*, 7 November 2002

[121] T. Oğuzlu, "The Impact of 'Democratisation in the Context of the EU Accession Process' on Turkish Foreign Policy", *Mediterranean Politics,* spring 2004, p.103

[122] T. Oğuzlu, *ibid.*, p.96

[123] K. Kirişçi, 'Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy', *MERIA,* March 2004, p.48

military's understanding of security, its traditional approach to such threats, formed throughout time, along with the status it enjoys from among the Turkish society are all very important parameters for assessing the present condition.

- 2.3.1 *Civil-military relations in Turkey*

An important parameter for assessing the context, through which Turkish foreign policy seems to evolve towards a new direction, lies in the changing nature of civil-military relations in Turkey. This essentially concerns the effort to 'civilianize' foreign policy-making by curbing the military's indirect influence into politics. In turn 'civilianization' aims at boosting the authority of civilian institutions to conduct policy-making according to the tools available, e.g. the legal international context, formal domestic processes, economic incentives etc. Consequently, this underlines the necessity to erode the 'security-oriented' nature of Turkish foreign policy, developed as a result of the military's increasing ability to employ a securitized approach to certain issues with external and domestic implications. The historical self-perceptions of the TAF, along with their attempt to convey their own understanding on a series of issues, deemed of vital national interest, have created a certain pattern, in the past, in Turkey's interaction with its immediate neighbourhood and the world. Some analysts perceive this trend as pointing towards the indication of a 'coercive regional power', instead of a 'benign power'[124].

The expanded role of the Turkish military, especially during the 1990's, was according to Gencer Özcan the most important change in shaping the country's foreign policy, and came as a result of the post-Cold War confusion and the increased security considerations that the end of the new era brought about[125]. This emboldened the military's role in managing issues with unclear domestic and external security implications, e.g. Kurdish separatism and Islamic fundamentalism, and resulted in the previously mentioned issues to appear prominently in the TAF's agenda. Besides the historical evolution of the civil-

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[124] See Z. Öniş, *supra* n.73; K. Kirisçi, *supra* n.71
[125] G. Özcan, *supra* n.74, p.18

military interaction in Turkey[126], developments in the 1990's strengthened the interventionist culture of the TAF in the political realm. This could only be challenged by the end of the decade, as the EU accession factor started to have an impact on Turkish politics. The EU played an important role in reducing the security establishment's bid to control policy conduct, securitize political issues and impose its preferential policy outcomes on civilians. The endorsement that the Turkish governments received from Brussels, after 1999, in their efforts to normalize civil-military relations proved instrumental in limiting the reactions of the army over the erosion of its political role. Conversely, this development partly contributed in meeting the Copenhagen criteria in 2004, following the course of the democratization reforms that the country underwent. The effectiveness of Brussels' conditionality for initiating Turkey's integration was apparent in AKP's strains at enacting the relevant legislation amendments before the crucial December 2004 EU Summit.

Successive coup d'Etats in Turkey, from 1960 onwards, were short-lived and in each instance the military was generally mindful of handing power over to civilians relatively quickly. Nevertheless military rule gradually strengthened the army's political role even in periods where civilian authority was restored. The 1961 junta-sponsored constitution broadened the military's autonomy by introducing the NSC and by making the Chief of General Staff accountable to the Prime Minister instead of the Defence Minister. The 1980 coup, which was initially instigated to reinforce public order, concluded, after a three-year long period of military rule, to a refashioned political system, topped by another military-drafted constitution. This period entrenched the TAF's political role with a series of formal and informal provisions that essentially crowned it as the covert protagonist of Turkish politics[127]. Overall, Ümit Cizre-Sakallıoğlu observes that:

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[126] For an account of civil-military relations see *inter alia* W. Hale, *supra* n.56; G. Jenkins, *Context and Circumstance: the Turkish Military and Politics,* February 2001

[127] A measure to assure continued control of the achievements of the 1980 military junta was, for example, the Provisional Article 1 of the 1982 Constitution, which stated that it reserved for the junta leader, General Kenan Evren, the position of the President of the Republic for the ensuing seven years. Another measures included the immunity of NSC members during the coup, reservation of seats for five military members in the Presidential Council for six years, the institution of the 10% threshold necessary for parties to enter the TGNA, and the scrutiny of parties before granting them permission to participate in the 1983 elections.

Since 1983 the military has used legal/ constitutional, historical/ cultural, and structural reasons and mechanisms to retain its privileged position in issuing demands, policy suggestions, and warnings on political matters […] This privileged position of the military forms the core of the Turkish military's political prerogatives."[128]

The main platform that the military used to promote its views was certainly the NSC, where the TAF high command was sitting vis-à-vis the Prime Minister and members of the cabinet under the chairmanship of the President[129], in order to convey its opinion on a variety of issues, considered to affect national security. The NSC provided the arena for the power game between the two poles to take place, and as Cizre-Sakallıoğlu argues, "the NSC and the Council of Ministers have comprised a dual system of executive decision-making, with the NSC being the more decisive of the two."[130] The NSC is not a body entitled to enact legislation, but merely to propose policy measures to the cabinet. According to Article 118 of the 1982 Constitution, the NSC "declares its views concerning the decisions to be made regarding the determination and implementation of the national security policy and the coordination this requires to the Council of Ministers," and "the measures the council deems necessary are taken into consideration with priority by the Council of Ministers."[131] Nevertheless, although decisions at the NSC were always taken by consensus and not by 'counting fingers', in practice, every government translated those into concrete policy acts. As General Çevik Bir once stated, "[t]he government has never once refused a recommendation of the National Security Council"[132].

Another source for foreign policy influence is the priority role assigned to the army and to bodies where the army's presence is important in editing the National Security Policy Document (NSPD). The NSPD sets the guidelines for national security policy

[128] Ü. Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, "The anatomy of the Turkish Military's political autonomy", *Comparative Politics,* January 1997, p.153

[129] The NSC composition prior to the 2003 revisions included the President, the Prime Minister, the Foreign, Interior and Defence Ministers, the Chief of General Staff, the Commanders of the three Forces (Land, Navy and Air force) as well as the General Commander of the Gendarmerie.

[130] Ü. Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, *supra* n.128, p.157

[131] For an English translation of the 1982 Constitution see Prime Ministry, Directorate General of Press and Information, *The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, Yearbook 1983, Ankara, 1984.

[132] Quoted in P. Green, and R. Collins. Embracing Cyprus: the Path to Unity in the New Europe, 2003, p.95

conduct by listing the threats the country faces. It also includes appropriate responses to those threats. The document, which is updated regularly, passes through the Secretariat of the NSC, a post exclusively reserved for a member of the military until 2004. Revisions and drafts of the document are coordinated by the Secretariat among the TGS, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Intelligence Organization with great secrecy. The document is being approved by the NSC and is not submitted to the TGNA for ratification, neither is it open to public debate.

Moreover, an indication of the TGS' ubiquitous presence was the posting of representative members of the military in a number of governmental bodies, e.g the Higher Education Council (YÖK), the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), as well as in the National Security Courts. The Turkish constitution does not stipulate directly any guardian role for the military. However, a series of legal texts provide for its legal engagement in broad terms. These include legal provisions concerning the NSC and its Secretariat, a series of laws on terrorism, the media and the political parties, as well as the internal regulation of the TAF, which stipulates that its duty is "to protect and safeguard the Turkish land and the Turkish Republic"[133]. The absence of a clear specification of the NSC's role and the lack of effective civilian checks and balances over the military budget have barred, during the 1990's, elected governments and the parliament to assume a more assertive role in controlling the military's activities.

Overall, in the post-Cold War era, despite the potentials of having a more open and pluralistic foreign policy-making, away from the constraints of the past excessively-militarized environment, the Turkish army managed to retain, and even strengthen, its intervention in the field. Özcan underlines this fact, by saying that, during the 1990's, "the military's role has become more perceptible, and in some cases uncomfortably coexists with the role of the elected government and the Foreign Ministry."[134] An occasion, where the military could demonstrate its accumulated power, came with the 'February 28 Process', whereby the elected government could do nothing else, but put its

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[133] Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Law No. 211, January 1961
[134] G. Özcan, *supra* n.74, p.36

signature on the anti-Islamist measures that were presented to it, and with which it essentially disagreed. The shift towards internally-originating threats, which the military invoked for its expanding role, found a propitious ground, not only in the rise of political Islam, but also in the escalation of the PKK insurgency in the Southeast of Turkey, a development that effectively gave a free hand in the administration of these areas by the army.

Certainly, EU-induced reforms challenged the security establishment, which, through the increasing securitization of a broad range of policy areas, secured for itself a privileged place in formulating state policy concerning Cyprus, northern Iraq, the Kurds, minorities etc. By keeping the public debate away from the definition of what constitutes a security problem, the security establishment and the state elite could define any issue as such and, consequently, reserve the special right to approach it as they deemed right. Pinar Bilgin notes that "the agency of state representatives is crucial in the process of securitization in that by definition, something is a security problem when the elites declare it to be so."[135] The way the army could dominate the NSC and translate its security considerations into state policies by 'consensus', along with its influence over the NSPD is shedding light on the process of securitization.

However, civilian forces are not excused from this process as totally uninvolved, as they have over time implemented such policies with ardency. Thus, the security establishment and political forces, identifying themselves with secular circles, have traditionally joined their voices, calling for restriction or 'special implementation' of democratic rights. A common theme was the suspicion both voiced over EU-required reforms. Bülent Ecevit, for example, has maintained that "Turkey's special geographical conditions require a special type of democracy"[136]. And General Çevik Bir has argued that, since no other European country faces the same threats as Turkey, the Copenhagen criteria should be implemented by "taking into consideration the interests and realities of

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[135] P. Bilgin, "Turkey's changing security discourses: The challenge of Globalisation", *European Journal of Political Research,* January 2005, p.183

[136] P. Bilgin, *ibid.*, p.186

the country"[137].

Following the revision of the NSPD in the 1990's, which broadened the security agenda to include internal along with trans-boundary threats, i.e. regressive Islamism and Kurdish separatism accordingly, it was only after the Helsinki Summit's decision that demands for public debate on national security issues started to be voiced. Bilgin says that this debate took place "between the Eurosceptics and pro-EU actors and focused on the security implications of some of the reforms demanded by the EU."[138] This divergent focus on security issues distinguished the two camps, which, in theory, were otherwise concurrent on endorsing Turkey's EU membership. The catalytic role that the EU incentive was able to exert in triggering democratization reforms, and more particularly in limiting the influence of the military and putting it under civilian control[139], started to emerge even before the Helsinki EU Summit, during the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan. While the December 1999 Summit was approaching, Turkey appeared receptive to calls from Brussels to remove military judges from State Security Courts and did so almost a week before the Öcalan trial.

After 1999, successive Turkish governments have embarked on a legal process that eliminated certain prerogatives enjoyed by the military, and aimed at strengthening the elected civilians and consolidate the liberalization and democratization process in view of stronger signs coming from Brussels. The Ecevit government amended the constitution twice, once in 1999, in order to civilianize the State Security Courts, and once again in 2001, when it adopted 34 amendments to the 1982 constitution. The 2001 reforms were important in bringing about changes in Article 118, which regulates the functioning of the NSC. Thus, the civilian presence was strengthened with the inclusion of the Justice Minister and Deputy Prime Ministers. The previous stipulation that asked for NSC decisions to be given priority consideration by the cabinet, also softened, asking now the Council of Ministers to merely "evaluate" the decisions. Thereby the original advisory

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[137] Cited in G. Jenkins, *Context and Circumstance: the Turkish Military and Politics,* February 2001, p.82

[138] P. Bilgin, *supra* n.135, p.189

[139] For an authoritative account of the democratization reforms in Turkey see E. Özbudun and S. Yazıcı, *Democratizetion reforms in Turkey (1993 – 2004)*, 2004; Ü. Cizre (ed.), *Almanac Turkey 2005: Security Sector and Democratic Oversight*, 2006

nature of the NSC was re-instituted. More revisions concerning the NSC came in July 2003, with the 7th constitutional package that abolished the provision, according to which the NSC Secretary General post had to be occupied by a serving member of the military. Moreover, it reduced the monthly sessions of the council to once every two months. The reduction of the meetings on a bi-monthly basis was deemed as an indication of weakening the military's ability to put constant pressure on elected civilians. Concerning the State Security Courts, the 8th Constitutional package, adopted in 2004, provided for their final abolishment.

