

KADİR HAS UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



**UNDERSTANDING TURKISH-GREEK RELATIONS  
THROUGH SECURITIZATION AND  
DESECURITIZATION: A TURKISH PERSPECTIVE**

A PhD Dissertation

by

Cihan DİZDAROĞLU  
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**Advisor:** Prof. Sinem AKGÜL-AÇIKMEŞE

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CİHAN DİZDAROĞLU

**APPROVED BY:**

Prof. Sinem AKGÜL-AÇIKMEŞE, Kadir Has University  
Advisor

Prof. Mitat ÇELİKPALA, Kadir Has University  
Examining Committee Member

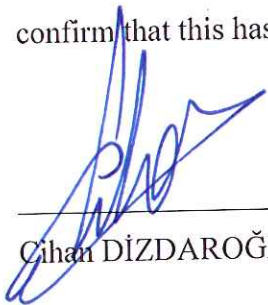
Prof. Serhat GÜVENÇ, Kadir Has University  
Examining Committee Member

Assoc. Prof. İ. Özgür ÖZDAMAR, Bilkent University  
Examining Committee Member

Assist. Prof. İnan RÜMA, İstanbul Bilgi University  
Examining Committee Member

APPROVAL DATE: 8 / 2 / 2017

I, Cihan DİZDAROĞLU, hereby declare that the work presented in this PhD dissertation is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the PhD dissertation.”



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Cihan DİZDAROĞLU

## **ABSTRACT**

### **UNDERSTANDING TURKISH-GREEK RELATIONS THROUGH SECURITIZATION TO DESECURITIZATION: A TURKISH PERSPECTIVE**

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February, 2017

This thesis focuses on the main contentious issues between Turkey and Greece, particularly in the post-Cold War era which was the peak point of securitization in bilateral relations, by using the framework of securitization theory in order to understand how, by whom and to what extent Greece is securitized and desecuritized by Turkey. By doing so, the thesis argues that there was a “threatening” and a “hostile” tone in Turkish elites’ discourses in almost every contention between the two countries such as delimitation (territorial waters, airspace and the continental shelf) and sovereignty issues (the status of the islands, islets and rocks as well as the (de)militarization of the islands) in the Aegean Sea, problems related to Cyprus, and Greece’s ties with terrorist organizations. Even though Turkish elites have securitized issues related to Greece, such security speech-acts, paradoxically, since the late 1990s due to the forces of rapprochement, bilateral relations were almost transformed into a cooperative stance with emphasis on “friendship” rather than focusing on any existential threat, and decision-makers began to substitute their security grammar with a positive and cautious tone. Accordingly, this thesis argues that it is possible to explain the amelioration of bilateral relations with the methodology of desecuritization as there is a close correlation between the rapprochement process and desecuritization. In this context, the thesis reaches the conclusion that the rapprochement process, which has been an outcome of several factors, in Turkish-Greek relations quite fits into the form of “change through stabilization”, borrowed from Lene Hansen’s terminology.

**Keywords:** Turkish-Greek Relations, Copenhagen School, Securitization, Desecuritization, Aegean Sea, Cyprus.

## ÖZET

### TÜRK-YUNAN İLİŞKİLERİNİ GÜVENLİKLEŞTİRME VE GÜVENLİK-DIŞILAŞTIRMA YOLUYLA ANLAMAK: BİR TÜRK BAKIŞ AÇISI

Cihan Dizdarođlu

Uluslararası İlişkiler Doktora

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Sinem Akgül-Açıkmeşe

Şubat, 2017

Bu tez, Türkiye tarafından Yunanistan'ın nasıl, kim tarafından ve hangi boyutta güvenikleştirildiđi ve güvenlik-dışılaştırıldığını anlamak amacıyla, güvenikleştirme teorisinin sunduđu çerçeveyi kullanarak başta ikili ilişkilerde güvenikleştirmenin zirve yaptığı Soğuk Savaş dönemini olmak üzere, Türkiye ve Yunanistan arasındaki temel tartışma konularına odaklanmaktadır. Böylelikle, iki ülke arasındaki Ege'deki sınırlandırma (kara suları, hava sahası ve kıta sahanlığı) ve egemenlik konuları (ada, adacık ve kayalıkların durumuyla adaların silah(sız)landırılması), Kıbrıs'la ilgili sorunlar ve Yunanistan'ın terörizm bağlantısı gibi hemen her ihtilafta Türk elitlerinin söylemlerinde “tehditkâr” ve “düşmanca” bir ton hâkim olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Her ne kadar Türk elitleri Yunanistan'la ilgili konuları yukarıda anıldığı şekilde güvenlik söz edimleriyle güvenikleştirmişse de, 1990'ların sonralarından itibaren yakınlaşmanın da etkisiyle çelişkili bir şekilde ikili ilişkiler yaşamsal tehditlere odaklanmak yerine “dostluk” vurgusunun hakim olduğu ve karar vericilerin güvenlik söylemlerinin yerini daha olumlu ve temkinli bir tona bıraktığı işbirliğine doğru evrilmiştir. Bu doğrultuda, elinizdeki tez yaklaşma süreci ve güvenlik-dışılaştırma arasında yakın bir bağ olduğundan yola çıkarak, ikili ilişkilerdeki iyileşmeyi güvenlik-dışılaştırma metodolojisi çerçevesinde açıklamanın mümkün olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu çerçevede tez, çok sayıda etkenin bir sonucu olan Türkiye-Yunanistan arasındaki yakınlaşma sürecinin Lene Hansen'in terminolojisinden ödünç alınan “istikrar yoluyla deđişim” formuna tümüyle uyduđu sonucuna ulaşmaktadır

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk-Yunan İlişkileri, Kopenhag Okulu, Güvenikleştirme, Güvenlik-dışılaştırma, Ege Denizi, Kıbrıs.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

EU:	European Union
EC:	European Community
EEC:	European Economic Community
EMU:	European Monetary Union
FDI:	Foreign Direct Investment
FIR:	Flight Information Region
HLCC:	High-Level Cooperation Council
ICAO:	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICJ:	International Court of Justice
JDP:	Justice and Development Party
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NOTAM:	Notice to Airmen
NAPC:	North Aegean Petroleum Company
NSC:	National Security Council
PASOK:	Pan-Hellenic Socialist Party/Movement
PKK:	The Kurdish Workers' Party, Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê in Kurdish ( <i>in Kurdish</i> )
RoC:	Republic of Cyprus
TGNA:	Turkish Grand National Assembly
TOBB:	Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges
TPAO:	Turkish Petroleum Company
TRNC:	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
TÜSİAD:	Turkish Association of Industry and Business
UN:	United Nations
UNCLOS:	United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea
UNSC:	United Nations Security Council
US/USA:	United States of America

# INTRODUCTION

When you feel homesick, you become aware that  
You are brothers with Greeks  
When you hear a Greek music, you conjure up  
The child of İstanbul who's far away from his motherland  
...  
A blue magic between us  
A warm sea  
Two peoples on its shores  
Equals in beauty  
  
The golden age of the Aegean  
Will revive through us  
As with the fire of the future  
The hearth of the past comes alive (Ecevit, 1947).

Turkey and Greece are two neighboring countries that share a long history. The historical ties of the two countries date back to the early fifteenth century when the Ottoman Empire conquered Constantinople in 1453. However, the relationship between Turkey and Greece in modern times can be traced back to the early nineteenth century, the time that Greece became a sovereign and independent state as a result of its fight against the Ottoman Empire. The historical relationship between Turkey and Greece has always shaped priorities of both countries' foreign and security policy agendas.

Historically, the Turkish-Greek relationship could be identified as a vicious cycle of improvement and deterioration. Both countries have perceived each other as a “*source of threat*” or “*enemy*”, and this mutual perception mainly stemmed from their historical backgrounds.<sup>1</sup> Even though the problems between the two countries have generally been perceived through the lenses of security, politics and to some extent economy, it would be naive to overestimate the burden of the past, which is the main source of the feelings of enmity and mistrust between the two nations. History has

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<sup>1</sup> These perceptions will be further explained in the following pages.

played a significant role in shaping not only foreign policies of the two countries, but also their national identities for decades. In addition, the historical heritage and mutual antipathy between Turkey and Greece have had an impact on the mind-set of decision makers and have affected the bilateral relations of two countries since their foundations. Therefore, the nature as well as the current state of Turkish-Greek relations cannot be fully understood without paying attention to the past.<sup>2</sup> As Gürel (1993b: 10) points out, both for Greece and Turkey, “history is not past, the past continues to live in the present”.

Clogg (1980: 141) also identifies the impact of the historical heritage on national identity and historical consciousness as,

... even if a rapprochement between two governments is achieved, it would be a much more difficult and arduous process to overcome the mistrust between two peoples, mutual stereotypes and fears that are fundamental for existing confrontation. Until a fundamental change in mutual (mis)perceptions has achieved, we will continue to see a mutual proclivity towards suspicion and crisis in the relations between two states.

As previously noted, the relationship between Turkey and Greece in modern times began when the Greeks waged a revolt on 25 March 1821 to end four hundred years of rule by the Ottoman Empire over Greece. In July 1832, the Kingdom of Greece became a sovereign and independent state as a result of its struggle against the Ottoman Empire. The popular Turkish image of the Greek “Independence War” is that of a rebellion, instigated and supported by the Great Powers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Aydın 1997: 111). Furthermore, according to Clogg (1992: 47-99), “the establishment of an

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed account of the history of Turkish-Greek relations, see Bahçeli, T. (1990) *Greek-Turkish Relations Since 1955*. Boulder: Westview Press; Alexandris, A. (1992) *The Greek Minority in Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974*. Athens: Center for Asia Minor Studies; Volkan, V. and Itzkowitz, N. (1994) *Turks and Greeks: Neighbours in Conflict*: Huntingdon: Eothen Press; Sönmezoğlu, F. (2000) *Türkiye-Yunanistan İlişkileri ve Büyük Güçler: Kıbrıs, Ege ve Diğer Sorunlar* [Turkish Greek Relations and Great Powers: Cyprus, Aegean and Other Disputes]. Istanbul: Der Yayınları.

independent Greek state meant divided loyalties among the Greek subjects of the Ottoman Empire; as a result, Greeks could no longer be trusted to hold official positions and those in the Ottoman diplomatic corps were purged.”

This perception consolidated with the Greek politicians’ goal of uniting all Greeks under a single flag and country, which is known as *Megali Idea*. The Greek politicians’ ambitions were followed by some territorial growth in the 1850s,<sup>3</sup> and it climaxed during the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. With the support of Bulgaria, Montenegro and Serbia, Greece conquered vast swathes of territory in Macedonia and Thrace during the Balkan Wars from the weak Ottoman Empire. (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 12-13). Following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, Greek attention turned to the Greeks living in Asia-Minor and Constantinople (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 13). However, the Greek invasion of Western Anatolia after World War I and the subsequent defeat of the Greek armies, followed by the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, constituted a difficult beginning for both countries (Turan 2010: 1). Greeks still remembered the struggle which Turks called the “War as National Liberation” as the “Asia Minor Catastrophe” (Aydn 1997: 111). Furthermore, the compulsory population exchange in the 1920s, which became official with the signing of the Protocol (30 January 1923) by the Greek and Turkish delegations during the Lausanne Conference, reinforced the notion of ethnic separation between the Greeks and the Turks (Evin 2005: 395; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 13; Demirözü 2008: 309).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> During that time, the Greeks created tensions in their pursuit of *Megali Idea* as they were widely scattered to the southern Balkan peninsula including Macedonia, Bulgaria, Albania, Serbia and Romania, along with the Greek inhabitants of Cyprus and Crete. In addition, there was a large Greek population in the Ottoman Empire. The periodic uprisings in the island of Crete (1841, 1858, 1866-69, 1877-78, 1888-89 and 1896-97) might be considered among the Greek attempts towards the *Megali Idea* (Clogg 1992: 55-69).

<sup>4</sup> For instance, Dido Sotiriu, who had to leave İzmir right after the defeat of Greek armies in 1922, deals with this period in her novels. To see the trauma of the Asia Minor Catastrophe following the population exchange between Turkey and Greece, and the expulsion of Greeks living in Anatolia, see Sotiriu, D.

The foundation of the two nation-states as a result of fighting against each other in a series of wars also marked the emergence of the perceptions of citizens, in order to consolidate the national identity, by presenting the “other” as the national enemy in their historiography and literary texts (Artunkal 1989: 229; Millas 2004: 54-61). Millas (2004: 61) stresses the general trend on how both communities perceived each other as the “other”, an “unreliable neighbor” or the “potential danger.” In the words of Millas (2004: 54):

Greek textbooks are portrayed Turks as an enemy with barbaric characteristics - rude warriors, uncivilized, invaders, etc.- an anathema that caused the slavery of the nation for many centuries; Turkish textbooks are almost a mirror image of the above: the Turks are perfect and the Greeks, who hate and massacre the Turks carry many negative characteristics: they are unreliable, unfaithful, cunning, insatiable, etc.

From this sweeping history came the stereotypes of alleged ethnic behaviors, and Greeks and Turks were locked into an “age-old” enmity and the clash of their civilizations (Carnegie 1997: 3). Thus, the current disputes owe much of their divisive nature to the threat perceptions and symbolic or historical significance both sides attach to them (Siegl 2002: 42-43). Accordingly, studying Turkish-Greek relations requires a thorough consideration of the years of distrust and prejudices of the two nations against each other.

The course of the Turkish-Greek relationship is dominated by conflict and competition rather than cooperation. In the words of Gürel (1993a: 161-190), the history of Turkish-Greek relations has more chapters on competition than cooperation. In addition to the latest rapprochement process, which began in late 1999, there were two

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(1962) *Bloody Earth*. Athens: Kedros (the English edition of this book entitled “Farewell Anatolia” and the novel translated in Turkish with the title of “Benden Selam Söyle Anadolu’ya”). There are several other novels which focus particularly the population exchange between Turkey and Greece, see Kemal, Y. (1997) *Fırat Suyu Kan Ağlıyor Baksana: Bir Ada Hikayesi 1* [The Euphrates Runs with Blood: An Island Story 1], İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları; Karakoyunlu, Y. (2012) *Mor Kaftanlı Selanik* [Purple-Robed Thessaloniki] İstanbul: Doğan Yayınları.

periods of cooperation between Turkey and Greece that were shaped around a common threat from a third country, Italy and the Soviet Union respectively.

The first period started after the Treaty of Friendship was signed between Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the President of the Republic of Turkey, and Eleftherios Venizelos, the Prime Minister of Greece, in August 1930 during the historic visit of Venizelos to Ankara. This treaty brought the two countries closer in the political, military and social spheres. Two months after Venizelos' trip, the two countries signed three more agreements on 30 October 1930, which consisted of a Treaty of Neutrality, Conciliation and Arbitration, a Protocol on the limitation of naval armaments, and a commercial Convention (Heraclides 2010: 68). During this period, both Turkey and Greece were aware of the threat from Italy and they broadened their friendship by establishing the Balkan Entente in 1934.<sup>5</sup> The spirit of friendship between the two countries reflected in the leader's statements/attitudes at that time. While Mustafa Kemal Atatürk evaluated the cordial relationship by saying that "the Turkish-Greek friendship is eternal", Eleftherios Venizelos suggested Atatürk for the Nobel Peace Prize with a letter to the Norwegian Nobel Committee on 12 January 1934 (Heraclides 2010: 68; Tulça 2003: 54). The rapprochement that began in the 1930s was interrupted by World War II but resumed in the early 1950s.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The Balkan Entente was established among Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia and Romania in February 1934. The idea of cooperation among Balkan countries in the interwar period stemmed as a reaction to the revisionist powers, in particularly Italy. The Italian fascist leader Benito A. Mussolini's (took the office between 1922 and 1943) proposal of a Four-Power Pact, which aimed at initiating cooperation in Europe between Italy, Britain, France and Germany in order to dictate the terms of the European peace, forced Turkey and its neighbors in the Balkans to move toward the entente (Barlas 2005: 444). Turkey, as the driving force behind the cooperation, aimed at forming a "neutrality" bloc in south-eastern Europe by using its diplomatic power in the Balkans (Barlas 2005: 443-447).

<sup>6</sup> For further details about the cooperation periods in Turkish-Greek relations, see: Tulça, E. (2003) *Atatürk, Venizelos ve Bir Diplomat Enis Bey* [Atatürk, Venizelos and a Diplomat Mr. Enis]. İstanbul: Simurg; Demiröz, D. (2008) "The Greek-Turkish Rapprochement of 1930 and the Repercussions of the Ankara Convention in Turkey". *Journal of Islamic Studies* 19 (3), 309-324; Barlas, D. (2005) "Turkish Diplomacy in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Opportunities and Limits for Middle-power Activism in the 1930s". *Journal of Contemporary History* 40 (3), 441-464.

In the second period, which was marked by a Soviet threat against the Western bloc, both countries met under the umbrella of NATO with the encouragement of the United States (Aydın 1997: 113). In the aftermath of the Second World War, both Turkey and Greece were under the threat of the Soviet Union due to Soviet claims over Turkey's territory and its influence over Greece's domestic politics. As a result of such a threat, the US began to support both countries in order to secure its interests in the region and to keep Turkey and Greece within the Western Bloc.<sup>7</sup> The relationship in the US-Greece-Turkey triangle was consolidated by the accession of both countries to NATO in 1952. In other words, between 1950-1955, both countries identified their national interests with the needs of alliance (Firat 2010: 354; Larrabee 2012: 472). To summarize, first the Italian and then the Soviet threats provided the glue that held Turkey and Greece together during the two cooperative periods between the countries (Güvenç 2004: 3).

Following the emergence of the Cyprus problem in the mid-1950s, the spirit of a cordial relationship between Turkey and Greece was quickly lost and the relations deteriorated several times.<sup>8</sup> The subsequent conflicts in the small island of the Eastern Mediterranean had serious repercussions not only on the islanders, but also on Turkish-

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<sup>7</sup> After the Second World War, the US administration launched economic aid programs towards "friendly regimes" under the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. The US decision, named after the US President Harry S. Truman, on providing support both to Turkey and Greece in 1947, alongside the US economic recovery program towards Europe, in which Turkey began to receive aid after became a member of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) in 1948 facilitated Turkey's inclusion in the Western Bloc (Hale 2002: 115-116).

<sup>8</sup> For the emergence and the evaluation of the Cyprus problem, see Volkan, V. D. (1979) *Cyprus: War and Adaptation: A Psychoanalytic History of Two Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Virginia: Virginia University Press; Özersay, K. (2002) *Kıbrıs Hukuksal Bir İnceleme [Cyprus: A Legal Evaluation]*. Ankara: ASAM Yayınları; Hannay, D. (2005) *Cyprus: The Search for a Solution*. London: I. B. Tauris; Kızılyürek, N. (2005) *Milliyetçilik Kışkıracında Kıbrıs [Cyprus in the Dilemma of Nationalism]*. İstanbul: İletişim; Palley, C. (2005) *An International Relations Debacle: The UN Secretary-General's Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus 1999-2004*. Oxford: Hart Publishing; Hoffmeister, F. (2006) *Legal Aspects of the Cyprus Problem: Annan Plan and the EU Accession*. Leiden and Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishing. Dodd, C. (2010) *The History and Politics of Cyprus Conflict*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan; Ker-Lindsay, J. (2011) *The Cyprus Problem: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Diez, T. and Tocci, N. (2013) *Cyprus: A Conflict at the Crossroads*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.



Greek relations.<sup>9</sup> Over the years, the two communities on the island have been trying to find a comprehensive and equitable solution to the issue, however all efforts have failed thus far. Even during the writing of this thesis, the Cyprus issue is still on the foreign and security policy agendas of both countries due to the ongoing negotiation process between the two communities on the island.<sup>10</sup>

While the Cyprus issue has occupied the foreign and security policy agendas of both countries since the mid-1950s, other issues related to the Aegean Sea such as delimitation of maritime boundaries and the continental shelf, the breadth of territorial waters and airspace, and the Greek fortification of the Eastern islands have created problems between Greece and Turkey since the mid-1960s.<sup>11</sup> Turkey and Greece have been at odds due to disagreements over the Aegean Sea for almost five decades. Since then, the issue came to the forefront in parallel with the developments in bilateral relations, international politics, as well as international law. In the course of history, there were several occasions that brought the two countries very close to war. The most recent crisis, the worst of its kind, in the Aegean Sea erupted when a Turkish ship ran ground over one of the islets in the Aegean on 25 December 1995. Although all of the disputes in the Aegean Sea still loom in the background, there haven't been any other serious crisis -or at least they have been carefully handled by the decision-makers in

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<sup>9</sup> For the impact of the Cyprus problem on Turkish-Greek Relations, see Camp, G.D. (1980) "Greek-Turkish Conflict in Cyprus". *Political Science Quarterly* 95 (1), 43-70; Mavroyiannis, A. (1989) 'Kıbrıs Sorununun Türk-Yunan İlişkilerine Etkisi [The Impact of Cyprus Problem on Turkish-Greek Relations]' in *Türk-Yunan Uyuşmazlığı [The Turkish-Greek Controversy]*. ed by Vaner, S. İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 127-151; Sönmezöğlü, F. (1989) 'Kıbrıs Sorununda Tarafların Tutum ve Tezleri [Attitudes and Thesis of the Conflicting Parties in the Cyprus Problem]' in *Türk Dış Politikasında Sorunlar [The Problems in the Turkish Foreign Policy]*. ed by Çam, E. İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 81-144.

<sup>10</sup> The most recent negotiation process in Cyprus started on 11 May 2015, right after the presidential election in TRNC in which Mustafa Akıncı was elected as the fourth president of TRNC. So far, there have been hundreds of meetings between Nicos Anastasides the President of RoC and his Turkish Cypriot counterpart Mustafa Akıncı under the auspices of Espen Barth Eide, the Special Adviser of the UN Secretary General on Cyprus. For further details on the current negotiation process in Cyprus, see <http://www.uncyprustalks.org>.