Additionally, another package, adopted in June 2004 by the TGNA, eliminated the representative of the Chief of the General Staff from YÖK and RTÜK. All these reforms were indicative of the shift that was taking place in the realm of civil-military relations. However it is still too early to assess whether these measures have had a definite impact in eradicating the army's political influence. The Turkish army still utters its reservations on a number of issues, most notably on developments in northern Iraq, the Kurdish issue and Cyprus. Despite its temporizing attitude, however, Öniş maintains that "it is fair to say that the military in Turkey has been changing in such a way that it no longer makes sense to place it firmly within the Euro-skeptic camp."[140]

The European Commission acknowledged the improvements in the civil-military relations domain by stating in its 2004 regular report that "[t]he duties, powers and functioning of the National Security Council (NSC) have been substantially amended, bringing the framework of civil-military relations closer to practice in EU Member States."[141] It nevertheless stated that the process had been far from concluded: "Although the process of aligning civil-military relations with EU practice is underway, the Armed Forces in Turkey continue to exercise influence through a series of informal channels."[142] Thereby, the Commission asked from the civilian authorities to put the supervisory provisions into practice and to enforce those in sensitive areas. Thereby, it referred to the

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[140] Z. Öniş, *supra* n.101
[141] See Commission of the European Communities, "2004 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession", Brussels, 6 October 2004
[142] *ibid.*

formulation and implementation of the national security strategy, which seriously affects relations with neighbouring countries, as well as in the control of the defence budget[143].

Finally, in order to evaluate the future direction of civil-military relations and the chances of the total subordination of the army to the civilian authorities, the means by which the TAF are able to exert unofficial influence should be taken into account, apart from the democratization reforms. The status that the military enjoys from among the society is one of these cultural characteristics that is both hard to control and to limit, since it mainly rests on public perceptions formed over the years. The EU, through its regular reports, acknowledged that the army is still able to exert influence on daily political affairs, e.g. by making public pronouncements. The military's presence in many aspects of social, economic and political life, its connections to civilian bureaucracy and members of the government, its public statements through media briefings etc demonstrate the complex interrelation between the TAF and the public and political realms.

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The security establishment viewed the rise of AKP into power with suspicion. According to its understanding, the party represented one of the two major internal threats it vowed to eliminate, for the sake of protecting the secular character of the Republic. While, during 1995, prevailing conditions enabled the secular/ security establishment to manipulate the electoral results and enforce its preferential government configuration by excluding Refah, and later forced it to yield power by using the NSC, the same process could not be repeated in 2002. Apart from the electoral results, which allowed only two parties to enter parliament, and the overwhelming majority the AKP was able to muster, the EU emerged as another constraint in prohibiting the TGS to bypass democratic norms and act in an arbitrary way. According to Cizre and Çınar, these developments reinforced the conviction among staunch secularists, that "the post-1997 attempts to stem the tide of the Islamist threat have failed and […] that the JDP's [AKP's]

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[143] ibid.

advent to power through democratic means [came] as [an] evidence that the threat has grown in size."[144] Nevertheless, developments in Ankara's relations with Brussels were limiting the TGS's latitude to effectively take any action against the AKP, without endangering Turkey's prospects to get a date for accession negotiations. The risk of undermining its own status vis-à-vis an overwhelmingly pro-EU public opinion, in case of undertaking action against the government, or the potential of strengthening anti-Turkish circles in the EU, which were already arguing about a non-democratic/ military-ruled country, nailed the army's secular reflexes down.

In August 2002, less than two months before the electoral victory of AKP, the installation of a new Chief of General Staff indicated the emergence of new atmospherics in the military's top brass. The new Chief of General Staff, General Hilmi Özkök, had served in several NATO positions, including Brussels and had spent almost half of his career abroad. His disinclination to resort to stern measures against elected civilians and his ardent support for EU membership earned him a lot of antipathy among the hardliners. However, the General's somehow different mindset was deemed to have "altered the face of the country's rigidly hierarchical and secretive armed forces"[145]. Nevertheless, Özkök's different style did not imply the military's drastic shift from the main tenets that it pledged to protect. Rather, Özkök appeared more inclined to adopt a cooperative stance towards the government. His accommodating stance and the rapport he was able to establish with Prime Minister Erdoğan made many within the TGS to feel uncomfortable and ask for a more assertive stance towards the government.

This uneasiness heightened with the adoption of the legislative measures, and particularly after the 7th constitutional package, which targeted the NSC's political influence. Özkök, who did not appear to oppose these measures, implied with his stance that he was willing to allow for their implementation, thus facilitating the country's EU accession process. The army was ambivalent on that issue. One the one hand it agreed, in principle, with Turkey's accession into the bloc (and hence made sure to convey its

[144] Ü. Cizre and M. Çınar, *supra* n.100, p.11
[145] "Turkey's guardian generals", *Economist,* 25 November 2004

opinion publicly) on the grounds that it would complete Atatürk's project of Westernization. On the other hand, it felt uneasy with the implications of the EU reforms, which in many cases were contravening orthodox Kemalist interpretations of national security. Within this context, Özkök's tenure could be characterized as a landmark in the course of civil-military relations, on the grounds that he was able to channel the TGS's dissatisfaction to the government in a moderate fashion, observant of the delicate balances that democratic principles demanded. Metin Heper underlines this new attitude in the upper echelons of the army, by saying that, due to the TAF's Western vocation, which has always implied a belief that, at least in principle, the last word should belong to civilians, "the office of the chief of staff decided to share their reservations with the government and then go along with the latter's policy."[146]

A major crisis between AKP and the TGS came in spring 2003 with the looming war in Iraq. Virtually, Turkey, with its long NATO tradition and its close relations with the US, was expected to stand by the Bush administration's effort to oust Saddam Hussein from power. This superficial evaluation by Washington evidently failed to asses Ankara's intent at both the political and military levels. On that occasion, the government and the TGS essentially agreed that the US demand, to permit the passage of American troops through Turkey and use the country's military bases, were more than they could stomach. Nevertheless, the government initiated negotiations with the Americans on the terms of an accord, because it saw no bright future for the country's interests by alienating the world's sole superpower. Caught between the public's anti-war feelings and the country's interests, which were at stake, the government expected a sign of support from the army. The TGS on that occasion appeared unwilling to make any statement that would endorse the government's position and was eager to disclaim responsibility.

- *2.3.3 Context and emergence of the new foreign policy*

Turkish politics have entered a new phase after the Helsinki EU Summit in 1999, one

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[146] M. Heper, "The European Union, the Turkish Military and Democracy", *South European Society and Politics,* April 2005, p.38

that builds on the processes of the post-Cold War era and refines them further into more democratic, more Europeanized and ultimately highly transformative outputs in the domestic and foreign policy domains. This is why the two discourses of continuity and change in Turkish politics, and in particular in foreign policy, cannot be separated. After Helsinki, the new challenge posed by the EU to Turkish foreign policy-making circles concerned the update of Ankara's priorities to those of Europe, i.e. the 'Europeanization' of Turkish foreign policy. Far from implying a prescriptive mood from Brussels towards Ankara's pursue of national interest, Europeanization overly refers to the imperative to fall in line with the basic orientations/ preferences of continental Europe, as well as to the adjustment of foreign policy pursue to acceptable means, shared by the EU member states. Therefore, the aspect of the Europeanization process that concerns itself with Ankara's external policies refers both to the adjustment of foreign policy interests and the mechanisms of its pursuit.

Unfortunately, there is no definition of what form this adjustment should take, since the EU's Common Foreign Policy initiative has not yet evolved dramatically. Neither has the European Security Defence Policy (ESDP), although, at least in that issue, there have been some relevant decisions concerning Turkey. In 2001, prior to the Laeken EU Summit, where the ESDP was pronounced as operational, Turkey reached an agreement with the bloc on the terms of its participation in the project. Additionally, there are some policy areas in which Turkey pronounces to follow the European foreign policy patterns, like for example in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict[147]. These signs, as weak and unconsolidated as they may seem today, may provide the spring-board for future developments and greater convergence in Turkish-EU preferences on the foreign and security policy realm.

Beyond the 'Europeanization-in-content' dimension, there is also a domestic implication of the same process, which asks for more democratic foreign policy-making. This requires the acknowledgement and inclusion of more actors in shaping policy

[147] After Erdoğan's criticism on Israel that it is conducting state terrorism, following the assassination of Hamas leader Sheikh Yassin in April 2004, the Prime Minister responded to its critics by saying that the Turkish attitude is in line with the EU's. See C. Caldwell, "The Turkey Paradox", *Weekly Standard*, 26 July 2004

preferences and, *mutatis mutandis*, an effort to set aside the exclusiveness of certain elite circles. Policy outcomes, even in sensitive areas such as foreign and security policy, need to become more receptive to public opinion inputs. The foreign policy elite, which includes the Foreign Ministry bureaucracy, along with high ranking officers from the TGS, is generally not perceptive to inputs stemming from the public. The media boom in Turkey during the 1990's challenged the prerogatives of the elite by opening up the debate and was able to have some influence while conveying the pulse of the masses. This development assisted the consolidation of civil societal configurations to assume a more assertive role in public affairs, and, in some cases, proved to be very effective in foreign policy issues as well. Such a case emerged following the calamitous earthquakes in Greece and Turkey that shocked both countries during the summer of 1999[148].

Another issue which is indicative of the degree of correlation between public opinion and foreign policy is the war in Iraq in 2003, as well as the attempt concerning the reunification of Cyprus, based on the Annan Plan, in 2004. In the first instance, the overwhelming majority of the public, that was against the war and resisted Turkey's interference in it, has put significant leverage in constraining the policymakers' ability to provide exhaustive support to the US. The Cyprus case was a bit more complicated, since it involved the introduction of an official policy volte-face on a highly emotional issue. Nevertheless, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, the business sector and the media embarked, as part of a fierce debate between status-quoists and pro-settlement supporters, on an effort to prepare public opinion for what later became the officially-endorsed Turkish policy.

Economic liberalization, increasing civil society pressure, and the EU prospect, all developed at different levels during the 1990's and each of them had an impact on the democratization process of Turkey. Part of this transformation concerned the Turkish foreign policy realm. The degree to which the political context and its parameters were transformed was aptly demonstrated during the first two years of the AKP government.

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[148] For the role of the EU in facilitating Greek–Turkish cooperation at the civil society level see B. Rumelili, "Civil Society and the Europeanization of Greek–Turkish Cooperation", *South European Society & Politics*, April 2005

AKP policy-makers build on these processes and expanded their manoeuvring space while handling critical policy issues (e.g. Iraq, Cyprus), without endangering – in fact, by rather strengthening – the country's European vocation. Moreover, this discussion is pertinent to the developments in the area of civil-military relations, and the new directions which the EU implanted in the interrelation of the two poles.

Positive developments over the PKK issue and relations with Syria and Greece challenged after 1998 the traditional suspicion with which elite circles in Turkey were contemplating the West, as a result of the decades-old 'Sèvres syndrome'. Apart from the change in Turkey's external relations with its immediate environment, refurbished EU prospects were calling for a positive response from the country's policy-makers, which would enable the country to take full advantage of the rising opportunities. These changes contributed in reversing the significance of these actors and empowered the civilian leg at the expense of the military pole. Kirisçi maintains that these developments, which redressed civilian control over the military, are critical in comprehending the new trends in Turkish foreign policy. He adds that, in effect, they reflect the endeavour to pursue a more 'democratic' foreign policy, by enriching the decision-making process with the inclusion of civil society, business circles and media inputs[149].