<sup>11</sup> The Eastern Aegean Islands consist of group of islands (the Strait Region Islands, the *Saruhan* Islands and the Dodacanese Islands) lie closer to the Anatolian shores. The details about sovereignty rights and the fortification of these islands will be evaluated in the chapter of the "Disputes of the Aegean Sea".

both countries- due to the impact of the rapprochement process between the two countries which began in 1999.

Nevertheless, there are many other issues with diverse dimensions, including the rights and status of minorities both in Turkey and Greece, border disputes, the status of the Halki Seminary in Istanbul, Greece's political blockage on Turkey's relations with the European Union, Greece's support for terrorism and etc. Though the two countries were at times on the verge of conflict, the burden of taking the responsibility of a full-scale war convinced leaders to contain those disputes without transforming them into armed clashes.

The relations between the two countries steadily started to thaw in the late 1990s despite the fact that the problems between the two have not yet been resolved. A sustainable period of rapprochement, or *détente*, between the two countries has been in progress since 1999. There are vast numbers of academic studies with different perspectives that focus on the root causes of the recent rapprochement process. While some scholars explained the winds of change in bilateral relations as being a product of the "*disaster/earthquake diplomacy*" (Siegl 2002; Keridis 1999; Ganapati *et al* 2010), some others focus on the impact of the Helsinki Summit of the EU in 1999, where Turkey obtained candidacy status, as a promoter of the rapprochement (Aydın and Akgül Açıkmeşe 2007; Öniş and Yılmaz 2008; Grigoriadis 2011). In conjunction with the latter, the pursuit of Europeanization through its mix of conditions and incentives also contributed to the changes in both countries' foreign policies (Rumelili 2003; Güvenç 2004). The empowerment of civil society actors and NGOs in favor of Turkish-Greek cooperation constituted another catalyst of improvement in bilateral relations (Rumelili 2004; Evin 2005). Last but not least, there is also the view that the role of

third parties such as the US is a reason behind the rapprochement process. However, the latest rapprochement process in Turkish-Greek relations can be seen as having started as a result of a chain of events rather than a simplistic view of the occurrence of natural disasters. In the words of Öniş and Yılmaz (Öniş and Yılmaz 2001: 4), “Greek-Turkish rapprochement is a complex process with multiple layers and has been shaped by multiple critical domestic and international factors and actors.”

Due to the long rivalry between Turkey and Greece, there is substantial literature on Turkish-Greek relations. While some scholars focus on the political and historical aspects of the relations (Clogg 1980; Nachmani 1987; Vaner 1990; Conostas 1990; Bahçeli 1992; Aksu 2001; Keridis and Triantaphyllou 2001; Tsakonas 2001; Öniş 2001; Akıman 2002; Fırat 2002; Başeren 2003 and 2006; Rumelili 2003; Moustakis 2003; Aydın and Ifantis 2004; Çarkoğlu and Rubin 2005; Ker-Lindsay 2007; Rumelili 2007; Öniş and Yılmaz 2008; Heraclides 2010; Karakatsanis 2014), some others concentrate on the economic, social, cultural and religious dimensions (Alexandris 1992; Volkan, 1999; Hirschon 2004; Belge 2004; Rumelili 2004; Clark 2006; Theodossopoulos 2007; Theodossopoulos 2007; Özkırımlı and Sofos 2008; Akgönül 2008; Tsarouhas 2009; Vathakou 2010; Heraclides 2012; Millas 2016). In this context, this thesis will focus on Turkish-Greek relations from a security perspective, and will try to analyze whether, how and to what extent Greece has been a security issue for Turkey by using the methodology and the concepts of securitization and desecuritization of the securitization theory employed by the Copenhagen School.

The securitization theory found its way into the two views of Security Studies, traditionalists and wideners, by offering a new and comprehensive framework for the field. In the midst of a lively debate in security studies, which started with “the rise of

the economic and environmental agendas in international relations during the 1970s and 1980s”, the scholars of the Copenhagen School presented a groundbreaking framework “based on the wider agenda that will incorporate the traditionalists position” (Buzan *et al* 1998: 2-4). Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Oscar de Wilde (1998) in their co-authored book “*Security: A New Framework for Analysis*” try to show how the agenda of security studies can be extended without destroying the intellectual coherence of the field. Accordingly, they developed the securitization theory for identifying security issues beyond the traditional military and political sectors into the new developed sectors: military, economic, societal, environmental and political security (Nyman 2013: 52). As Buzan *et al* (1998: vii) argue, they offered “a constructivist operational method” in order to understand and analyze how, when and by whom issues become securitized.

Basically, securitization is “presenting an issue as an existential threat requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure” to deal with it (Buzan *et al* 1998: 23-24). Thus, security defined as a “speech act” and the utterance itself is the act (Wæver 1995: 55). In practice, the issue becomes a security issue whether or not the threat is “real” or “exists”, but because of the issue is presented as such a threat (Buzan *et al* 1998: 24). In the words of Wæver (1995: 54), “something is a security problem when the elites declare it to be so.” According to Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998: 35-36), analyzing a security issue requires a distinction among units of “referent objects”, “securitizing actors”, and “functional actors”, which will be evaluated in detail in the chapter on theoretical background.

In contrast, desecuritization is the reverse process that means, “the shifting of issues out of emergency mode and into the normal bargaining process of the political

sphere” (Buzan *et al* 1998: 4). The transformation from securitization to desecuritization is a difficult task considering that the latter is more abstract than the former. The methodology of desecuritization has not been fully explored by the Copenhagen School in their initial works. However, Lene Hansen provides (2012: 539-545) four forms of desecuritization for the analysis of the desecuritization process.<sup>12</sup> These forms were identified by Hansen (2012: 529) as: “change through stability” (when an issue is cast in terms other than security, but where the larger conflict still looms), replacement (when an issue is removed from the securitized, while another securitization takes its place), rearticulation (when an issue is moved from the securitized to the politicized due to a resolution of the threats and dangers), and silencing (when desecuritization takes the form of a de-politicization, which marginalizes potentially insecure subjects).<sup>13</sup>

The securitization theory has been used to analyze a vast number of issues including terrorism (Buzan 2006; Amicelle 2007; Karyotis 2007), migration (Bigo 2002; Boswell 2007), human security and identity (Floyd 2007; Hayes 2009; Rumelili 2011), the environment (Trombetta 2008; Wishnick 2010), women’s rights (Hansen 2000), minority rights (Jutla 2006) as well as specific problems of a country/region or relations between two countries (Kaliber 2005; Aras and Karakaya Polat 2008; Coşkun 2009; Shipoli 2010; Aktaş 2011; Balcı and Kardaş 2012; Tüysüzoğlu 2014; Adamides 2016). There are also vast numbers of studies that directly concentrate on the theoretical dimension of the Copenhagen School (McSweeney 1998, 2004, 2008; Hansen 2000,

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<sup>12</sup> The Copenhagen School began to develop with the cooperation between Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan under the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI) which was established in 1985. The COPRI was institutionalized with the establishment of the Center for Advanced Security Theory (CAST) in 2008 at the University of Copenhagen (Bilgin 2010: 41). Today, the CAST consists of a group of core scholars and researchers of the Copenhagen School such as Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, Jef Huysmans, Michael Williams, Lene Hansen and so on. Thus, Lene Hansen, with her contributions to the theory, could also be identified as the representatives of the Copenhagen School.

<sup>13</sup> These forms are elaborated in further detail in the methodology section on page 34.

2011, 2012; Huysmans 2000; Bilgin 2002, 2007; Stritzel 2007, 2011, 2012; Wilkinson 2007; Akgül Açıkmüşe 2008, Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010; Guzzini 2011; Roe 2012; Nyman 2013; Lupovici 2014).

The securitization theory has also been utilized for understanding some of the issues related to Turkey's foreign and security policies. For instance, in Alper Kaliber's (2005) work, the securitization theory was used in the Cyprus case to comprehend the conventional Turkish rhetoric on Cyprus as well as its repercussions for the political balances and power relations in domestic politics. In addition to Kaliber's work, Bilgin (2007) concentrates on the reasons behind the transformation in Turkish politics in the post-1999 period through the desecuritization perspective. Aras and Karakaya Polat (2008) aim to analyze the Iranian issue to show the transformation of the relations between Turkey and Iran. Karakaya Polat (2009) also focuses on the 2007 parliamentary elections and analyzes the securitization and desecuritization of political Islam and the Kurdish issue. Likewise, Aktaş (2011) uses the concept of desecuritization to analyze the transformation of Turkey's national security, and its reflection on Turkish foreign policy. From the securitization perspective, Balcı and Kardaş (2012) use the securitization theory to analyze Turkish-Israeli relations, while Tüysüzöğlü (2014) applies the securitization theory to understand conflicts in the Black Sea basin. In her article on EU's role as desecuritization agent for Turkey, Akgül Açıkmüşe (2013) focuses on the security speech acts on "Kurdish separatism" and "political Islam."

Despite the vast number of studies on Turkish-Greek relations, the analysis of whether, how and to what extent Greece has been a security issue for Turkey from the securitization perspective has not been covered so far. However, there are some

examples that use the words of “securitization” and “desecuritization” without a link to securitization theory or its framework. For instance, Rumelili (2007: 107, emphasis added) uses the word of “desecuritization” to identify the transformation of the long-lasting Aegean disputes between Turkey and Greece with the encouragement of the EU, by saying that:

Towards the end of the 1990s, however, Greek-Turkish relations entered into what is likely to be a sustainable period of rapprochement. Since 1999, the two states have signed numerous co-operation agreements, advanced towards resolving their border disputes and most importantly managed to maintain the positive momentum in their relations despite changes of government and throughout the contentious period leading to Cyprus’ EU membership. Serious episodes that would have easily escalated into crises in the past are now carefully managed by the elites. In effect, the Greek-Turkish conflicts have de-escalated to issue conflicts, with the as yet unresolved Aegean disputes being to some extent **desecuritized**, and have begun to be articulated as differences that can be managed, rather than as **existential threats**.

Rumelili’s (2007) article mainly focuses on the role of the EU’s bordering practices in solving conflicts between insider and outsider states from a different theoretical background. Thus, her usage of the words of “desecuritization” or “existential threat” does not include any connection with the analytical framework of the securitization theory.

In a similar way, Aksu (2010: 208) also uses the word “securitization” a few times to emphasize the influence of the decision-makers in defining the disputes between Turkey and Greece. However, as mentioned below, his approach does not include the methodological framework and the discursive approach of the Copenhagen School.

... It can be argued that in the post 1999 period bilateral relations started to be handled in a different way. In this process, bilateral relations and issues of dispute have moved away, both in Turkey and Greece, from the classical ‘security’ sphere and now there is an understanding in the sense that the previously ‘**securitized**’ disputes can be negotiated ...

... with the entry into force of the confidence building measures and détente, a new process started in which the parties learned to live with the disputes between them. “**Securitized**” issues within the framework of previous threat perceptions were not taken directly to a level of sensationalism, and thus the poisoning of relations was prevented.

... Some of the changes that were demanded by the EU from Turkey are issues **securitized** by Turkey, like the rights and status of minorities, border disputes and relations with neighbours (Aksu, 2010: 215, emphasis added).