- 2.3.4 *AKP's foreign policy approach*

Since AKP's victory in the 2002 elections, Erdoğan, on several occasions repeated that his party's policies could be better understood in line with the spirit of Adnan Menderes and Turgut Özal, rather than the ideological hue of the NOM parties. The reference to Menderes and Özal, primarily served AKP's identification with the liberal economic/political preferences, introduced during the multiparty period and especially after the post-1980 coup era. However, there is also an important implication concerning foreign policy in Erdoğan's reference to the Democratic Party and ANAP's policies. This is not about actual foreign policy orientation, but rather about the style and the 'spirit' of activism. Both Menderes and Özal were keen in introducing relations with the Middle

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[149] K. Kirişci, *supra* n.71, pp.29-49

East, against the long standing Kemalist tradition, which kept the region at arms' length. AKP was also interested in enhancing Turkey's engagement with the Middle East and the Muslim world, not because of ideological reasons or religious affiliation. The main objective was to develop complementary relations with the Muslim, Arab, and Turkic world, pursue a more balanced foreign policy and increase Turkey's legitimacy as an interlocutor between East and West. This was less than a novel idea, but certainly an understated one, since Kemalist West-only exclusiveness always preferred to sideline the East. The EU prospect reinvigorated this perspective, as Turkey's bid gained the world's attention and the country's policy preferences were minutely scrutinized. AKP for example seized the opportunity to present itself as a credible and impartial mediator in the Arab-Israeli or Syrial-Israeli conflicts. These were all cases of great interest to the EU and its strategic considerations. More importantly, the balanced approach underlined AKP's departure from the "peace at home, peace in the world" isolationist and idle foreign policy tradition, which had in any case become defunct after the end of the Cold World.

AKP's focus to the East is generally linked with the occupation of the chief foreign policy advisor position by Professor Ahmet Davutoğlu, who developed a new ideological concept to frame Turkish foreign policy. Called as the 'strategic depth' concept, after Davutoğlu's book[150], this ideologocal framework emphasizes Turkey's historical and geographical 'depth', as the succesor state of the Ottoman Epire's legacy, in order to explicate the country's potential influence reserves in the wider region and the world. Turkey, being placed in the center of many areas of influence, like the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East, should, according to the 'strategic depth' doctrine, opt "for an activist engagement with all regional systems in the Turkey's neighbourhood."[151] In one of his rare interviews, the chief foreign policy advisor stated:

> [W]e are a society with historical depth, and everything produced in historical
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> depth, even if it is eclipsed in time at a certain conjuncture, may manifest itself

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[150] Prof. Dr. A. Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik/ Türkiye'nin Uluslararasi Konumu* [The Strategic Depth: The Turkish International Location], Istanbul, 2000

[151] There is currently no English translation of Davutoğlu's book. For excerpts in English and a summary of arguments see A. Murinson, "The Strategic Depth Doctrine of Turkish Foreign Policy", *Middle Eastern Studies,* November 2006, pp.945-964

again later. We are not a nation-state which emerged at a certain period of time conjecturally imposed by conditions and emerging by way of circumstances.[152]

Davutoğlu's reference to the state-structures and the legacy inherited from the Ottoman Empire is employed in order to asses Turkey's historical responsibilities in the surrounding areas, which he calls as 'land basins', i.e. the Balkans, Caucasus and the Middle East.

The argumentation he uses is also indicative of AKP's understanding concerning the securitization of foreign policy issues, which Davutoğlu regards as an obstacle in expanding the freedoms of Turkish citizens in social life. He says that a basic principle for Turkey to establish its historical/ geographical depth on strategic grounds and through peaceful means, is to further the expansion of "the sphere of freedom without risking its security."[153] Although he states that such an approach has already been followed in Turkey since the end of the Cold War, we may assume that his reference is an indirect criticism to the military-endorsed 'national security syndrome' of past times, and comprises an indicative statement of AKP's intentions. In conclusion, Davutoğlu, by espousing the post-Islamists' liberal discourse, said: "This [approach] will be carried on because this attitude also helps us encapsulate all our energy within, on a strategic framework like augmenting freedoms in social life."[154]

Davutoğlu's concept certainly marks a paradigm shift in Turkish foreign policy conduct. However, the main vehicle for materializing the ideas he propounds in his book are the developing trends of active/ more assertive diplomacy, which Turkey follows since the end of the Cold War. Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül seems to attest this view, by advocating an assertive approach for Turkey towards Europe and the neighbouring countries, one focusing on diplomacy and multilateralism: "Turkey actively advocates a particular security and foreign policy approach that is based on the culture of compromise

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[152] Interview to A. K. Han, "The world of business now spearheads foreign policy", *TURKISHTİME*, 15 April-15 May 2004, accessible under http://www.turkishtime.org/27/66_2_en.asp
[153] A. K. Han, *ibid.*
[154] A. K. Han, *ibid.*

and win-win solutions to complex problems."[155] The case of Cyprus, where the Turkish government worked towards a solution for the reunification of the island, comprises thereby an example where these new foreign policy 'qualities' became apparent. Certainly, a series of structural characteristics, which delineate the new context for thee merging new Turkish foreign policy, facilitated this approach. These include the Europeanization/ democratization context, changes in the civil-military realm, disengagement from security-informed policy attitudes, Turkey's commitment to further its application for membership etc. Moreover, the uniqueness of the Turkish response to Cyprus, in the lead-up to the March 2004 referenda, also lies, to a great extend, to the application of AKP's assertive policy-making.

Activism and multilateralism has also been displayed by the AKP administration prior to the Iraq War in 2003, when, the then Prime Minister, Abdullah Gül preferred to tour in the neighbouring countries and try to build on peaceful initiatives in convincing the Iraqi regime to comply with UN demands, instead of facilitating the eruption of another war in the region. Overall, AKP managed to demonstrate a rare dynamism, taking the initiative to promote Turkey's position in that of a mediating power seeking for consensus instead of taking refuge to military means or readily siding with one of the belligerent parties. The prioritization of the EU goal played also a crucial role in this new approach, reflecting Ankara's focus on balanced relations with both Western powers, i.e. the EU and the US. Extreme cases like the war in Iraq exhibit the necessity of striking a balance between the diverging perspectives of the two Western poles, but this need was certainly not an exclusive Turkish preoccupation; Europe itself was split into two, between the advocates of war versus the adherents of a diplomatic solution. Graham Fuller remarks that "Turkey is growing more independent-minded and less enamored of Washington and has less need for a systemic type of security guarantee because today it lacks enemies who can seriously threaten Ankara's security as long as Turkey remains domestically stable."[156]

The previous comment is indicative of two things; first, that Turkey is re-evaluating

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[155] Quoted in B. Duran, *supra* n.116, p.290
[156] G. Fuller, *supra* n.103, p.63

the nature of the strategic relationship with the US, forged during the Cold War, by lessening the exclusive focus on security considerations; and second, that this approach can only be sustained as long as Turkey remains committed to its Europeanization reforms, which will enable it to put its house in order and be part of the 'Kantian' security environment that the EU buttresses. This approach, simultaneously, helps the AKP to convince other powerful internal actors, i.e. the military, to give up their meddlesome attitude in the political realm.

In this context, AKP's balanced relations with the military are central in preserving the EU link, in order not to relive again a regress to the pre-2003 security-dominated type of bilateral relations. The EU's continued encouragement of the Turkish application with concrete actions is therefore deemed as essential in sustaining Turkey's "process of 'socialization' into Europe's security culture"[157] and allay the fears of the Turkish military over the undergoing revision of the 'national security' definition. Cooperation with the US has to fit into this scheme, which requires relations with Washington to be regarded as complementary to those with Brussels, in order not to endanger the Turkish bid for EU membership. Thereby, Duran remarks that, "[f]or the JDP [AKP], Turkey's EU membership and its strategic partnership with the United States are complementary. But the nature of this relationship is Europeanized."[158]

Continued American support for Turkish EU membership opens up the perspectives for sustained Turkish-US relations. Nevertheless, the Iraq experience shows that militant activism and predilection for 'forced democratization' towards the wider Middle East, as displayed by the current Bush administration, may put the two allies at odds. The predicaments in Iraq and the future cohesion of the country will be crucial in maintaining the EU-centred policy line. The issue of PKK and northern Iraq, along with their wider implications for Turkey's Kurdish issue still seem to be monopolized by the military's perspective, especially after the failure in 2003 to satisfy Turkey's basic objectives (or red lines) in the area. Northern Iraq appears therefore as a prominent foreign policy issue,

[157] B. Park "The security dimensions of Turkey-EU relations", in M. Lake (ed.), *The EU & Turkey*, 2005, p.137
[158] B. Duran, *supra* n.116, p.293

whose dynamics do not allow for a Europeanized approach and tolerate the prevalence of security considerations. However, furthering regional cooperation is essential in bringing Turkish foreign policy closer to the EU's mainstream understanding of 'good neighbouring relations'. Improved relations with Greece, efforts on Cyprus, ties with Syria and Iran, all point to the Europeanized direction of Ankara's external relations, which is promoted through AKP's 'zero-problems-with-neighbours' approach.

Between 2002 and 2004, the two most salient events that marked the realm of foreign policy were related to Turkey's evolving dynamics with the EU and the US. In the first instance, the AKP government preoccupied itself with furthering democratic reforms necessary prior to attaining a date from Brussels for starting its accession negotiations. The two-year effort culminated in the momentous decision of the Brussels EU Summit in December 2004 to start negotiation talks on October 2005. A stumbling block that (not so unexpectedly) intersected Turkey's already problematic trajectory to the EU, was the decades-old Cyprus problem. As the integration project progressed with higher pace towards Eastern Europe, Cyprus and Malta than towards Turkey, the possibility of Cyprus (and indeed other member states) blocking Turkey's entry into the bloc forced Ankara to search for an acceptable solution to the problem. Concerning the Iraq war, the AKP government, immediate after its rise to power, was called to handle the extraordinary situation of the impeding US-led military initiative. Due to Turkey's geostrategical importance and the precedent of the first Gulf War, Washington exaggerated its expectations from Ankara, thereby missing the signals of political transformation, which ultimately resulted to the Turkish non-involvement in the war.

Both the Iraq war and the Cyprus issue, with their implications for Turkish-EU and Turkish-US relations, were multifaceted policy subjects that involved the whole range of policy actors in Turkey; the government, the secular establishment, the military and, certainly, vocal public opinion. The following chapter is going to examine the interaction of those actors under the prism of the new conditions that were brought to the fore by the AKP government in the case of Cyprus. The Europeanization factor and the new socio-political context that it created are thereby crucial in underlining the novel nuances that characterized Turkish foreign policy after 2002.

▶

Turkish-EU Relations through the Lens of Cyprus:
The Annan Plan & Turkey's New Cyprus Policy as a Case Study

■ 3.1 *Brussels and the stumbling block*

The all pervasive nature of the EU integration project, to which the AKP has committed itself, is non-pertinent to hardly any state or social aspect in Turkey. Turkish foreign policy can, therefore, not remain unaffected by the course of Turkish-EU relations. The maintenance of the Europeanization process and EU-centred foreign policy orientation are difficult to be consolidated without Brussels' strong incentive for further integration. Foreign policy trends that were developed and refined by the AKP government and Ankara's foreign relations are destined to come closer to the European mainstream attitude and become more predictable, under the precondition that the EU accession process will remain on track. Tarik Oğuzlu detects a stronger likelihood of an EU-oriented foreign policy pursuit, if the path of democratization follows alongside the EU accession process[159]. In Turkey's case, the incentive of intimate cooperation with the EU, leading to full membership to the European bloc, motivated the government to change domestic legal provisions, adjust Turkish laws to European standards and restructure undemocratic institutions in an uncontested manner, meeting virtually no

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[159] T. Oğuzlu, *supra* n.121, p.97

resistance, even from the Euro-sceptic bloc.

AKP's political influence, which continued to rise after the party's electoral victory in November 2002, was also subject to Brussels-related developments, due to the party's EU-centred agenda that guided its domestic and foreign policy-making to a large extend. The EU factor became, therefore, critical in understanding the context within which the ruling party in Turkey formulated its foreign policy preferences between 2002 and 2004. In attaining the AKP's stated goal of commencing accession talks, the government has been enthusiastic in undertaking EU-required reforms that were deemed necessary to meet the Copenhagen criteria. It even appeared willing to contemplate a policy revision over Cyprus in order to solve the decades-old problem. To that end, it endorsed a plan, drafted by the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, which envisioned a re-unified Cypriot State. This political option totally contrasted Turkey's traditional approach, prescribed in essence by the secular/ security circles for decades. Thus, the Annan Plan emerged as a test case for Ankara, through which the government was called to display the degree of transformation in Turkish foreign policy. During the course of developments over Cyprus, AKP had the chance to unfold its new approach in managing foreign problematic issues. But the real test was about the degree of European foreign policy transfer to Ankara, i.e. an early indication of the degree of Ankara's willingness to complying with EU standards and employ EU practices. The implication of Europeanization in Turkey's external relations referred to the contribution of good neighbouring relations in a secure inter-state environment.