Tekin (2010) focuses on minority issues between Turkey and Greece by using the words “securitization” and “securitized” in his article to emphasize Turkey’s security-oriented perception towards both the minority issue and its relations with the Greece. However, these usages by Tekin (2010: 84, emphasis added) do not have any connection with the securitization theory.

... both empirical and historiographically-shaped perceptions have led to the **securitization** of overall relations between Greece and Turkey. ... Not surprisingly, this had produced nothing but **securitized** foreign policies and a protracted relationship of conflicts. Within this framework, minority issues had also been held hostage by **securitized** foreign policies.

In her article titled “*Europeanization of the Aegean Dispute: An Analysis of Turkish Political Elite Discourse,*” Gökçen Yavaş (2013) focuses on Turkish-Greek disputes over the Aegean Sea through combining the securitization theory with the concept of Europeanization. In this paper, Yavaş argues (2013: 521) that the changes in Turkish and Greek foreign and security policies, in regard to the Aegean dispute, within the Europeanization process might be evaluated as “desecuritization” or in her own words “normalization.” The focus of the study is the discursive shift from “confrontational discourses to cooperative” ones by the Turkish political and military elites (Yavaş 2013: 528). She argues that this transformation occurred with the triggering impact of Turkey’s EU candidacy status. In the words of Yavaş (2013: 534),



“normalization and desecuritization of the dispute equated with the term ‘Europeanization’ that was previously labeled as ‘military based’ took place on the road to the EU.” Even though Yavaş uses the words of securitization and desecuritization of the Copenhagen School, her article does not include an analysis by the proper employment of the securitization theory. In contrast to the previously mentioned papers, she focuses on the disputes in the Aegean Sea through discursive constructions of the Turkish elites; however, she evaluates the militarism in the discourse of elites as securitization without any particular attention to the components of securitization. For instance, there is no emphasis on the emergency action and the intersubjectivity of the securitization. Thus, this thesis aims at filling this gap in the literature by looking at the Turkish-Greek relations by using the methodology of the securitization theory.

Accordingly, this thesis will use the methodology that was presented by Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde’s co-authored book entitled “*Security: A New Framework for Analysis*” and the four-forms of desecuritization provided by Hansen in order to understand whether, how, by whom and to what extent Greece is securitized and desecuritized by Turkey. In this respect, the thesis will focus on the detailed account of securitizing actors’ discourses to understand their way of handling problems, and their repercussions on the relations.

At that point, it is important to stress that this thesis acknowledges the fact that there have been several security issues between the two countries, however the methodology of securitization theory enables to understand the relationship from a different angle.<sup>14</sup> Especially, the existence of objective security matters/threats, as seen

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<sup>14</sup> The thesis does not argue that the problems between Turkey and Greece are created by Turkish elites (see methodology section for further details about the main actors of the decision-making process in Turkish foreign and security policy). Instead, Turkish elites, likewise their Greek counterparts, have used (in other words securitized) the existing issues between Turkey and Greece in line with the traditional

in the Turkish-Greek relations, and also the dramatized security rhetoric employed by Turkish elites are presented as the internal and external conditions of a successful securitization.<sup>15</sup> For instance, Akgül-Açıkmeşe (2008: 193) points out the tanks on the border, the distinction of friend-enemy and the sentiments of competition, or dirty rivers can play facilitating role in securitization. Thus, the existing security issues between the two provide a fruitful case study to observe whether, how, by whom and to what extent Greece is securitized and desecuritized by Turkey.

While the thesis focuses on the main contentious issues between the two countries within the framework of the securitization theory, it will give special emphasis to relations in the post-Cold War era, more specifically the period which started right after the Turkish Parliament's verbal declaration on *casus belli* in June 1995.<sup>16</sup> The thesis argues that this was the peak point of securitization in Turkish-Greek relations that was followed by other securitizations in subsequent crises such as the sovereignty over the Kardak islets, the S-300 missile issue, Greece's support for the PKK, as well as Turkey's path towards the EU. This period is also important as it continued with the breakthrough rapprochement process, which is not only built on the old unsustainable pillar of external threat, like the previous phases of cooperation, and it should be traced in several layers with its precipitating causes (Güvenç 2004: 3).

By doing so, the thesis will aim to understand whether, how, and to what extent the issues related to Greece are securitized or desecuritized by Turkey. In this overall context, the first objective is to understand the security issues related to Greece by

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security discourse in Turkey. According to Bilgin (2005: 183), the traditional security discourse on security in Turkey has had two major components such as “fear of abandonment and fear of loss territory”, and the assumption of “geographical determinism.” For details of those components, see footnotes 24 and 25.

<sup>15</sup> For the internal and external conditions of a successful securitization, see page 33.

<sup>16</sup> The premise of *casus belli* is used in International Relations to define an event or action that justifies or allegedly justifies a war or conflict.

employing the components of the securitization theory (existential threat, emergency measure and the approval of audience). By looking at which issues related to Greece by whom and to what extent were securitized by Turkey, this thesis will argue that there was a “threatening” and a “hostile” tone in Turkish elites’ discourses in almost every contention between the two countries such as delimitation (territorial waters, airspace and the continental shelf) and sovereignty issues (the status of the islands, islets and rocks as well as the (de)militarization of the islands) in the Aegean Sea, problems related to Cyprus, and Greece’s ties with terrorist organizations. The rowdy tones in the security speech-acts of the securitizing actors indicated that Turkey was almost ready to get into armed conflict with Greece.

Even though Turkish elites have securitized issues related to Greece with such a tone as explained above, paradoxically since the late 1990s due to the forces of rapprochement, bilateral relations were almost transformed into a cooperative stance with emphasis on “friendship” rather than focusing on any existential threat that could end up in an armed conflict. Accordingly, the second objective of this thesis is to ask whether the rapprochement process has led to desecuritization and whether it is possible to explain rapprochement with the methodology of desecuritization. In this context, this thesis employs Hansen’s four forms of desecuritization in order to understand the correlation between rapprochement and desecuritization. It argues that the rapprochement process in Turkish-Greek relations fits the form of change through stabilization, borrowed from Lene Hansen’s terminology.

In this context, the first chapter of the thesis provides an introduction on securitization theory. In this chapter, this thesis gives information about the debates on the definition of security and tries to reflect the contributions of the scholars of the

Copenhagen School with their concepts of securitization and desecuritization. Following the background on the frameworks presented in Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde's co-authored book "*Security: A New Framework for Analysis*" and Hansen's article titled "*Reconstructing Desecuritisation: The Normative-political in the Copenhagen School and Directions for How to Apply it*", the thesis will present some critiques of the securitization theory and implementation of the framework in different topics such as energy, terrorism and migration. The background information on the theory will be followed by the methodology of this thesis. The methodology section includes insights about how these frameworks could be applied to Turkish-Greek relations. The *sui generis* characteristics of Turkish politics require thorough explanation to comprehend the role of the actors in the decision-making process, which forms the next topic of this chapter.

The second chapter of the thesis presents a range of disputes in bilateral relations in order to understand the way Turkish decision-makers handle problems on Greece. Even though the focal point of this chapter is the securitizations after the post-Cold War, it will also cover the historical background of the issues in order to understand how securitizing actors securitized, or preferred to securitize, issues related to Greece within the historical cycle. After appraising the past, it will focus on Turkey's securitizations of different contentious issues in bilateral relations, i.e. disputes of the delimitation of territorial waters, the sovereignty over the Kardak islets, the Cyprus issue with a special reference to the S-300 missiles crisis, and Greece's support of terrorist organizations. Although, Greece's use of the veto card in Turkey's accession process to the EU would not fit into the securitization framework like the above-mentioned cases, the thesis evaluates this issue in order to show decision-makers' handling the issue within the normal political processes. Since this thesis argues that

this period is highly securitized by securitizing actors, it will focus on the discourses of decision-makers to reflect the security speech-acts in face of the crises of the period.

The third chapter of the thesis investigates the reasons behind the latest rapprochement process and tries to explain the transformation in bilateral relations with the methodological perspectives of desecuritization by using Hansen's four-forms. In this context, it will first focus on the root causes of the rapprochement within four categories including the earthquakes and the empowerment of the civil society, the Europeanization of both Turkish and Greek foreign policies, the role of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and finally the role of the US in bilateral relations. Then, it will discuss the instances of the rapprochement process in order to form a basis for a detailed analysis of the period with the framework of desecuritization. The thesis argues in this section that the rapprochement process paved the way for desecuritization and the best way to explain this is through the form of "change through stability" suggested by Hansen.

# 1. SECURITIZATION AND DESECURITIZATION: CONCEPTS, THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

Security has always been an “essentially contested concept”<sup>17</sup> (McSweeney 2004: 54) and topic in International Relations (IR). It is impossible to think about IR without reference to it. The wide and comprehensive characteristics of security cause disagreements on its definition. Since there is no worldwide consensus on the definition, the concept has several understandings. According to the Oxford Dictionary (2006), security can simply be defined as “the state of being or feeling safe” from danger or threat. The concept closely relates with protection or survival. Arnold Wolfers (1952: 485) points out that “security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked.” During the Cold War, the state was the main focus of debates and security was understood through military terms. In the words of Bilgin (2002: 102), “the state has traditionally been viewed as referent (security is about the state) and agent (the state is about security)”. However, the dominant position of the state started to change in IR since the 1980s with the rise of new agendas in international relations. The Critical Security Studies have triggered debates over the development of new approaches to the analysis of international politics through challenging “traditional -largely realist and neorealist- theories on their ‘home turf’” (Williams 2003: 511).

Some scholars, as wideners, such as Herz (1981), Ullman (1983), Buzan (1983), Matthews (1989) or Tickner (1992) have tried to broaden the definition of security beyond state and military security, while traditionalists such as Walt (1991)

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<sup>17</sup> As McSweeney pointed out, he inspired by Gallie’s notion of the “*essentially contested concepts*”. See, Gallie, W.B. (1962) ‘Essentially Contested Concepts’. in *The Importance of Language*. ed. by Black, M. New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 121-146.

have defended maintaining the narrow, traditional definition. One of the first attempts of broadening the scope of security came from John H. Herz (1981: 184-192), a realist scholar, who argues that in addition to the nuclear armament, threats such as an increase in world population, dwindling food and energy resources, and environmental harm should also be included in the security agenda. Ullman (1983: 129) stresses, “defining national security merely (or even primarily) in military terms conveys a profoundly false image of reality” and “causes ignoring more harmful dangers”. Moreover, Buzan (1983) in his well-known book *“People, States and Fear”* introduces five sectors of security such as military, political, economic, societal and environmental.<sup>18</sup> In contrast, traditionalist scholars like Stephen M. Walt (1991: 213) emphasizes the following:

... the risk of expanding “security studies” excessively; by this logic, issues such as pollution, disease, child abuse, or economic recessions could all be viewed as threats to “security”. Defining the field in this way would destroy its intellectual coherence and make it more difficult to devise solutions to any of these important problems.

On the other hand, the securitization approach, which is articulated in the works of the Copenhagen School, has become one of the most important and influential debates within Security Studies. In the midst of the lively controversy between the “wideners” and “traditionalists” on the definition of security, Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan, the most prominent scholars of the Copenhagen School, have presented a groundbreaking framework for the field of Security Studies. The Copenhagen School has redefined security around new issues in the context of wideners understanding of security, while avoiding an over-extension of the term which would cover everything and become

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<sup>18</sup> Buzan defines five sectors as: “the military security concerns the two-level interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of states, and states’ perceptions of each other’s intentions. Political security concerns the organizational stability of states, systems of government and the ideologies that give them legitimacy. Economic security concerns access to the resources, finance and markets necessary to sustain acceptable levels of welfare and state power. Societal security concerns the sustainability, within acceptable conditions for evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture and religious and national identity and custom. Environmental security concerns the maintenance of the local and the planetary biosphere as the essential support system on which all other human enterprises depend” (Buzan 1991: 19-20).

meaningless as traditionalists argued. Huysmans (1998: 482) underscores this effort as “the Copenhagen group has struggled with ... how to move security studies beyond a narrow agenda which focuses on military relations between states while avoiding ending up with an all-embracing, inflated concept dealing with all kinds of threats to the existence, well-being or development of individuals, social groups, nations and mankind?” Accordingly, in their book entitled “*Security: A New Framework for Analysis*”, Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998: 4-5) “seek to find coherence not by confining security to the military sector but by exploring the logic of security itself to find out what differentiates security and the process of securitization from that which is merely political.” With this redefinition, the Copenhagen School has taken a position in between traditionalists and wideners. This positioning of the Copenhagen School explained by Wæver (2011: 469) as follows:

Until the invention of the concept of securitization, ‘widening security’ had to specify either the actor (the state) or the sector (military), or else risk the ‘everything becomes security’ trap. Securitization theory handled this problem by fixing *form*: whenever something took the form of the particular speech act of securitization, with a securitizing actor claiming an existential threat to a valued referent object in order to make the audience tolerate extraordinary measures that otherwise would not have been acceptable, this was a case of securitization; in this way, one could ‘throw the net’ across all sectors and all actors and still not drag in everything with the catch, only the security part.

The perception of the Copenhagen School towards security can be founded in the concepts of “securitization”, “sectoral security” and “regional security complex theory” which are grounded in different individual and collective principal works by the scholars of the School.<sup>19</sup> Barry Buzan’s concepts of sectoral security and regional security complex theory (put forward by Buzan in the book *People, States and Fear* in

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<sup>19</sup> Some of those foundational works are Buzan’s book *People, States and Fear* (1991); Wæver *et al*’s book *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (1993); Wæver’s (1995) book chapter ‘Securitization and Desecuritization’ (1995) and book *Concepts of Security* (1997); Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde’s (1998) book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*; and Buzan and Wæver’s (2003) book *Regions and Powers*.



1983 and its updated version in 1991), and Ole Wæver's idea of securitization and desecuritization (in his book *Concepts of Security* and the article titled *Securitization and Desecuritization*) are gathered and broadened in the collective works *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (1998) and *Regions and Powers: The Structure for International Security* (2003).

### **1.1. Securitization Theory: What is Securitization/Desecuritization?**

Scholars of the Copenhagen School support the idea, which is mainly adopted by the traditionalists, that security is about survival of the referent object (Buzan *et al* 1998: 4-5). The existence of a threat, whether it is real or not, against the survival of the referent object requires special measures to handle it. As Wæver (1995: 55) put it, “by uttering ‘security’ a state-representative<sup>20</sup> moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it.” This process of securitization defined as a speech act “through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and to enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat” (Buzan and Wæver 2003: 491). This political process “marks a decision, a “breaking free of rules” and the suspension of normal politics” (Williams 2003: 518). In other words, by securitization “an issue becomes a security issue not because something constitutes an objective threat to the state, but rather because an actor has defined something as existential threat to some object’s survival” (Buzan and Wæver 2003). Accordingly, Bilgin (2007: 559) emphasizes the political character of the act that “involves making choices about how

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<sup>20</sup> While Wæver used the concept of “state-representatives” in his initial works, the Copenhagen School replaced it with the actors, who have to be in a position of authority” to make decisions, and the adoption of emergency measures (Hansen and Nissenbaum 2009: 1158).

an issue would be handled: ordinary or extraordinary.” In the words of Wæver (2000: 251) “it is always a choice to treat something as security issue.” Therefore, security is defined as a political process, which can be analyzed by drawing on the “speech act”.

Within this framework, the meaning of security became secondary to “the essential quality of security in general” (Buzan *et al* 1998: 26) considering it as a kind of act. As Buzan *et al* argue (1998: 26),

That quality is the staging of existential issue in politics to lift them above politics. In security discourse, an issue is dramatized and presented as an issue of supreme priority; thus, by labeling it as security, an agent claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means. For the analyst to grasp this act, the task is not to assess some objective threats that ‘really’ endanger some object to be defended or secured; rather, it is to understand the processes of constructing a shared understanding of what is to be considered and collectively responded to as a threat.

Thus, the main aim of securitization is extracting issues from the sphere of normal politics in order to deal with the threats by breaking the rules.<sup>21</sup> By doing so, the securitizing actors use extraordinary means of “secrecy, levying taxes or conscripts, and limitations on otherwise inviolable rights” (Wæver 1996: 106). These abovementioned components identified by Buzan *et al* (1998: 26) as the main two components of a successful securitization: “existential threat” and “emergency action”. However, security issues cannot be reduced to a subjective process. Despite the fact that there is dramatization of an issue as a “supreme priority”, it also requires an approval on the ground “whether an issue is a security issue is not something individuals decide alone” (Buzan *et al* 1998: 31). The success of an attempt mainly depends on the existence and some degrees of acceptance of a relevant audience, which is closely related to the third component of the securitization that is “intersubjectivity” (1998: 26-31; Peoples and

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<sup>21</sup> Breaking rules can take any forms as presented by Buzan *et al* (1998: 25) in their example of Pentagon, in which “Pentagon designated hackers as “a catastrophic treat” and “a serious threat to national security” that could possibly lead to actions within the computer field but with no cascading effects on other security issues.”

Vaughan-Williams 2010: 78). Without acceptance by the audience, the attempt remains incomplete and is identified as a “securitizing move” rather than “securitization”.<sup>22</sup> In other words, a securitizing actor should convince its audience of the suspension of normal rules in this emergency situation. In the words of Buzan *et al* (1998: 25):

A discourse that takes the form of presenting something about as an existential threat to a referent object does not by itself create securitization-this is a securitizing move, but the issue is securitized only if and when the audience accept it as such.

Thus, the approval by the relevant audience is considered as *sine qua non* for the securitization process. Accordingly, the book titled “*Security: A New Framework for Analysis*” emphasizes as follows:

Successful securitization is not decided by the securitizer but by the audience of the security speech act: Does the audience accept that something is an existential threat to a shared value? Thus, security (as with all politics) ultimately rests neither with the objects nor with the subjects but *among* the subjects (Buzan et al 1998: 31 emphasis in original).

Another crucial point regarding the securitization process is the qualifications of the speaker of security. As Wæver (2000: 252–253) points out, the speaker, who performs the speech act, should have “social capital” and “has to be in a position of authority.” Securitization is a process that is structured, in practice, by the differential capacity of actors to make socially effective claims about threats (Williams 2003: 514). In general, political leaders, bureaucrats or government elites play this role but it is still difficult to identify the securitizing actor because of some problems. As Buzan *et al* argue (1998: 40) there is a level-of-analysis problem in identifying actors since “the same event can be attributed to different levels (individual, bureaucracy, or state, for

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<sup>22</sup> In line with the crucial role of the audience component of securitization, T. Balzacq (2005) defines the securitization as an “audience-centered” process, despite the fact that there is no clear definition on the concept of “audience” by the securitization theory. The critics on the vagueness of the audience issue will be evaluated in the following pages.

instance)”.

Buzan and his colleagues, in contrast to traditionalists, open up new referent objects beyond the military sector by adding political, economic, societal and environmental sectors by following Buzan’s early categorization in 1991. By doing so, they provide a way of specifying security within these five comprising sectors and avoid extending the scope of the security agenda, which wideners tend to see. Accordingly, they present five sectors with their particular referent object and threat agenda (Buzan *et al* 1998). For instance, in the military sector the referent object is survival of the state and the threat(s) is/are generally defined as external threats such as possible attackers. In the environmental sector, what is at stake is the existence of the environment itself and the nexus of civilization and environment. The threats in the environmental sector are complicated by a variety of issues such as global warming, pollution, energy resources and etc. In the economic sector, as Buzan *et al* argue (1998: 100), there are plenty of referent objects ranging from individuals through classes and states to the abstract and complex system of the global market itself. The financial crisis or collapse was perceived as the main threat among many other threats for the referent objects. The political sector is the widest and also the less coherent sector compared to the others as the referent object can be territorial states or other unit-level actors such as the EU, stateless groups and transnational movements. This sector overlaps with others since security is to some extent political. Finally, in the societal sector, the referent objects are tribes, clans, nations, civilizations, religions and race. The important thing in the societal sector is the identity of a group, which is threatened by migration, political integration or cultural flows.

As Buzan *et al* present, the security agenda can be broadened in different sectors

under certain circumstances, as discussed above. But one can also argue that securitization theory contributes to the debates regarding the limitation of the security agenda within the five sectors. According to the co-authored study of Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998: 35-36), analyzing a security issue requires a distinction among three types of units: “referent objects”, “securitizing actors”, and “functional actors”. The referent object is something that is thought to be existentially threatened and that has a legitimate claim to survival. Though the state has traditionally maintained its primary role as the referent object, it can be changed according to the different sectors. In other words, the referent object is closely linked with the discursive articulation of the securitizing actor. Securitizing actors -it can be political elites, government, pressure groups and etc.- are those who securitize issues through performing the speech act. Functional actors are different than the securitizing actors since they help securitizing actors determine the issues because of their significant influences in the decision-making process. However, the influence of the functional actors is limited and never transforms its role into a securitizing actor.

Briefly, securitization has three components such as “existential threat”, “emergency action”, and the existence and approval of an “audience”. Wæver believes that politics should be done consensually and through dialogue and deliberation, as opposed to a top-down process (Floyd 2010: 50). As already mentioned, this refers to the intersubjectivity characteristic of a successful securitization. Wæver (2003: 14) underlines this characteristic as follows:

... in order to avoid simply moving from objective to subjective – it should be stressed that securitization is never decided by one sovereign subject but in a constellation of decisions it is ultimately inter-subjective.

In summary, securitization theory has presented a process that begins with the

determination of a certain issue as an existential threat and then moving the issue into an emergency situation for a referent object. While securitizing actors play a crucial role in this process, functional actors contribute to the process as well. However, this process is still incomplete until the audience approves it, which is the final process that transforms a securitization move into an actual securitization. This intersubjective dimension of securitization is defined by Roe (2004: 281) as a “call and response” process in which “an actor makes a call that something is a matter of ‘security’, and the audience must then respond with their acceptance of it as such.” Without approval by the audience, the process cannot be evaluated as a complete and successful process; it is no more than an attempt.