Thus, beyond the democratization reforms, Cyprus was the one issue that needed to be resolved in order to clear Turkey's way towards the commencement of accession negotiations. This was not an easy task, since it constituted an emotive issue, to which Turkish diplomacy had devoted a substantial part of its efforts. Conflict in the island dates back in the 1950's, when Cyprus was still a British Colony. Efforts to distance the two communities from imported nationalistic tendencies, advocating unification with the respective 'motherlands', failed after the creation of the independent Republic of Cyprus in 1960, when a protracted period of bi-communal clashes emerged. The island has been divided along ethnic lines since the 1974 events, when Turkey responded to an Athens-

backed coup with a military operation in order to preclude unification with Greece. Since then, the Greek-administered Republic of Cyprus is recognized by the international community as representing the whole island. Turkey is the only country to recognize the TRNC, which declared its independence unilaterally in 1983.

■ 3.2 *The Annan Plan: A new opportunity arises*

Although during the 1990's, past impetus for finding a solution to the problem had eclipsed, giving its place to entrenched mindsets that precluded any progress[160], the EU factor played a significant role in reviving these efforts. This appeared to be an important stimulus for the Turkish side, which in 1999 received candidacy status in Helsinki, in parallel to the European *quid pro quo* to Cypriot accession without any settlement conditions attached[161]. In fact, the need to tackle the Cyprus problem had already intensified since 1997, when the EU decided to start accession negotiations with the island Republic. During the infamous Luxembourg Summit, Turkey's EU prospects were marginalized, leading to a harsh response from Ankara. Turkey distanced itself from the EU, questioning the member states' even-handedness. Grudges on European double standards heightened with Cyprus' inclusion into the list of prospective members.

After 1999, the solution of the problem became inextricable with Turkey's quest for membership and Ankara was pressed to attain a constructive attitude in its approach to Cyprus, in order to avoid frictions over its own integration process. As the crucial 'date to obtain a date' deemed to be closer in December 2002, a policy revision among Turkish foreign policy-making circles seemed inevitable. AKP appeared willing to contemplate a foreign policy shift, away from the established approach. Nevertheless, signs, denoting the government's willingness for a new stance, did not go without causing domestic tensions. Erdoğan's commitment of solving the problem was reassured from the early days of his

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[160] For a historical account of the Cyprus problem and the course of negotiations see inter alia C. H. Dodd, *Cyprus: The Need for New Perspectives*, 1999; R. McDonald, "Greek-Turkish relations and the Cyprus conflict", in D. Keridis and D. Triantaphyllou (eds), *Greek-Turkish Relations in the Era of Globalization*, 2001. For a Turkish view of the problem, see Z. M. Necatigil, *The Cyprus Question and the Turkish Position in International Law*, 1996.
[161] The text of the 1999 EU Summit's conclusions can be accessed under:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/ACFA4C.htm

party's electoral victory. In various press statements the AKP leader advocated various successful examples as putative state models for managing the Cyprus issue[162]. The old dictum "The problem was solved back in 1974" and slogans like "No solution is the solution" gave their place to a compromise-seeking wording, claiming that "No solution is not a solution". Such statements were perceived as an early indication of the divergence between the new government's policy intentions and past hard-liners' rhetoric.

Nevertheless, during 2002, beyond verbal novelties, an apparent foreign policy shift was too early to be concluded. A series of reasons were obstructing a visible policy change on behalf of Ankara, such as the looming war in Iraq, AKP's leadership problem (Erdoğan entered Parliament and became Prime Minister in the following year) and the fixed stance of advocates of the traditional approach. Besides, after November 2002, the government was preparing itself for the crucial Copenhagen EU Summit on December, from which it hoped to obtain a definite date for starting accession negotiations. The result of the Copenhagen Summit, evaluated in negative terms from the Turkish side, due to its failure to set a date for starting negotiations, was eventually instrumental in accelerating the democratization process in Turkey. By essentially concluding that Turkey was not ready to negotiate with Brussels over its accession, the conclusion forged AKP's willingness to prove it wrong in the next Summit, in December 2004, that would revise the country's position. The Presidency's concluding statement, which affirmed Nicosia's inclusion in the next enlargement round, pointed to Ankara the urgency for a solution in the Mediterranean island if Turkey wanted to keep its accession prospects on track.

The ground on which to build for progress existed even before the EU member state's convention in Copenhagen on December 12-13, 2002. Negotiations, during the course of 2002, between Glafcos Clerides and Rauf Denktaş, the leaders of the respective communities in Cyprus, were advancing slowly, due to divergent interpretations of the initial agreements brokered back in the 1970's[163]. Denktaş was favouring a loose

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[162] See for example, "Erdoğan advocates Belgian model for permanent solution on Cyprus", *Turkish Press Review,* 7 November 2002

[163] These were the High Level Agreement between Makarios and Denktaş in February 12, 1977 and the 10-Point Agreement of 19 May 1979 between Kyprianou and Denktaş, which set the basis for a bizonal, bicommunal future solution on a federative basis.

confederation of two sovereign states, while Clerides was striving for a single state authority and for gradual refugee resettlement in the north. Failure to come up with a conclusion led the UN Secretary General to present his own proposition on November 11, 2002. His proposal, aiming at a comprehensive solution to the problem, became subsequently known as the Annan Plan. The plan proposed the establishment of a new state of affairs on the island under the scheme of the 'United Cyprus Republic', an independent state with a single international legal personality and sovereignty, a federal government and two equal constituent states, the Greek Cypriot State and the Turkish Cypriot State[164]. The outcome of the Copenhagen Summit managed to induce Turkey to facilitate a solution. It did so, not only by applying pressure to Ankara with Cyprus' prospective inclusion, but also by asking the two Cypriot sides to conclude their negotiations on the basis of the Annan Plan by February 28, 2003. The EU's intention, to push the two sides to find a solution in the short-term, in order to sign together the EU accession agreement on April 16, 2003 in Athens, backfired. Denktaş remained unmoved while thousands of Turkish Cypriots were protesting in the north for a solution based on the Annan Plan. Greek Cypriots were also opposed to the plan, but the Greek Cypriot administration said it would not reject it altogether. After the February deadline was violated, the UN Secretary General presided over another fruitless meeting of the two sides in The Hague. At the end of the meeting Denktaş scraped the plan and refused to put it to a referendum. Subsequently Annan concluded the process without being able to achieve a breakthrough.

Throughout the rest of 2003 no activity resumed for reviving the Annan Plan. In the meantime Clerides lost the Presidential race to Tassos Papadopoulos, known for his hard stance vis-à-vis a compromise. Rauf Denktaş, who was accredited with much of the failure of the Hague meeting[165] decided on April 23, 2003 to ease restrictions on the movement across the 'Green Line' that divided the two communities since 1974. But beyond this

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[164] Article 1 of the new United Cyprus Republic Constitution. The final draft of the Annan Plan, submitted on March 31, 2004 can be accessed under: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/annanplan/annanplan.pdf

[165] In his statement after the negotiations in The Hague, Annan blamed Rauf Denktaş for not putting the Plan to referendum. See *Kathimerini*, English edition, 12 March 2003

motion, he was adamant in returning to the negotiating table.

■ 3.3 *Back to the negotiating table: AKP & Turkish foreign policy on Cyprus as a case study*

From the moment the AKP came to power it realized that the margins for finding an acceptable solution to the Cyprus problem were tight, for the sake of sustaining its own European membership aspirations. Cyprus would become an EU member on May 2004 and without a solution on the table, or at least a demonstration of good will, Europe would be reluctant to start negotiations with Ankara. Nevertheless, the deadlock to which negotiations has ended was not providing an encouraging sign for the initiation of any diplomatic activity. Moreover, the government, since its incumbency, was confronted with two major obstacles that were constraining its ability to manoeuvre freely. The first concerned its obligation to deal with EU-demands in light of the crucial Copenhagen EU Summit, in order to persuade the member states for its readiness to start accession negotiations. Secondly, it had to overcome a series of limitations in domestic policymaking emanating from Kemalist suspicion towards it secular credentials. The necessity to tackle problems in these two areas was of paramount importance for the government to establish its own authority over policy-making. The unresolved Cyprus problem stood in-between both issues. The EU was expecting from Turkey to contribute in its solution, before it could further Ankara's application. On the other hand, the secular/ security establishment, already uncomfortable with Brussels' demands, rigidly declined to undertake any change on Cyprus that would go against its interpretation of Turkish national interests.

• 3.3.1 *From security concerns to securitized policies and beyond*

Turkish policy on Cyprus has been traditionally informed by the security considerations of the secular establishment and particularly the Turkish military[166], which

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[166] For a Turkish view on the strategic importance of Cyprus see E. Özveren, "Geo-strategic significance of Cyprus: Long

is contemplating the island as a vital part of Turkey's security in the Eastern Mediterranean. From 1974 onwards, Turkey stations in the northern part around 35,000 Turkish soldiers on a permanent basis, a disproportionately high number compared to the civilian population of approximately 200,000. The island poses a significant strategic location due to its approximation to Turkey's southern coast, the only open and unhindered access that the country has on its way to the Mediterranean Sea. Additionally, Cyprus stands opposite to the port of Ceyhan, where the oil pipeline from Baku terminates. Wider geostrategic considerations that add to the islands importance include its vicinity to the Middle East and its placing in the midst of important oil transportation routes. The northern part provides a kind of a protecting shield against possible threats coming from the Greek south. If seen as the continuation of a chain of Greek-dominated islands, ranging from north-eastern Aegean to south-eastern Mediterranean, the fear of encirclement warrants the security-dominated approach of the Turkish side. Thus, ever since Turkey's involvement in Cyprus in the mid 1950's Ankara remained concerned about who's in control of the island. As a result, the security discourse went in parallel, and sometimes even surpassed, the humanitarian nature that Turkey invoked in the 1974 operation. Turan Güneş who was the Foreign Minister in the Ecevit coalition government during the 1974 military operation in Cyprus, stated his understanding of the problem as following:

> Cyprus is as precious as the right arm of a country which cares for her defence or her expansionistic aims if she harbours any. If we don't keep this strategic importance of Cyprus we cannot understand the peace operation of 20 July [1974] or rather it is impossible to understand the entire Cyprus crisis [...] Many states, to a certain extent because it suits their interest, want to see the Cyprus problem merely as our desire to protect the Turkish community on the island. Whereas the actual problem is the security of 45 million Turks in the motherland together with the Turks in the island and the maintenance of the

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term trends and prospects", *Perceptions,* December 2002-February 2003

balance of the Middle East.[167]

Furthermore, Turgut Özal voiced a similar concern, while commenting on the unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) of the TRNC after he became Prime Minister in the first post-1980 coup elections:

> Cyprus is an island which pierces the middle of Turkey like a dagger. It is extremely vital from the viewpoint of our security. This island should not be in enemy hands. The existence of Turks in northern Cyprus is a guarantee in this direction.[168]

Finally, while underlining the strategic aspect that reckons Cyprus as the cornerstone of Turkey's security, an advisor to Rauf Denktaş, Mümtaz Soysal, stated once that "the Turkish military presence in Cyprus was a matter of the protection of southern Turkey – a strategic question not a humanitarian one."[169]

The security-imbued discourse that traditionally dominated Turkish responses on Cyprus was not seriously questioned until the end of the 1990's. Nevertheless, the societal and political context since the end of the Cold War, fuelled by the efforts to liberalize the society and bring the country closer to the EU, steadily posed challenges to the national security-centred approach. Gradual democratization led to the opening of previously insulated policy-making processes (most notably of foreign policy) with the inclusion of a variety of actors, e.g. public opinion, media, business associations, think tanks, ethnic lobbies and pressure groups. Thus, the excessively securitized policy areas of the past gradually moved towards the civilian realm and the security discourse began to erode. Although this process is far from concluded, the July 2003 constitutional amendments, adopted by the TGNA, have contributed towards that end. The securitizing tone in foreign policy issues, although not totally abandoned, has evidently begun to soften, as in the case of Cyprus after January 2004.