In contrast to securitization, desecuritization is the reverse process that means “the shifting of issues out of emergency mode and into the normal bargaining process of the political sphere” (Buzan *et al* 1998: 4). In other words, desecuritization is a process of “moving of issues off the “security” agenda and back into the realm of public discourse and “normal” political dispute and accommodation (Williams 2003: 523). It is generally acknowledged that the concept of desecuritization figures more prominently in Wæver’s initial works (such as Wæver 1995, 2000) rather than in the collective effort of the Copenhagen School, which spends less time on exploring desecuritization (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010: 83). Unlike securitization, the concept is not analyzed in detail by scholars and has a “secondary” status. Claudia Aradau (2004: 398) argues that desecuritization has received “comparatively scant attention”, while Lene Hansen points out (2012: 530) a secondary situation of the concept by emphasizing the “superiority” of securitization. She argues, “desecuritisiation is derivative of securitization semantically (modified through ‘de’), and in terms of the political modality, the concept identifies: desecuritisiation happens ‘away from’ or ‘out off’ securitization” (Hansen

2012: 530).

Understanding the transformation from securitization to desecuritization is a highly difficult task considering that the latter is much more abstract than the former. As Behnke (2006: 65) points out, “if securitization is a speech act, desecuritization should be marked by the lack of any such speech acts.” In other words, “desecuritization occurs not through further speech but through its absence” (Aras and Polat 2008: 499). Wæver (2000: 252) also emphasizes this issue by “one cannot desecuritize through speech acts such as, “I hereby declare this issue to no longer be a threat”, and he (2000: 253) offers “desecuritization through avoidance of security speak.” To that point Behnke (2006: 64) argues, “desecuritization can never really happen” and suggests the idea that:

States continuously securitize issues and actors in order to produce a national identity. Desecuritization is perhaps best understood as the fading away of one particular issue or actor from the repertoire of these processes. At some point, certain “threats” might no longer exercise our minds and imaginations sufficiently and are replaced with more powerful and stirring imageries.

There is also a dilemma in the Copenhagen School’s concept of securitization. According to Williams (2003: 523), the Copenhagen School does not regard an act of securitization as a positive value or as a required development to tackle specific issues. Instead, societies should, as much as possible, operate within the realm of normal politics where issues can be debated and addressed within the boundaries of politicization. Thus, desecuritization is the “optimal long-range option” or “the ultimate aim” for the scholars of the Copenhagen School, since they consider that “security should be seen as negative, as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics” (Wæver 1995; Buzan *et al* 1998: 29). Jef Huysmans (1998) provides an alternative approach based on ethical-political while he investigates the issue of why to desecuritize.

Accordingly, he (1998: 576) suggests that:

Desecuritisation unmakes politics which identify the community on the basis of the expectations of hostility. Instead of simply removing policy questions from the security sector and plugging them into another sector, desecuritisation turns into a political strategy which challenges the fundamentals of the political realist constitution of the political community head on.

Following the logic of the securitization theory, Bilgin (2007: 557-559) identifies the best choice of the Copenhagen School as “universal desecuritization” which refers to the assumption that “desecuritization is the preferable ethico-political strategy for scholars and societal actors, regardless of time and space.” Peoples and Vaughan-Williams (2010: 83) also underline that more security is not better as securitization of an issue brings with it a particular type of emergency politics and a militarized mode of thinking.

Though the concept of securitization presents a viable framework with the notion of speech act, securitizing actors and conditions for success, its reverse concept of desecuritization still needs more theoretical exploration. While Hansen (2012: 528) criticizes “the unsystematic or even contradictory ways in the implementation of desecuritization” that indicates more focus on it, she provides some forms to make it possible to further analyze the issue.

## **1.2. How does Securitization/Desecuritization Occur?**

The Copenhagen School claims that any specific matter can be located on “the spectrum ranging from non-politicized through politicized to securitized” (Buzan *et al* 1998: 23). It means that an issue becomes politicized when the state elites bring it to the public debate “requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance” (Buzan *et al* 1998: 23). Finally, it is plotted at the



securitized spectrum when a securitizing actor presented it as an existential threat and goes outside of the standard political procedures. In other words, the existential nature of the threat requires emergency measures, which also legitimizes breaking the rules.

Therefore, securitization refers to the process of presenting an issue in security terms:

The way to study securitization is to study discourse and political constellations: When does an argument with this particular rhetorical and semiotic structure achieve sufficient effect to make an audience tolerate violations of rules that would otherwise have to be obeyed? If by means of an argument about the priority and urgency of an existential threat the securitizing actor has managed to break free of procedures or rules he or she would otherwise be bound by, we are witnessing a case of securitization (Buzan *et al* 1998: p. 25).

Simply put, everything begins by speaking. This leads to the question of how theory of language is important for securitization? The Copenhagen School draws on the theory of language and especially employs the discursive process for securitizing an issue. The impact of language theory in the Copenhagen School can be clearly seen in studies of Wæver. As Wæver (1995: 55) points out:

With the help of language theory, we can regard “security” as a “speech act”. In this usage, security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance itself is the act. By saying it, something is done.

Buzan and Wæver (2003: 491) define securitization as “the discursive process through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and to enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat.” The Copenhagen School proposes to draw on speech act philosophy, articulated in the works of John L. Austin and Jacques Derrida. Akgül Açıkmeşe (2011: 63) defines the discourse perception of the Copenhagen School as *sui generis* and a synthesis of both Austin and Derrida’s philosophies.

John L. Austin in his 1962 book *How to do Things with Words* proposes the

concept of “performative utterances” that support the idea of sentences, which are grammatically declarative, yet are neither true nor false. Uttering a sentence will constitute “doing something rather than merely saying something” (Austin 1962: 137). Therefore, “Wæver argues that the very utterance of “security” is more than just saying or describing something but the performing an action” (Stritzel 2007: 361).

In addition, as Stritzel points out, “Wæver also draws on insights from Derrida and Judith Butler to stress the always political and indeterminate nature of speech act event whose meaning and performative force is not related to its context” (Stritzel 2007: 361). Wæver states this as follows:

[Derrida’s philosophy] points to the centrality of studying in a text, how it produces its own meaning, rather than relating it to a ‘context’ which is doubtful concept because it tends to imply the traditional sender-receiver view of communication where an original meaning can be retrieved if only put in the proper context (Wæver 2004: 11).

In contrast to Austin, Derrida argues “there is nothing outside the text” therefore the meaning of the text is inside the sentence rather than the philosophy or perception of the actors. In parallel with Derrida’s argument, the Copenhagen School focuses on textual analysis as well (Buzan *et al* 1998: 24). Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998: 24) believe that the meaning lies not in what people consciously think the concept means but in how they implicitly use it in some ways and not others. In this sense, discourse analysis is the way to study securitization (Buzan *et al* 1998: 25). As Wæver (2001: 26-27) points out, “discourse analysis works on public texts. It does not try to the thoughts or motives of the actors ... What interest us is neither what individual decision makers really believe, not what are shared beliefs among populations, but which codes are used when actors relate to each other.” This is the reason that this thesis focuses on the official texts collected from published and online sources in order to explore patterns in

the statements of the related actors.<sup>23</sup>

According to Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, a successful speech act has internal and external conditions. Among the internal conditions of a speech act, “the most important thing is to follow the security form, the grammar of security, and construct a plot that includes existential threat, point of no return, and a possible way out” (Buzan *et al* 1998: 32-33). As Wæver argues (1996: 108) “threats and security are not objective matters, security is a way to frame and handle an issue” and the actors “make a choice when they treat something as a security issue” by using particular dialects for the different sectors. These dialects of security refer to identity in the society sector, sovereignty in the political and military sectors, and sustainability in the environmental sector (Wæver 1996: 109; Buzan *et al* 1998: 33). The external aspect of a speech act has two main conditions, one is the securitizing actor, who must be in a position of authority, and the other is the alleged threat (Buzan *et al* 1998: 33).

The impact of the speech act in constructing a security threat might be best understood with examples. One good example is US President George W. Bush’s well-known State of the Union address given on 29 January 2002. In his speech, President Bush states the following:

States like these [North Korea, Iran and Iraq], and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic. ...

We will develop and deploy effective missile defenses to protect America and our allies from sudden attack. And all nations should know: America will do what is

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<sup>23</sup> The thesis considers the President, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Chief of General Staff and the Secretary-General of the National Security Council as the securitizing actors in Turkey. The reasons behind the depiction of those actors as the securitizing actors will be evaluated in the “Methodology” section of the thesis.

necessary to ensure our nation's security (White House Archive 2002, emphasis added).

In his statement, President Bush utilized security grammar while he identified North Korea, Iraq and Iran as an “axis of evil” that are supporting and arming terrorists to “threaten the peace of the world”. His dramatization of the issue can clearly be seen from his emphasis on the “catastrophic” price of indifference against such an existential threat. He highlighted his administration's emergency actions such as to develop and deploy effective missile defenses and to do what is necessary to ensure the US' security.

Antony Amicelle's article on “the fight against terrorist financing” represents another example to grasp the impact of discourse. Amicelle (2007: 62) argues that “the 9/11 attacks transformed the global security agenda not only catapulting terrorist financing to the top of the agenda but also reinforcing the surveillance of the free movement of capital as a security issue.” Associating terrorist acts with money laundering authorities provided the justification needed to intensify financial surveillance and to diminish possible resistance to extending security measures. For instance, “the fight against terrorist financing represents a marked break with earlier regimes of money laundering regulation that focused on tracing criminal money after the crime” (Amicelle 2007: 63). However, with the redefinition of money laundering, predicting possible terrorist attacks become the objective of post 9/11 (Amicelle 2007: 63).

While the scholars of securitization theory provide a comprehensive framework in order to analyze how securitization occurs, an explicit framework for desecuritization is lacking. To this point, Wæver outlines (2000: 253), rather than a collective effort of the securitization theory, three options: “not to talk about issues in terms of security in the first place”, once an issue is securitized “do not generate security dilemmas and other

vicious spirals”, and finally “to move security issues back into normal politics.”

The lack of a systematic framework for desecuritization resulted in different interpretations by scholars. Lene Hansen’s “four-forms of desecuritization”, from her 2012 article, provides a thorough reading for varied empirical studies. She likely puts an end to the debates regarding the need for a desecuritization framework by claiming that (2012: 539) “we are unlikely to find – at least at the moment – instances of desecuritisiation, which cannot be analysed through these four forms of desecuritisiation.” The first form titled *change through stabilization* was derived from the détente period of the Cold War, which also gave Wæver the reason for inventing the concept of desecuritisiation (Hansen 2012: 536-539). According to Hansen (2012: 539), this form of desecuritization refers to:

rather slow move out of an explicit security discourse, which in turn facilitates a less militaristic, less violent and hence more genuinely political form of engagement. It also requires that parties to a conflict recognise each other as legitimate.