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[167] Reported in *Hurriyet*, 20 July 1980, English translation accessible under: http://www.hellas.org/cyprus/trexpand.htm
[168] Reported in *Milliyet*, November 1983, English translation: http://www.hellas.org/cyprus/trexpand.htm
[169] Cited by C. Hitchens, *Hostage to History: Cyprus from the Ottomans to Kissinger*, September 1997

- 3.3.2 *Cyprus & foreign policy transformation: The security perspective*

The problem of protracted non-settlement in Cyprus was entering a new phase on November 15, 1983, when the TRNC unilaterally proclaimed its independence. Supported by the Turkish troops' presence, which remained stationed in the northern part of the island since 1974, the breakaway northern part appealed for international recognition, yet with little success. The Turkish military was regarded by the Turkish Cypriot leadership and people as the guarantor of their security in the island, able to deter any future Greek Cypriot threat. The army's on-spot presence allowed the TGS the latitude to influence policymaking on Cyprus and consolidate a policy context, leaving limited leeway to individual government-generated policies. Assisted by the congruent nature of their policy preferences, the security and secular/ bureaucratic establishment developed a mainstream approach that devised the main precepts of Cyprus-related Turkish foreign policy on elected governments. The establishment's main preoccupation revolved around the preservation of Turkey's 'red lines', the undefined nature of which points to the attempt to securitize the issue[170]. According to Alper Kaliber, "[t]he main reason for the centrality of the Cyprus issue within domestic power relations in Turkey stems from its heavy securitization by the foreign policy and security establishment."[171] Following the scholars' rationale, a security-fraught discourse concerning a concrete policy area aims at distancing this issue from the public debate. This 'de-politicisation' process enfranchised the secular elite to handle the issue in an exclusive manner and limit its accountability to the civilian authority and the public.

Internal developments during the 1990's proved instrumental in monopolizing access to issues deemed of vital interest by the security establishment. The military's expanding role in policy-making was conducive in the scarcity of actors that were allowed to partake in or influence the process. Turkish foreign policy-making throughout the 1990's is indicative of Turkey's democratic deficiency in that area. It generally reserved little space

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[170] For a definition of the term and its application in the Turkish context see P. Savvides, *supra* n.109, p.59

[171] A. Kaliber, "Securing the Ground through Securitized 'Foreign' Policy: The Cyprus Case', *Security Dialogue,*, September 2005, p.320

for civilian policy-makers on issues prioritized by the military and the state bureaucracy on the excuse of managing the issues of foremost national importance in an optimum way. This tradition, which lasted until the first decade after the end of the Cold War, even precluded elected governments from having a decisive saying on sensitive foreign policy issues. According to Robins, "[i]t is not the case that the democratically-elected government lays down policy, the implementation of which is then managed by the foreign and other related ministries."[172] Robins maintains that at the end of the 1990's the military has emerged more publicly than at any time since the end of the 1980 coup, "as the most important institution, at least in charting the strategic direction of foreign policy."[173] These foreign policy-making trends reduced the government's role into a plain administrator of pre-existing policies, devised by the guardians of Kemalism, most notably the military's top brass, the state bureaucracy and senior diplomats at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Turkish policy on Cyprus was also affected by the military's interference in politics and its increasing autonomy during the 1990's, although not in the ostentatious way that domestic issues/ threats were brought to the fore. Cyprus has been a security preoccupation ever since the issue came to the attention of the Turkish public and state, and especially after the eruption of inter-communal clashes in 1963. After the Cold War, the expansion of the military's security agenda to virtually all policy areas via institutionalized processes (NSC sessions) did not affect Cyprus as such. Rather it was the escalating tension in relations with Greece and Cyprus that led the military to assume a leading role in light of civilian irresponsibility. The TGS was alarmed by Tansu Çiller's chancy handling of the Imia/ Kardak crisis in January 1996, where the then Prime Minister essentially proposed to go to war with Greece over sovereignty disputes of two Aegean islets. Gareth Jenkins reports that in the aftermath of the crisis, "the TGS subsequently ensured that all policy concerning Cyprus and Greece was controlled by the NSC."[174] Especially on Cyprus, the TGS assumed a more pro-active role in policy

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[172] P. Robins, *supra* n.2, p.69
[173] P. Robins, *ibid.*, p.92
[174] G. Jenkins, *supra* n.137, p.79

formulation and dissemination, both through the NSC and its military presence in Cyprus. Even if the TGS is officially committed to a solution, in line with the Turkish state policy rhetoric, nevertheless, it remains worried in case of a potential Greek domination over the island in a future unified state structure. Besides, the current status quo of partition allows the military to influence internal politics in the TRNC[175].

The limitations in the foreign policymaking process and the military's lead in shaping Turkey's Cyprus policy have muted the articulation of public debate on that issue and hindered the emergence of alternative arguments. Turkish state policy on Cyprus combines all the aforementioned characteristics; seen from a strategic perspective, it has been securitized since its emergence and successive elected governments have not questioned the policy line designed by the secular/ security establishment. Consequently, Turkish society's sympathy for the Turkish Cypriot cause refrained from developing into a public debate concerning the adopted policy implementation. Thus, societal perspectives on Cyprus coincided with state-objectives in the absence of new discourses. This consonance remained uninterrupted until the emergence of AKP, which broke off from the state-society consensus and made an alternative proposition. This cracked the establishment's monopoly in steering Turkey's policy approach on Cyprus and accounted for the opening of the issue, allowing contrasting opinions to be debated publicly. Therefore AKP's approach marked a novel trend in foreign policy-making patterns, fitting to the changing political and societal context in Turkey.

- ### 3.3.3 *AKP's new Cyprus policy*

The traditional cautious approach of the secular/ security establishment and policy bedevilment during the first days of AKP accounted for the slow response in initiating a fresh approach over Cyprus, despite Erdoğan's public statements to the contrary. For example, after the AKP leader proposed any future solution to be baseed on the Belgian model of bicommunal symbiosis, Foreign Minister Yasar Yakış came the next day to

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[175] The Turkish Cypriot security forces are under the commando of a serving Turkish General, who reports to the Presidency of the TRNC. This serves as a conduit for direct interrelation between the TGS and northern Cypriot political affairs. See Gareth Jenkins, *ibid.*, pp.79-81

dismiss the idea as unattainable. After January 2003, confusion prevailed as to whether there was a policy change on Cyprus or not, with state officials and officers making the one contradictory statement after the other[176]. Some analysis suggests that, despite EU caveats to contribute to a solution before Cyprus' accession, Ankara did'nt take the warning seriously. On March 11, for example, EU Commission spokesman Jean-Christophe Filori remarked that Turkey's hopes for accession could suffer if no solution could be reached before the May 1, 2004 date[177] (the official accession of the ten new member states). But despite Europe's direct warnings to Ankara, to assume a positive stance after Denktaş' showdown in The Hague, the Turkish attitude remained rather nonchalant. Therefore, the same analysis suggests, at that time "many in Ankara simply refused to believe that the EU would allow the Greek Cypriots to join on 1 May 2004 if a settlement had not been reached by that date"[178].

One explanation for Ankara's stance could involve the busy foreign policy agenda of the time. The Foreign Ministry had dedicated most of its resources to deal with the forthcoming war in Iraq. Turkey was engaged in damage control activity over the March 1 vote in the TGNA, which failed to allow US troops to pass through Turkish territory and open a second front against Iraq. Turkish-US relations were severely damaged after Ankara's temporizing moves to avoid interference. It seems that the handling of both issues at the same time limited Ankara's latitude in making bold steps. In parallel, AKP had to remain thoughtful of keeping internal balances in tact, because it needed to secure Erdoğan's inclusion into parliament through a forthcoming by-election in the province of Siirt. Additionally, AKP had to manoeuvre carefully in order not to strain its relations with the military too much, especially after the hardships over the March 1, 2003 resolution in the TGNA[179].

EU resentment was reflected in the Commission's regular report on Turkey, published on November 5, 2003, where Ankara was cautioned to "provide determined support for

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[176] For a summary of such statements see *Strategy Survey, IISS,* May 2003, pp.134-135

[177] Quoted in "Turkey in flux", *Strategic Survey, IISS*, May 2004, p.142

[178] Strategic Survey, *ibid.*

[179] In that case, Erdoğan had asked from the military, during an NSC session, to endorse the resolution but the later declined to do so. See K. Kirişci, *supra* n.123, p.44

efforts to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem"[180]. Nevertheless, the reports stressed as a positive outcome Turkey's declared intention to comply with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruling, of July 1998, to compensate Greek Cypriot applicant Titina Loizidou for her lost property in the north, following the 1974 events. The outcome of the Loizidou case turned out to be the first indication for Turkey's reversal on its Cyprus policy, suggesting a softening of the tones. A more favourable outcome was about to follow, originating this time from developments in northern Cyprus. Turkish Cypriots increasingly came to realize that Denktaş' stance in The Hague was eliminating their chances to join the EU and failed to secure a brighter future for the island. Long-term stagnation, due to the international economic embargo, to which TRNC was subject to, made people in the north resent their leader's rejectionist attitude. Many even contemplated the scenario of a reunited island that could provide the means to overcome their daily hardships.

The Annan Plan provisions and the perspective of EU membership came to be seen as sufficient guarantees for the future well-being and security of the Turkish Cypriots. Thus, Cyprus' EU accession prospects appeared to exert a comparable incentive to the Turkish Cypriot people, in the same way it motivated Turkey to advance its own European outlook by endorsing a solution-oriented outcome. The forthcoming elections in northern Cyprus, on December 14, 2003, presented the opportunity to measure the proportions of the two sides, i.e. those favouring EU accession and reunification on the basis of the Annan Plan and those opposing it. Eventually the result was equally split among the two sides, both winning exactly half of the 50 seats in the assembly. However Mehmet Ali Talat's Republican Turkish Party (Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi, CTP) managed to form a coalition government with Serdar Denktaş' Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti, DP), replacing the previous National Unity Party (Ulusal Birlik Partisi, UBP) administration, affiliated with Rauf Denktaş. An assessment of the Turkish Cypriot vote, by Ali Çarkoğlu and Ahmet Sözen, suggested that it managed to provide "electoral legitimacy to a

[180] See Commission of the European Communities, "2003 Regular Report on Turkey's progress towards accession", 5 November 2003,p.134

seemingly growing constituency that is supportive of a cooperative solution to the longlasting conflict on the island."[181]

The electoral results enabled AKP to campaign domestically in favour of a solution based on the Annan Plan and for the re-initiation of negotiations. While the government realized that time for a solution in Cyprus was running out, it was emboldened by the vote to force Denktaş back to the negotiating table. There was no anticipation for a smooth policy shift, due to the existing divergence between AKP's views and those of the Turkish Cypriot leader. Alteration of the long-standing policy, supporting the status quo, would inevitably bring the two sides, i.e. AKP and Denktaş, in conflict. However, AKP's authority to drag the old veteran back to negotiations, somehow, bent, due to the marginal electoral results of December 14. Therefore AKP was not in the position to relegate Denktaş from the chief negotiator's post. As an end result, the Turkish Cypriot leader's position weakened, as the northern part of Cyprus appeared fragmented between proponents of a settlement and those advocating the maintenance of the status quo.