Though the form of *change through stabilization* associates with a “macro-desecuritisiation” like détente of the Cold War, Hansen provides instances such as cross-border minority conflicts that might also fit into this form. The second form titled *replacement* refers to a process in which “one issue is moved out of security, while another is simultaneously securitized” (Hansen 2012: 541). This form of desecuritization followed Behnke’s (2006: 65), as already noted, argument of replacement of threats with more powerful and stirring imaginaries. The third form called *rearticulation* refers to a fundamental transformation of an issue moved out from securitized with the resolution of threats and dangers and without any conflict looming in the background; hence it is a more radical form of political engagement (Hansen 2012: 542-543). The forth and final form of desecuritization, “silencing” refers to the

disappearance or failure to register an issue in the security discourse (Hansen 2012: 544-545).

### **1.3. Critics on the Securitization Theory**

Despite the fact that the Copenhagen School provides a useful framework to understanding how, when and by whom a specific matter becomes securitized or desecuritized, it triggered a vibrant debate in contemporary Security Studies. As explained before, there are several criticisms of the Copenhagen School ranging from concerns over societal security to the unclear nature of an audience to the emphasis on speech act to the absence of gender issues to the abstract nature of desecuritization and etc.

The concerns, raised by McSweeney, over the societal security constituted the initial debates about the Copenhagen School. McSweeney (1996: 91) criticizes Buzan *et al* by highlighting the problems of interpreting identity claims, rather than assuming their validity and coherence. According to him, in the context of societal security “Wæver *et al*’s book will make claims for the protection of national identity all the easier to substantiate, without investigation of the interests underlying them or of the moral choices involved in any decision to authenticate them” (McSweeney 1996: 91). In response, Buzan and Wæver (1997: 246) argue that they do not treat identities as objective or given, but that “once mobilized, identities have to be reckoned with as something people perceive that they belong to, and act upon as objective, given”.

Some scholars, on the other hand, criticize the role of the audience in the securitization approach as highly problematic because of the ambiguity of who constitutes the third component of the securitization as audience (Kaliber 2005; Balzacq

2005 and McDonald 2008). For instance, Kaliber (2005: 323-324) underscores the unclear nature of acceptance by the relevant audience. As he (2005: 323-324, *emphasis in original*) argued,

Buzan and Wæver do not unequivocally explain whether an explicit endorsement by an audience is necessary for the presumption that the conditions for such an acceptance have fully occurred. Even if they concede that the securitizing move is realized through either coercion or consent and is achieved through negotiations between the securitizer [read ruling elite] and the audience/society, they are not clear regarding the nature of the negotiation processes through which such approval for securitization is acquired. Therefore, approval is not necessarily preceded by a process of free discussion but, in some cases, can be identified with the absence of an explicit opposition to the securitizing move.

According to Leonard and Kaunert (2011: 59), there are no criteria “to identify who exactly constitutes the audience in practice.” However, Hansen (2000: 289) argues “the relevant audience need not be the entire population; especially in non-democratic countries the audience might well be much smaller and restricted to the power elite.” This argument by Hansen is consistent with Wæver’s (2003: 12) understanding of audience, who asserts that it varies according to the political system and the nature of the issue. This “audience” appears in discourse as a constituted subject whose “opinion” might be detected through surveys, polls and elections (Wæver 2002: 26-7). According to Balzacq (2005: 184), “the success of securitization is highly contingent upon the securitizing actor’s ability to identify with the audience’s feelings, needs and interests.” Therefore, his (2005: 185) emphasis on “direct casual connection with the desired goals” provides a solution in determining the target audience.

On the other hand, Balzacq (2005: 172) suggests “securitization is better understood as a strategic (pragmatic) practice that occurs within, and as part of, a configuration of circumstances, including the context, the psycho-cultural disposition of the audience, and the power that both speaker and listener bring to the interaction”.

Therefore, according to Williams (2003: 528), presentation of security as a speech act is potentially too narrow to fully grasp the social context, complex communicative and institutional processes of securitization. Similarly, Hansen (2000: 300) also argues that the securitization approach excludes the potential importance of non-verbal communication such as visual and bodily communication.

While Hansen (Hansen 2000: 286) raises the lack of the gender issue in the securitization approach discussions by underlining the urgency regarding honor killings of girls and women in Pakistan, she also draws attention to another aspect of the issue. She believes that the absence of the gender issue stems from two theoretical discussions, which lead to “security as silence” (refers to a situation where the potential subject of security has no, or limited, possibility of speaking its security problem) and “subsuming security” problems (refers the conditions for becoming a referent object) (Hansen, 2000 294-299).

There are also some critics regarding the criteria for who can become securitizing actors since the theory is less specific about it (Hansen 2000: 289). Williams (2003: 514) argues “securitization is a power-laden process that is structured by the differential capacity of actors to make socially effective claims about threats”. The definition of securitizing actors depends in other words on their ability to perform a successful securitization, to get a sufficient acceptance of the threat in question from the relevant audience (Hansen 2000: 289). Buzan *et al* acknowledge (1998: 40) this criticism by saying there is a level-of-analysis problem in identifying actors since “the same event can be attributed to different levels (individual, bureaucracy, or state, for instance).”

There are also some other criticisms like the condition of societies, for example



undemocratic societies, which have limited access to influence the decision-making process. Therefore, the third component of intersubjectivity will be a missing part, as the audience is not invited to speak out. Kyle Grayson uses Frankenstein's Monster metaphor to highlight the potential risk of securitization in such societies (Grayson 2003). According to this analogy, the powerful securitizing actor opens the door to extraordinary security actions at the end of the securitization process.

Finally, the Copenhagen School is also criticized for being Euro-centric (Antony, Emmers, Acharya, 2006). For instance, Tow underlines the importance of society rather than the state as the referent object in societal security and he thinks it derives from a European experience since the existence of community in many other regions or parts of the world is disputable (Tow, 2001).

For the concept of desecuritization, critics generally focus on its secondary position *vis a vis* securitization. According to Hansen (2012: 526) "the concept is far from viewed as unproblematic or consistently empirically applied." Huysmans (1998) points out that desecuritization or the unmaking of securitization has far minimal leverage on securitization theory. Behnke focuses on the contradictory character of desecuritization as speech act. Accordingly, he (2006: 65) emphasizes the language game in declaring that a particular issue no longer constitutes a threat, and offers the argument that an issue is desecuritized through a lack of speech, not through speech acts.

Several scholars such as Anrea Oelsner and Claudia Aradau also question the issue of actors in desecuritization. While Oelsner (2005: 15) defines the actors as "policy-makers and other political, economic, and intellectual elite, who will try to convey the public their re-interpreted perceptions", Aradau (2003: 20) argues that

deseuritization actors should be from the previously silenced ‘other’ instead of the selfsame agents of securitization.

Despite all these criticisms of securitization theory, this thesis takes the concepts of securitization and deseuritization employed by the Copenhagen School in order to explore the speech acts by the Turkish elites in terms of bilateral relations. This thesis argues that the peak point of securitization in bilateral relations in the post-Cold War was followed by a cooperation period that began in the late 1990s despite the fact that there have been no tangible changes and solutions in any of the disputes between Turkey and Greece. The thesis aims to explain this cooperation/rapprochement period by borrowing Hansen’s form of deseuritization labeled as “change through stabilization.”

#### **1.4. Methodology of the Thesis**

This thesis applies the methodology of securitization, which Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998) present in their book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, and uses the forms of deseuritization, which Hansen (2012) provides in her article titled “*Reconstructing Deseuritization: The Normative-political in the Copenhagen School and Directions for How to Apply it*”, to analyze the securitization and deseuritization of issues between Turkey and Greece.

As Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998: 35-36) stress, the distinction among the units of “referent object” and “securitizing actors” is required in order to grasp the cases of securitization. In the following sections, the actors of the securitization processes in Turkey as well as the four-forms of deseuritization suggested by Lene Hansen are explained further in order to clarify the methodological framework of the thesis.

### 1.4.1 Defining the Referent Object

Scholars of securitization theory argue that security is about survival of the referent object that is something thought to be existentially threatened and that has a legitimate claim to survival. Like the traditionalists, scholars of securitization theory also believe in the primary role of state as the referent object. Within the framework of the securitization theory, the referent object is going to be the state of Turkey for the analysis since Turkey's perception regarding Greece has always been as a "*source of threat*" or that of "*enemy*". This perception has shaped Turkey's foreign and security policy for decades. Due to the mutual mistrust and misperception between the two countries, even its peoples, both countries have felt insecure about their national security.

Turkey's perception towards Greece is reflected in the rhetoric of Turkish foreign and security policy. The traditional discourse on security in Turkey has had two major components, as Bilgin (2005: 183) defines: "fear of abandonment and fear of loss territory",<sup>24</sup> and the assumption of "geographical determinism".<sup>25</sup> While these two components have characterized the traditional security discourse that has prevailed during the Republican era (Bilgin 2005: 187), they have also continued to dominate the security discourse in the following periods. Particularly, the relationship between Turkey and Greece has had its share of this traditional discourse as well. For instance, Ambassador Şükrü Elekdağ's, former Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1996 article, entitled "*2 1/2 War Strategy*" presents the reasons for Turkey's skepticism about its neighbors. According to Elekdağ (1996: 34), "two countries,

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<sup>24</sup> This fear is mainly stemmed from the Sevres Treaty (1920) that was detrimental to Ottoman Empire and destructive of its homeland as it allowed Turks to keep just a small part of desolate central Anatolia (Aydın 1999: 158; Bilgin 2005: 183-184).

<sup>25</sup> The assumption of "geographical determinism" refers to Turkey's geopolitical location, which has been used to legitimation of caution and risks in the formulation of policies (Bilgin 2005: 185-187).

namely Greece and Syria, who have claims on Turkey's vital interests, constitute an immediate threat for Turkey." Greece's claims to extend its territorial waters in the Aegean, its financial and accommodation support for the PKK, its efforts to change the balance of power in the Aegean vis-a-vis naval and air forces as well as its Enosis<sup>26</sup> plans with Cyprus have been posing serious threats and challenges against the security and the survival of the referent object (Elekdağ 1996: 33-43). In order to prevent Greece's claims on Turkey's vital interests, Turkey has been implementing several preventive measures in its foreign and security policies. Turkey's policy of *casus belli*, which means that any Greek initiative to extend its territorial waters in the Aegean beyond the six-mile would be treated as a cause of war, is the most obvious example of Turkey's preventive policies and the continuation of the traditional security discourse in Turkey.

Similarly, the persistent external threat from Greece can be clearly seen in Turkey's Cyprus policy as well. As Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, former Turkish Prime Minister, pointed out "from the military and strategic perspective, any state dominant on the island [Cyprus] would have a say in "the fate of Turkey", since "if this dominant power is also the same dominant power on the islands to the west [of Turkey], Turkey would be *de facto* encircled" (Kazan 2002: 58). Turkey has always feared Greece's policies that would limit Turkey's free access to the seas, which is vital for the defense and survival of the referent object. Therefore, securitizing actors have determined Turkish foreign and security policy for the survival of the referent object against the existential threat named as Greece.

Even though the referent object is quite clear in analyzing Turkish-Greek

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<sup>26</sup> *Enosis* known as the desire of Greek Cypriots for union of Cyprus into Greece.

relations, determining the securitizing actors is more problematic due to the characteristics of the Turkish political system. Within this scope it is important to define the main actors of the decision-making process in Turkish foreign and security policy.