Before confronting Denktaş, though, Erdoğan had to persuade internal policy actors to realign in favour of a settlement-oriented policy. To that end, the government had to find a way to bridge the gap between its approach and that of nationalistic-inclined domestic policy actors. Practically it had to persuade the secular/ security establishment to embrace its point of view for a novel approach on the issue, and convince Denktaş to act accordingly. AKP's efforts concentrated on the drafting of a 'road map', in cooperation with the TGS and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This strategy-paper would outline the basic goals of the Turkish side in the negotiating table. The 'road map' was finalized and approved on January 8, 2004 during a high-level summit in Ankara, attended by Erdoğan, Özkök and President Sezer[182]. According to the adopted strategy Turkey pledged to use the UN Secretary General's Cyprus plan as the basis for a future agreement and was affirming its determination to solve the Cyprus issue through negotiations, as soon as possible. Subsequently, Denktaş was invited to Ankara and was briefed over the new

[181] A. Çarkoğlu and A. Sözen, "The Turkish Cypriot General Elections of December 2003: Setting the Stage for Resolving the Cyprus Conflict?", *South European Society and Politics*, Winter 2004, p.135
[182] Strategic Survey, supra n.177, p.143

policy line, which he was expected to follow 'to the letter'. Mustafa Unal, a journalist from daily Zaman, commented on the implications of the new Cyprus road map as following:

> The Annan plan will be negotiated on. Denktas will remain as negotiator, but he won't be on his own; a team will accompany him at the table. A representative from the government and certain bureaucrats from Ankara's Foreign Ministry will also be there. From now on, Denktas will take his steps in line with Turkey's new policy'.[183]

The AKP government, which could not even cling to a common position on Cyprus during the Copenhagen Summit, emerged one year later as a solid decisive bloc, able to convince the rest of its ideological rivals. This development, certainly, constituted a major turnabout regarding the establishment's approach to the 'holy cow' of Turkey's foreign policy, to use Philip Robin's expression. According to the scholar, the government was able to entertain such a policy volte-face, without agitating the secular/ security establishment, because of the overwhelming parliamentary mandate it was given, as well as due to foreign encouragement[184]. The majority, which the AKP enjoyed in parliament, strengthened the government's will to proceed with its policy, enduing it with a civilian 'buttress' against the military's opposition. The government's popularity stood also as another deterrent to the TAF from repeating a political intervention similar to the one in February 1997. Furthermore, Kirişci remarks that, by the time that a consensus was achieved among all policy actors, the government had managed to consolidate its power. It had also acquired experience in mobilising support for its causes and benefited from the advantage of a robust economy[185].

AKP had by then succeeded in passing the constitutional packages that curtailed, to some extend, the military's political influence. After the high-level summit of January 8, the 'road map' was discussed in the subsequent NSC meeting on January 23. According to the press, a compromise between the government and the military was reflected in the

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[183] M. Unal, "Turkey's new Cyprus Policy", *Zaman*, 9 January 2004; For an English summary of the article see *Turkish Press Review*, 9 January 2004

[184] He mentions the involvement of leading foreign states, notably the UK, to encourage the government to restart negotiations. P. Robins, *supra* n.135, pp.297-298

[185] K. Kirişci, *supra* n.71, p.46

statement issued after the session, saying that "Turkey continues to support the U.N. secretary-general's goodwill mission and has renewed its political determination to rapidly reach a solution that takes the Annan plan as a reference"[186]. Certainly, all these factors have contributed in outbidding the establishment's resistance against a turnabout on Cyprus. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that the secular/ security establishment retracted so readily from its decades-old entrenched position by persuasion. Bearing in mind the continuous and total support, which the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş has enjoyed from Ankara in promoting international recognition of breakaway 'TRNC', the establishment's U-turn on this matter becomes rather incomprehensible.

Turkish support for the post-1974 status quo, was not only embedded in official state responses, but stemmed also from popular sympathies towards its ethnic kindred on the island. The 1974 military undertaking, that aimed to prevent Cyprus' unification with Greece, a development under which Turkish Cypriots were to suffer, was largely seen as a matter of national pride. Only a few years ago, the political discourse on Cyprus, articulated by governments preceding AKP, was insisting on the 'acknowledgement of the realities on ground', and was advocating a confederation model consisting of two states. As soon as in 2000, İsmail Cem, the former Foreign Minister, encapsulated Turkey's traditional Cyprus policy in one of his articles, by saying: "Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots live in the island as two independent states, two functioning democracies and two peoples in security"[187]. Such policy statements continued to be the mainstream approach, roughly up until 2002-2003. While AKP started to air its vague declarations on a different approach after November 2002, it was well aware that a political decision on the island's future had to strike a delicate balance between pragmatism and public sentiment. Failure to do so would heighten accusations, containing 'sell-out' charges against the political elite, and would most probably provoke public unrest drifted by nationalistic overstatements.

AKP opted for the 'Europeanized way'. At the state level, the decision to re-engage in

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[186] Y. Kanli, "New Cyprus push under way", *Turkish Daily News*, 26 January 2004
[187] Published in La Stampa, July 2000. The English text can be found in İ. Cem, Turkey in the New Century: Speeches and Texts Presented at International Fora (1995-2001), 2001, p.180

negotiations, placed within the wider EU context, emerged as the only pragmatic choice that would simultaneously enable Ankara to retain its EU prospects. The government's decision recoiled in turn on the societal level, prompting an unprecedented mobilization of public opinion through extensive media coverage and think tank activities[188]. The public debate that ensued within the Turkish society, for the first time exposed the public to pro-settlement arguments, by presenting them as a realistic choice and not as the 'wreckage' of the nation. Subsequently, the electoral outcome in northern Cyprus and Mehmet Ali Talat's favourable stance on the UN-sponsored reunification plan endorsed moderate voices in the Turkish mainland to call for an EU-oriented solution. These factors, certainly, increased the pressure for a revised stance on the problem. However, the turnabout in secular circles came in early 2004, when Turkish intelligence reports indicated that the Greek Cypriot side, which was so far sticking to the UN plan and accepting it as a basis for further negotiations, was highly disenchanted with it. Papadopoulos' election on February 2003 was also pointing to that direction. According to the Turkish analysis, acceptance of the Annan Plan by the Turkish Cypriot side would not immediately lead to its implementation, because of the high probability of its dismissal by the Greek Cypriots[189]. The later piece of information may have persuaded the secular/ security establishment to engage in a low-risk political 'gamble' with high turnout probabilities, even if it did not fully agree to the proposed resolution scheme.

The Turkish military possessed a key role in managing the Cyprus issue and was particularly interested in the developments leading to the simultaneous referenda in 2004. Its assertiveness on the matter slightly mitigated after the establishment of a co-operative relationship between the Prime Minister and the then Chief of Staff. General Özkök, who was concerned about Turkey's bid to join the EU, acted with restraint in his statements on governmental policy. Occasionally though, dissident voices from among the high ranking officers asked for more assertiveness in securing the status quo in Cyprus. These calls were featuring the usual characteristics of the securitized approach, alarming the public and

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[188] One such example was the 'Civil Society Meeting' organized on January 26, 2004 in Istanbul by TESEV, a leading think-tank, with the attendance of representatives from both sides of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey.
[189] "Europe/ Russia", *Strategic Survey*, *IISS*, p.166

especially the government of the grim prospects, which the abandoning of the traditional policy line would entail. When Aytaç Yalman, commander of the Turkish Ground Forces, flew on January 2003 to northern Cyprus to meet with Rauf Denktaş, he urged the Turkish Cypriot leader to "reject any solution proposal which could jeopardize the TRNC's future security"[190] and underlined that the Annan plan could lead to the erosion of security in Cyprus[191]. However, Özkök tied himself to his moderate approach propounding that the 'the last word lay with the elected civilians'. Thus the Chief of Staff discretely supported the Prime Minister's policy line, despite the considerable pressure from his uncompromising generals.

Aside from Özkök's independent approach, which valued EU membership, the TGS gradually adapted to a more favourable outlook concerning Turkey's entrance into the bloc. The military had so far adopted an ambivalent stance vis-à-vis the EU. Although it viewed full membership in the European club as the ultimate destination of the Turkish nation, in line with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's precepts, at the same time it grew wary of its potential impact in altering the nature of the Turkish regime[192]. Nevertheless, the ultimate acknowledgement that, in light of EU accession, the European security community would encompass Turkey and enhance its internal and external safety levels, resulted in a more propitious posture. The Turkish 'cost-benefit analysis' concluded that the EU would provide a better solution for most of such problems related to secessionist trends and terrorism within and around the country. According to Aydinli, Özcan and Akyaz "the costs of tackling these major [security] problems alone seemed to surpass those of meeting European demands, even though compliance would inevitably transform the Turkish armed forces."[193] By tacitly accepting the implementation of EU-induced reforms without much resistance, and especially those that affected the military directly, the TAF emphatically marked its retreat from the political realm, anticipating in return the

[190] Turkish Press Review, 28 January 2003
[191] See M. Kinacioğlu and E. Oktay, "The Domestic Dynamics of Turkey's Cyprus Policy: Implications for Turkey's Accession to the European Union", *Turkish Studies*, Summer 2006, p.265
[192] G. Jenkins, 2001, *supra* n.137, p82
[193] E. Aydinli, N. A. Özcan, D. Akyaz, "The Turkish Military's March Toward Europe", *Foreign Affairs*, January-February 2006

extension of European security guarantees. Kirişci maintains that such a development hints to the erosion of the 'national security' mentality and may denote changing trends, even within the TAF:

> [E]arly in 2004 in reaction to General Hursit Tolon, who had accused advocates of the Annan Plan in Cyprus of being traitors [...] Özkök noted that the military had to learn to recognize that it was not only the military who loved the country and that they were not the only patriots. It is against the background of such remarks that it becomes easier to account for the major turnabout in Turkey's Cyprus policy.[194]

Relying on the discreet support of General Hilmi Özkök, the open support of influential Turkish media and the backing of over 70% of the Turkish public for the goal of EU membership, Erdoğan was able to go on with the implementation of his government's Cyprus policy. In any case, Denktaş' reengagement in the negotiation process would strengthen the international community's conviction that Turkey does not constitute the intransigent part any more. Subsequently, Ankara would reinforce its European credentials and the advantageous position would tilt towards the Turkish side in light of an eventual rejection of the plan by the Greek Cypriot community. At best, this could even lead to the international recognition of the TRNC. The worst-case scenario would involve the materialization of the Annan Plan and the formation of a loose federal state in Cyprus, which again would boost Turkey's EU prospects.

- 3.3.4 *Last attempt for a solution: The April 2004 twin referenda*

After finessing domestic consensus over Turkey's new strategy in the January 23, 2004 NSC meeting, Erdoğan informed Kofi Annan that his side was ready to reengage in negotiations. In the sidelines of the Davos World Economic Forum, the Turkish Prime Minister told the UN Secretary General that Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot side would accept his preconditions. These included the authorization of Kofi Annan to fill the blanks

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[194] K. Kirişci, *supra* n.71, p.37

in the plan over unsettled matters between the two sides, as well as the submission of the final plan to simultaneous and separate referenda by late April. Although there was no concordance of view between Denktaş and Erdoğan, the Turkish Cypriot leader agreed to return to the negotiating table under the pressure of the NSC decision. Subsequently Kofi Annan invited the representatives of the two Cypriot communities in New York, where they decided to start a new round of negotiations. Talks began in Cyprus on February 19, and the two leaders met nearly every day facilitated by the Secretary General's Special Representative for Cyprus, Alvaro De Soto. In addition, numerous technical committees and subcommittees met in parallel, in an effort to resolve outstanding issues and complete the legislative framework. Although the technical committees were able to make great strides, their progress was incommensurable to that of the negotiations concerning the main thrust of political issues.

Since no agreement could be reached, the inconclusive talks were brought to an end on March 22. Beginning on March 24, the second round of talks moved to Burgenstock, Switzerland with the participation of the two Cypriot sides, the Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of Greece and Turkey. Rauf Denktaş, apparently disagreeing with the turn in the course of events, did not follow the second round, leaving his post to Mehmet Ali Talat and Serdar Denktaş (the CTP-DP coalition leaders respectively). Negotiations lasted for one week and concluded on March 31, where the Secretary General presented the two sides with a final settlement package, known as Annan Plan V, i.e. the fifth and final version of the plan. Turkish Cypriot and Turkish leaders supported the final version, which, according to their view, was tilting favourably towards their positions in all areas short of agreement. Erdoğan, commenting on the plan, said that his government's aim during the negotiations was "to reach a positive, 'win-win' outcome"[195].

The Greek Cypriot side on the other hand was highly disenchanted with the plan and said it could not endorse it. The Greek government's spokesman Theodoros Roussopoulos also expressed his side's reservations, saying that: "From the first reading we can say that

[195] *Turkish Press Review*, 31 March 2004

there are some clear concerns"[196] Papadopoulos subsequently urged the Greek Cypriot public to reject the settlement. On April 24, after a three-week campaign, marked by accusations that the government of the Republic of Cyprus was unfairly manipulating public opinion, Cypriots on both sides of the Green Line went to the polls, in parallel and simultaneous referenda. Turkish Cypriots overwhelmingly endorsed the proposed solution (65% "yes" to 35% "no"). Greek Cypriots however voted against its implementation (76% "no" to 24% "yes"). As a result Cyprus entered the European Union on May 1, 2004 as a divided country.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF THE CYPRUS ISSUE ON TURKISH ACCESSION
■ 3.4 *Turkey's EU destiny: A route through Nicosia's Green Line?*

The 1997 Luxembourg Summit decision to include Cyprus in the bloc brought about an unyielding stance on behalf of, both, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot side. Following Ankara's response, Rauf Denktaş severed relations with Brussels and interrupted the negotiations, hoping to pressure the EU to suspend accession negotiations with the Republic of Cyprus. After the publication of 'Agenda 2000', in July 1997, Turkey realized that its membership was excluded from the Union's strategic planning for at least another decade. A month later Ankara reacted with the establishment of an Association Council, which aimed to harmonize TRNC and Turkish legislation, with the final goal of integrating the northern part of Cyprus to the mainland. This reaction, followed by Denktaş' proposal for a confederal state[197] a year later signified an aberration of past federal schemes that were put forward for the solution of the political problem.

In Helsinki, the EU's previous exclusion strategy was reversed and the December 1999 Summit concluded with granting candidacy status to Turkey. Since the Luxembourg Summit's decision proved counterproductive in impelling Ankara to revise its Cyprus policy, Helsinki's conclusion attempted to take off the spirit of alienation, by anchoring Turkey in the EU and trying to motivate its policymakers act constructively. Nevertheless,

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[196] *Turkish Press Review, ibid.*
[197] See *Turkish Press Review*, 1 September 1998

the Ecevit government preferred to retain its entrenched position on the issue showing little enthusiasm for the reunification of the island. The Foreign Minister of the time, İsmail Cem, continued to carry on with the past approach, sometimes by even using bold words that called for a decision between Europe and Cyprus:

> Unfortunately, the European Union is totally disregarding Turkey's interests when it comes to the issue of the Greek Cyprus administration's EU membership. In the event of such membership, Turkey has to make a decision.
>
> […] We must know that Turkey will have to pay a price for such a decision.
>
> Yet, it is our duty to do so.[198]

The ambiguous language used in the December 1999 Presidency Conclusions seems to have accounted for the bedevilment of the Turkish side. Ankara interpreted the European Council's conclusions in a way that led its policy-makers to believe that the EU would not put its own candidacy at stake by allowing Cyprus' accession without a prior settlement[199]. Yet, after the Helsinki Summit, European officials made sure to state their intentions clearly to Turkey. For example, when European Commission President Romano Prodi visited the island on October 2001, he praised Cyprus for being "well advanced in the preparation for membership" and asserted that it "will be among the first new member group."[200] He also reiterated that the Union would prefer a united island rather than a divided to enter the bloc, but said that this would not be a precondition. In response to Prodi's remarks, Ecevit publicly stated a few days later, that northern Cyprus could be annexed to Turkey, in case the Greek-administered part entered the EU prior to a solution[201]. The European Commission responded to Ecevit's remarks, by saying that it regretted "the hardening of tone about the Cyprus problem", hinting that any Turkish annexation of northern Cyprus would probably jeopardise Ankara's own hopes of joining

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[198] İ. Cem, "Turkey's Cyprus Policy", *Kıbrıs*, November 2001. For an English translation of the article see C. H. Dodd, *Storm Clouds over Cyprus: a briefing,* 2002, pp.96-97.

[199] S. Suvarierol, "The Cyprus Obstacle on Turkey's Road to Membership in the European Union", in A. Çarkoğlu and B. Rubin (eds), *Turkey and the European Union: domestic politics, economic integration, and international dynamics*, 2003, p.61

[200] "President Clerides - Romano Prodi - Official talks", *Cyprus News Agency,* 26 October 2001

[201] See *Turkish Press Review*, 6 November 2001

the EU[202].

The negative climate started to change after December 2001 with the decision of the two Cypriot leaders to start face-to-face talks, which did not lead to real progress. A definite departure from the previous policy came only after AKP's electoral victory, where Erdoğan appeared keen to endorse negotiation talks, and, more importantly, renounced previous hints over annexation of the TRNC. Thus, the AKP leader made clear, that his government was not willing to jeopardize the country's EU prospects. While lobbying in the European capitals for an early negotiation date for Turkey, immediately after November 2002, he assured the member-state leaders for his party's eagerness to be actively involved in a resolution of the Cyprus problem. This was another substantial alteration to the traditional Turkish approach. AKP eschewed criticising the EU for particularly insisting on Turkey's active involvement to broker a solution, waiting for Ankara to take the lead. From its part, the EU was definite about Ankara's critical role in resolving the Cyprus issue due to the "well-founded conviction that Turkey has decisive leverage on the TRNC."[203] Therefore, the AKP, instead of reiterating Turkey's endorsement of stalemated inter-communal talks it opted for a more vigorous stance, starting from a domestic campaign to alter the disposition of all relevant policy actors. This was demonstrated in the unanimous adoption of a new Cyprus policy on January 8, 2004 with which the government succeeded in receiving the NCS's blessing for the resumption of negotiations, despite Denktaş' reservations. Although the outcome in the April 2004 referenda failed to produce the expected result, due to the negative vote cast by the Greek Cypriot constituency, Turkey achieved to display its readiness to support the island's reunification. The Commission's 2004 regular report praised Turkey's efforts in supporting the UN Secretary General's plan, marking the "significant policy shift" that hat emerged in Ankara's approach[204]. Overall, progress in meeting the Copenhagen criteria and Turkey's positive contribution in solving the Cyprus problem were recognized by the

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[202] J. Christou, "EU slams Turkish annexation threats", *Cyprus Mail,* 6 November 2001

[203] S. Suvarierol, *supra* n. 199, p.61

[204] Commission of the European Communities, "2004 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession", Brussels, 6 October 2004, p.19

European community in December 2004, when Turkey received a date to start its accession negotiations, set for October 3, 2005.

■ 4.1 *Conclusions*

In the early Republican era, the main preoccupation of the administration, as a result of the Turkish War of Independence in 1922, was the maintenance of the country's territorial integrity, aiming to guarantee the irreversible status of the Turks' independent statehood. These concerns presided over a cautious approach in the young Republic's external affairs, accounting for the neutral policy Ankara adopted in the first two decades after Independence. Furthermore, because Turkey at that time was bordering all of the Great Powers, with which it had fought against during WWI, overwhelmingly increased its alertness against any possible regression to the conditions leading to the Sèvres Treaty of 1920, i.e. the partition of Anatolia. Such apprehensions explained Turkey's unremitting adherence to the concepts of sovereignty, indivisibility of the country and maintenance of external borders, as enshrined in the 1923 Lausanne Treaty.

When these features faced a serious challenge from the Soviet Union in the aftermath of WWII, with Moscow laying claims over the Turkish Straits and its north-eastern provinces, Ankara turned to the West, searching to enhance its security. What initially seemed as an aberration from the Kemalist precepts of equal-distances, turned to consort fittingly with the state ideology, propounding modernization/ Westernization, and

strengthened Turkey's quest for integration into the Western world. Thus, isolationism was abandoned in favour of a more pragmatic foreign policy approach, albeit an exclusively mono-directional one. Kemalist abhorrence for Muslim world theocracy and bitter feelings concerning the Arab world led Turkey to turn its back to its neighbours to the East and prioritize relations with the West.

The rigid policy patterns pursued during the protracted Cold War period allowed for the preservation of the country's westward link, whose fixedness turned to become the policy-makers' obsession until the mid-1960's. Thus, NATO and the West were inculcated in the minds of Turkish security-planers as the ultimate source of protection. The bipolar world structure, along with Turkey's security considerations made for the country's transformation to a staunch ally of the West. Thus, common enemy perceptions, rather than common goals, accounted for much of Ankara's devotion to the NATO alliance, which in return appreciated the country's location in terms of its role for Soviet contention. The West-only exclusiveness started, somehow, to abate after the 1964 Johnson letter, exhibiting the necessity of a diversified alliance pattern.

Nevertheless, protracted bipolarity sustained a stable Turkish foreign policy outlook, leaving little room for diversification in Ankara's external interrelations. Domestically, nascent civil societal structures allowed for the Kemalist establishment's domination of the foreign policy-making process. The transition to the multi-party period did not introduce a major shift in foreign policy preferences, although the ill-fated Baghdad Pact in 1955 endorsed the Kemalist view of keeping away from Middle Eastern politics. Oddly enough, a first challenge to the Kemalist policy-making monopoly was introduced with the 1961 military-sponsored constitution, which consummated the first of several military rules, which Turkey experienced thenceforth. The liberal provisions of the constitution encouraged societal organizations to seek, at an initiatory stage, a more active role in the policy-making process.

Nevertheless, the real challenge to the establishment came with Turgut Özal. Having wriggled his way through the military junta's limitations, imposed to party activity prior to the 1983 elections, Özal managed to rise to power and defy the Kemalist's political patronage. His domestic policies, focusing on economic and political liberalism,

introduced a new era for state-periphery relations, and impacted favourably on the Kurdish issue and the economic activity of conservative individuals in Anatolia. Subsequently, foreign policy was also affected, from Turkey's export-oriented economic opening towards the Middle East and the Muslim world.

During Turgut Özal's reign, Turkey changed its foreign policy patterns, and from a cautious actor transformed into a pro-active regional player, pursuing a daring, diversified and outward-oriented policy. Although Ankara started to pursue a diversified policy line, complementing strong Western relations with Eastern rapprochement, Özal, through his Gulf War policy preferences in 1991, reasserted the primacy of the strategic aspect on which Turkish-Western relations have rested in the past forty years. Amidst the Kuwait crisis, Özal sided with the international coalition against Saddam Hussein and offered valuable assistance in imposing the UN-requested sanctions against Iraq. Thus, in his effort to overstate his country's persisting importance to the West, he somehow failed to underline other political and economic aspects of cooperation. It took over ten years and a second Gulf War to alter this perception in the minds of US policy-makers.

In the 1990's, the end of the Cold War opened to Turkey new potentials, that induced Ankara's turn to a more assertive and pro-active foreign policy approach. Turkish foreign policy-makers were tempted as much as alerted from the new developments, due to rising uncertainty for the world's future outlook. In the interior scene, domestic balances were increasingly reverting in favour of the secular/ security establishment, while political fragmentation from 1993 onwards opened the way for the military to increase its presence in the political realm. Echoing Özal's policies, the economic expansion of Muslim individuals started to translate into political assertiveness, a development attested in the ascent of NOM parties throughout the 1990's, and especially during the municipal elections of 1994 and the general elections of 1995. Alarmed by its secular reflexes, the Kemalist establishment interrupted the liberal process and regressed into an aggressive deterrence strategy, trying to intercept Kurdish and Islamist activity. The political setback was apparent in the military-instigated 'February 28 Process' and the forging of closer ties with Israel, an attempt aiming to dispel allusions of Turkey's deviation from its Western orientation.

The expulsion of PKK leader Abdulah Öcalan from Syria in 1998 and his arrest a year later opened the way for Turkey's rapprochement with Syria and Greece and eased, to a certain extend, domestic tensions over the Kurdish issue. Shortly after this development, Turkey's European prospects received a boost in the 1999 Helsinki EU Summit, where the country was offered candidate status. EU pressure to comply with the Copenhagen criteria and receding preoccupations over Kurdish secessionist activity, after the PKK's unilateral ceasefire, paved the way for the initiation of the democratization reforms. The adoption of brave measures, concerning among other things broadcasting in Kurdish, abolition of the death penalty etc, provide an indication for the changing mindset over security issues. Although somehow reluctant, the implementation of the reforms by the Ecevit coalition government, revealed the transformative power that Brussels may exert to a receptive domestic environment.

The impact of Europeanization in foreign policy matters started to decidedly emerge after AKP's electoral victory in 2002. AKP, a product of the transformative internal process of the Islamist movement and Turkey's secular political milieu, embraced the EU project, in an attempt to increase its chances of political survival. Simultaneously it discerned an opportunity to advance societal and political liberalization, which suffered under adamant Kemalist enforcement, especially during the 1990's. By increasing the pace of EU reforms, the AKP government managed to proceed in its first two years with the adoption of a series of constitutional amendments and 'harmonization packages' that transformed the domestic political realm. This effort resulted in the partial adjustment of the internal political scene to European standards, in areas previously dominated by the Kemalist establishment.

The EU reforms concerning e.g. the institutions charged with the drafting of national security policy (especially the NSC), enabled the government to initiate the 're-civilianization' process that discarded the secular/ security establishment's monopoly. Concomitantly, this brought about Turkey's closer alignment with EU foreign policy, as Ankara managed to slowly drift away from past securitized policy concepts that accounted for its differentiation and political 'otherness'. EU-induced reforms that urged for a civilian approach, for example to the Kurdish issue, inevitably carried policy implications

for the wider Kurdish issue and, as a result, for Turkey's relations with northern Iraq. The managing of the Cyprus case, in the course of the island's reunification effort under the aegis of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in 2004, also displayed the government's ability to transcend entrenched security-oriented policies that harmed the country's EU prospects in the long run. These cases, with which this essay dealt in detail, are just two of the foreign policy issues that demonstrate a new paradigm in Ankara's policy-making approach in the last years.

The main thesis that follows the analysis of AKP's foreign policy in 2002-2004, thus evolves around the two-phased transformation, which Turkey experienced after 1999. On the one hand, this involves the Europeanization process and the ability of an external source to induce domestic reforms. On the other hand, it takes into consideration the internal transformative dynamics, which precede the Helsinki EU Summit, and account for the susceptibility of the domestic political order vis-à-vis change. AKP engenders the political party that managed to couple domestic dynamics with externally induced transformative waves, in its effort to recast political roles to policy actors. By boosting the participation of civilian actors in the policy-making process, following EU standards, the government committed itself to the expansion of the political sphere (or its 'democratization', as some prefer to term it), away from past exclusiveness reserved for the secular/ security establishment. This development, along with the increasing detachment from the 'national-security' approach to domestic and external affairs, shall be regarded as the main reason behind Turkey's new foreign policy shift.

AKP did not bring about a total regime change, i.e. did not substitute the previous ruling establishment in its entirety. Therefore, this essay argues that from 2002 to 2004, AKP managed to cohabitate with the secular/ security establishment. 'Cohabitation' has been substantially facilitated by the establishment's acceptance of the Europeanization reforms, even when these aimed at curbing its policy prerogatives. The absence of resistance to the reforms should not be understood as a tacit agreement and submission to AKP's authority, i.e. the civilian government's authority, but rather as the necessary sacrifice to attend the common goal of EU membership. The extraordinary conditions of the 1990's, which inflated the military's autonomy in intervening into the political realm,

were in this process evaluated to be over by the military itself. And in any case, the military discerned that its interests would be better served once Turkey entered the European security community, along with the country's political and economic integration process. The self-evaluation of the military seems to have partly accounted for the security establishment's retreat concerning the reforms, and its compliance with the EU-related domestic developments (concerning among others the NSC, the death-penalty, the State Security Courts, the auditing of the military budget, the anti-terror law etc).

The process of transformation, through which the Islamist movement underwent, asserts that AKP's aim is not to alter the secular nature of the state. The fact that the party itself went through the process of secularizing its basic political premises, indicates to which extend AKP abided by the context and the fundamental rules that circumscribe the official state-ideology. After all, the party's statement did not turn against the secular ideals of the Turkish Republic, but to the way secularism is being implemented. The absence of a sudden change in the interior, in the direction of Islamizing the country, had its equivalent in the foreign policy realm. Turkish foreign policy has not drifted away from the West, but instead has come closer to Europe. Again, AKP did not follow the outdated foreign policy concepts that were developed with the West-ward Kemalist tradition, but instead preferred to build on Özal's assertive approach and take advantage of the rising opportunities of the post-Cold War era. It's early political activity revealed its desire to surpass the shortcomings of Özal's strategically-oriented partnership with the West and, while being assisted by its Europeanization process, to opt for a more diversified foreign policy. Political, economic and cultural considerations were therefore brought to the fore of its political agenda.

While dealing with political problems in Turkey's surroundings, the AKP government preferred to take refuge in diplomacy, negotiation and other civilian tools, instead of opting for an 'armed' solution. The new style employed in external affairs focused on a 'win-win' approach, away from past years' 'zero-sum' mentality. Building on the existing efforts for regional rapprochement, Turkey under AKP demonstrated its political preference for mutually-serving solutions, an approach that came to be known as 'zero-problems with neighbours' policy. An overall assessment of Turkish foreign policy in

2002-2004 would thus confirm the tendency of moving from a 'Hobbesian' realistic approach towards a more 'Kantian' security environment.

This essay endeavoured to demonstrate the shift in Turkish foreign policy-making by using the Cyprus reunification attempt in 2004 as a case study. It argued that after December 2002 and the EU Copenhagen Summit, AKP decidedly embarked on its effort to find a diplomatic solution to the Cyprus problem, driven by its EU aspirations. The EU Summit, with its decision to review the Turkish case after two years, circumscribed the time left available for the government to conclude its reforms and galvanized AKP into action. The Turkish delegation left the Summit, having a clear outline of what it lacked in order to attain the date to start accession negotiations: the completion of democratization reforms and a solution to the Cyprus problem.

By setting Cypriot accession due at 2004, in effect, the Copenhagen Summit pointed at Cyprus as a short-term obstacle to Turkey's European bid, and then as a long-term unsettled problem. AKP in return managed to discard past sentimentalism over the issue, and attempted to solve the problem in a manner, serving both peace in the island and Turkey's European prospects. Therefore, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan embarked on an unprecedented mobilization, domestically as well as in cooperation with the UN, declaring from the onset that "we [the Turkish side] will always be one step ahead and we will never be the ones walking away from talks"[205]. Although Erdoğan managed to persuade the Turkish side to orient itself towards the reunification of the island, eventually a final solution could not be reached. Irregardless of Turkey's commitment to a negotiated settlement, the UN reunification plan collapsed, after its dismissal by the Greek Cypriot constituency.

After the failed attempt to solve the island's political problem, the question that arises is whether AKP's new Cyprus policy was a misguided one, and whether it would have been better to stick to the traditional Kemalist approach, advocating cautiousness instead of activism. It is true that the Turkish initiative to go back to the negotiating table did not

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[205] Quoted by State Economics Minister and Chief EU Negotiator for Turkey Ali Babacan, in his speech at Chatham House on November 26, 2006.

yield the expected results. On the other hand though, Ankara, through its new Cyprus policy, was able to demonstrate its willingness to be part of the solution, and not part of the problem. Bearing in mind its double-pronged strategy, i.e. complete the reforms and eliminate the Cyprus obstacle, the overall aim of boosting Turkey's European chances, has been thoroughly successful after the AKP's initiative on Cyprus.

The European Council, in June 2004, welcomed the positive contribution of the Turkish government in the efforts of the UN Secretary General to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the problem. During the December 2004 European Council in Brussels, Ankara's stance helped the member-states to detach, temporarily, the solution of the Cyprus problem from reaching a decision on the start of the Turkish accession negotiations. Their decision was largely based on the Commissions' recommendation, which evaluated Turkey's progress as adequately sufficient for the initiation of accession talks. The content of the EU Commission progress reports on Turkey in 2003 and 2004 was in striking contrast as far as Cyprus is concerned. The Commission changed its evaluation altogether, from warning Turkey in 2003 for its own accession process in the event of no progress on Cyprus, to acknowledging Ankara's positive contribution and recommending the initiation of its accession talks the following year. Hence, the decision of the European Council on December 2004 was able to surpass Cyprus as an obstacle to start accession negotiations with Turkey.

This is far from implying that Turkey's European adventures ended in the particular Brussels Summit, or that Cyprus ceased to constitute an obstacle in Ankara's course towards further EU integration. That Turkey obtained a date to start accession negotiations with the European community denotes the beginning of a long process, which may last for over a decade and whose conclusion will remain uncertain until the last minute. Cyprus, which since 2004 enjoys the full rights of an EU member, including its veto powers, is monitoring Turkey's integration course closely, and may put obstacles to it. For the negotiation on each of every 35 chapters[206] to be concluded, all member-

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[206] Each chapter concerns a topic of the EU legislation, which has to be adopted by the prospective member states in its entirety.

states must agree that Turkey has fulfilled its obligations concerning the specific policy field. This leaves plenty of space for anyone to delay the process. Cyprus may use its position as a lever to yield more concessions from Turkey.

An indication of the future troublesome relation between Turkey and the EU appeared in July 2005, when Ankara signed a protocol to extend its Customs Union to the new EU member-states. Turkey unwillingly extended the so-called 'Ankara Protocol' to Cyprus, remarking that its motion does not signify recognition of the Republic of Cyprus[207]. Additionally, it declined to open its ports and airports to Cyprus-flagged vessels. Almost a year and a half later, the European Council on December 15, 2006 decided to partially suspend negotiations with Turkey, due to its failure to fully implement the 'Ankara Protocol'[208].

Adversities apart, Turkey's current status of relations with the EU cannot be compared to anything before. Uncertainty over the country's final admission may persist until the final stages of negotiations, but in the meantime, Turkey will continue to converge to EU standards, through the gradual internalization of EU legislation (the so-called *'acquis communautaire'*). However, the initiation of accession negotiations in December 2004 would have been uncertain, had the AKP government not displayed its resolutionist determination over Cyprus. The 2004 European Council, which at that time included the Republic of Cyprus, would have arguably been very reluctant to give the green light for Turkey to commence talks, only on the basis of its democratization progress and without any developments on Cyprus.

Particularly on AKP's new approach to the issue, Turkey's solution-oriented stance initiated a novel discourse, diverging from the domination of past security-oriented policies. By endorsing the acceptance of the UN plan in the Turkish Cypriot sector, Turkey re-affirmed its commitment to a bi-zonal, bi-communal federative structured solution, casting away the vagueness of the Ecevit era, which called for the eventual annexation of northern Cyprus to Turkey. The UN Secretary General noted this progress

[207] "Turkey signs EU customs protocol", *BBC*, 29 July 2005

[208] I. Panagiotis, "Η συμφωνία της Ένωσης για Τουρκία" [EU's decision on Turkey], *TA NEA*, 15 December 2006

in his report to the Security Council, after the conclusion of his mission of Good Offices in July 2004. Kofi Annan wrote: "In opting for a settlement, the Turkish Cypriots have broken with the decades-old policies of seeking recognition of the "state" they purported to create in 1983."[209] More importantly, AKP's policy managed to transcend the discourse that regarded status quo maintenance in Cyprus as a national security objective. By treating the problem as an obstacle to its own EU path, and not through the traditional security-dominated perspective, the Erdoğan administration redefined Turkey's national interest. Turkish accession to the EU, following the admission of the whole island, was deemed as serving Turkish interests more efficiently than the maintenance of 35,000 soldiers in the Cypriot north, protecting a state solely recognized by Ankara.

By December 2004 the AKP government consummated a political phase, which started with its rise to power in 2002. During that time, the government, compelled by its desire to attain EU membership, bolstered the democratization reforms of the country and transformed the domestic context to befit European standards. Turkey's internal transformation could not leave the foreign policy realm unaffected, a development that ultimately attested itself in a variety of issues, such as in Cyprus, in northern Iraq and in Ankara's relations with the US. In its effort to meet the Copenhagen criteria, AKP did more than any Turkish government outside the EU context would ever achieve. That Ankara's foreign policy-making approach steadily converged to the European mainstream only underlines the dynamics of a country's Europeanization process, which barely leaves any domain unaffected, both in its domestic, as well as in its foreign interrelations.

[209] K. Annan, "Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus", *United Nations Security Council*, S/2004/437, 2 June 2004, p.21

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