#### **1.4.2. Defining the Securitizing Actors in Turkey**

In terms of securitizing actors, Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde give a clear explanation about the qualifications of speakers of security. Wæver (2000: 252–253) points out, the speaker, who performs the speech act, should have “social capital” and “has to be in a position of authority.” The dramatization of an issue as an “existential threat” and call for an “emergency action” in front of an audience requires such a position of authority. Therefore, political leaders, government representatives and political elites might be considered as the securitizing actors who securitize issues through performing speech acts. Even though the complex characteristic of the bureaucracy prevents a clear distinction among actors that are contributing to the decision-making process, the topmost actors in the related units would reflect the position of the entire unit. Unlike the securitizing actors, there are also functional actors that have a secondary position in determining the issues because of their significant influences in decision-making process. Due to the limited influence of functional actors, they are never transformed into a securitizing position.

The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey adopted in 1982 defines Turkey as a parliamentary democracy, and vests the executive power and function to the President and the Council of Ministers. The president and the prime minister, who also serves as the chairperson of the Council of Ministers, are thus defined as the primary figures in the decision-making process. Nevertheless, these figures are influenced and advised by other actors within the state structure. According to Law no. 4009, The Law on

Organization and Duties of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1994)<sup>27</sup>, the Ministry is assigned to make necessary preparations and provide suggestions for determining the foreign policy of the country as well as to coordinate and implement foreign policy in accordance with the goals and principles set by the government. Therefore, the President, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs could be considered as the main securitizing actors in foreign policy decision-making processes in Turkey.

Due to the characteristics of the policymaking process in Turkey, other actors have also gained some influence in the decision-making process depending on the issue and agenda. Particularly, the military authorities are accepted as one of the determinant actors, if not so in the 2000s, in foreign and security policy decision-making processes. Philip Robins (2003: 69) reflects the *sui-generis* character of the policy-making process in Turkey as:

In Turkey, the guidelines of grand strategy, of high politics belong not to the government of the day as an expression of the popular will, but to the highest priests of Kemalism, as an expression of the ideals of Atatürk. These guardians of the sacred will consist first and foremost of the senior officer corps of the military, supplemented at a secondary level by parts of the bureaucracy, and the top diplomats in the case of the Foreign Ministry.

The military, which considered itself as the guardians of the Republic, has had an important role in shaping Turkish foreign and security policy since the foundation of the Republic. Bilgin (2007: 563) associates the crucial role of the military with its unquestioned authority over “security knowledge” and the civilians’ lack of interest in security issues. She states (2007: 563), the military’s active involvement in the formulation of the national security policy document, particularly in the post-1980 period, has influenced the security agenda in Turkey, in which the views of the military have prevailed. In fact, the central figures of the foundation process of the Republic

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<sup>27</sup> This Law was superseded by the Law No. 6004, which came into force in 07 July 2010. Sub-clauses 2(a) and 2(b) regulating the duties of the Ministry remain unchanged.

were mainly military figures, both founder and the first President of the Republic of Turkey Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and the succeeding President İsmet İnönü had military backgrounds. As Uzgel (2003: 178) points out the military has been the most influential institution in Turkish political life since 1960. Early on, the military did not play an active role in politics as the Republic was in the hands of the elites who established it (Uzgel 2003: 181).

From the 1960s onward, the military authorities have steadily expanded their autonomy and role and have successively intervened in Turkish politics. The military has always controlled the critical civilian institutions to maintain its influence in political life. For instance, until the election of Turgut Özal as president in 1989, this position was reserved for generals, or the director of the National Intelligence Unit who was appointed from the rank and file of the military (Uzgel 2003: 182). The chief of general staff's, in accordance with the Constitution's Article 117<sup>28</sup>, responsibilities are solely to the prime minister putting him at an equal status with the other members of the Council of Ministers (Özcan 2001: 16). Even, according to Özcan (2001: 16), the chief of general staff's position at the NSC furthers his position in relation to other, non-NSC, ministers and gives him a status almost equal to that of the prime minister. The military has been playing a role in government through the participation of the High Command in the NSC, which was established in 1961 and composed of the prime minister, deputy prime ministers, ministers of defense, internal affairs and foreign affairs, the chief of general staff, the commanders of the land, naval and air forces, and the general commander of the gendarmerie under the chairpersonship of the president (Heper and Güney 2000: 637). While the 1973 amendments extended the primary function of the

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<sup>28</sup> According to the Article 117 of the Constitution, "the Chief of the General Staff shall be appointed by the President of the Republic following the proposal of the Council of Ministers. His/her duties and powers shall be regulated by law. The Chief of the General Staff shall be responsible to the Prime Minister in the exercise of his/her duties and powers" (Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, 1982).

NSC to make recommendations to the government, its position was enhanced with the 1982 Constitution when its recommendations would be given priority consideration (Cizre 1997: 157).<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, the role of the secretary-general of the NSC, which was headed by a high-ranking military official until 2004, should be highlighted to understand the influence of the NSC in the decision-making process. Even though the NSC is an advisory body, in practice, the government tends to follow its suggestions closely. The secretary-general has the authority to follow up, control, direct and coordinate the implementation of the decisions taken by the NSC on behalf of the president, prime minister and the NSC (Uzgel 2003: 191-192).

It is important to highlight, at this point, the impossibility of obtaining information from the meetings of the National Security Council (NSC), one of the securitizing actors, due to confidentiality measures. The only information available about the monthly meetings of the NSC is the press releases from the institution. Although the press releases from 2003 to the present can be accessed from the NSC webpage, the researcher of this thesis applied, in accordance with the law on Right of Information Acquisition, to the NSC to access the press releases of the meetings prior to 2003. In response to the request, the NSC shared the press releases of the monthly meetings between 1996 and 2002. Press releases from the last twenty years, except for the rare examples presented below and quoted in the related chapters of this thesis, did not feature any items related to issues between Turkey and Greece. Thus, the tone of the releases can be evaluated as being more general, for example, one press release included a statement that read “the NSC has reviewed the public order and security throughout the country as well as the domestic and external developments that has influence on

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<sup>29</sup> According to the Article 118 of the Constitution, “The agenda of the National Security Council shall be drawn up by the President of the Republic taking into account the proposals of the Prime Minister and the Chief of the General Staff” (Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, 1982).



them.” Such an abstract emphasis on the “external developments/threats” and their ramifications on national security do not enable the researcher to a deeper analysis.

The NSC press releases that refer to issues related to Turkish-Greek relations are as follows:

In this meeting of the NSC, the issue related with the Kardak islets -under the Turkish sovereignty- in the Aegean Sea was discussed; and it was gladly observed that a common sense has prevailed as a result of decisive stances and remarkable efforts of all institutions and organization of the state in safeguarding Turkey’s sovereignty rights as well as our people’s mature and supportive attitudes toward national policies.<sup>30</sup> In the meeting, the issue was considered within the general context of the Aegean dispute, all other issues related with the Aegean Sea were also evaluated, and emphasis was made on the need for a peaceful resolution for the matters and the cooperation among parties in this issue (The NSC monthly meeting on 31 January 1996)

In the meeting, the current foreign policy developments were also assessed and within this context, emphasis was made on particular developments in the Northern Iraq, the Aegean and Cyprus issues. (The NSC monthly meeting on 31 October 1996)

In the meeting, the issues closely related with Turkey’s national security, and also the current foreign policy issues were reviewed; in this context, recent political and military developments in the Aegean and the Cyprus issue were reviewed (The NSC monthly meeting on 31 October 1997)

A general evaluation was made on the issues of Cyprus and the Aegean (The NSC monthly meeting on 22 August 2003).

The reason behind the vagueness of the external threat in the NSC press releases might be the natural consequence of modifications, which became explicit during the 1990s. As Bilgin (2005: 188-189) argues, the National Security Policy Document (commonly referred as the “Red Book”) was modified twice, the first changes made in 1992 and the second in 1997, and the internal threats were prioritized in Turkey’s security. In the words of the Office of the Chief of Staff, who publicized the 1997

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<sup>30</sup> The National Policy identified, in the book of “The Concept of Scope of the State” published by the NSC in 1997, as follows: national policy includes desires coming from history and matching the interests of a nation, as well as it is about the existence of a nation” (Milliyet, 28 January 1997).

amendments, “internal threats against the territorial integrity of the country and the founding principles of the republic became more grave than external threats. (Bilgin 2005: 188)” Thus, in addition to those rare examples, the thesis also utilized related newspaper coverage in order to reflect on the discourse of the secretary-general of the NSC on the relationship between Turkey and Greece.

The military’s autonomy in Turkish politics was not been questioned until the late 1990s. The challenges emanating both from the inside -Kurdish issue- and the outside - Greece and Syria- has led to the military’s growing role in conducting foreign and security policies. Another aspect of the privilege of the military was undoubtedly international developments such as the Gulf War, crisis in the Balkans among others. Following Turkey’s candidate status for the EU, which was granted in the 1999 Helsinki Summit, attempts were made to diminish the privilege and primary role of both the military and the NSC with the transformation of the Turkish political system in accordance with the EU harmonization process.<sup>31</sup>

Accordingly, the structure of the NSC has changed as part of Turkey’s accession process to the EU. The constitutional and legal amendments to Turkish law between 2001 and 2003, particularly concerning the structure of the NSC, enabled the demilitarization of the NSC (Aydın and Akgül Açıkmeşe 2007: 269-270; Özcan 2010: 30). In order to fulfill membership criteria, Turkey has changed the composition of the NSC, incorporating more civilians, including a civilian secretary general, and aligned its role as an advisory body to the government in accordance with the EU’s demands of

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<sup>31</sup> For a detail account of the impact of the EU harmonization process on civil-military relations in Turkey, see Narlı, N. (2000) “Civil-Military Relations in Turkey”. *Turkish Studies* 1 (1), 107-127; Özcan, G. (2009) “Facing its Waterloo in Diplomacy: Turkey’s Military in the Foreign Policy-Making Process”. *New Perspectives on Turkey* 40, 83-102; Karaosmanoğlu, A. L. (2011) “Transformation of Turkey’s Civil-Military Relations Culture and International Environment”. *Turkish Studies* 12 (2), 253-264; Gürsoy, Y. (2012) *Türkiye’de Sivil-Asker İlişkilerinin Dönüşümü* [Transformation of Civil-Military Relations in Turkey], İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.

ensuring civilian control over the military (Aydın and Açıkmeşe 2007: 269). The appointment of a civilian secretary general to the NSC (Ambassador Yiğit Alpogan appointed as the first civilian secretary general) for the first time in August 2004 ended the military's dominant position in the Council. The amendments hampered the authority of the NSC Secretariat to follow up, control, direct and coordinate the implementation of the NSC's recommendations on behalf of the president and the prime minister (Uzgel 2003: 191-192; Aydın and Akgül Açıkmeşe 2007: 269). Furthermore, the military's role in the preparation of the National Security Policy Document was also decreased when the government took an active role in its preparation (Özcan 2010: 30). As Özcan stressed (2010: 30) "the document was shorter in comparison to its predecessors and did not include the preparation of 'action plans' against certain countries." All these fundamental changes, which did not successfully prevent the issuance of statements from military authorities on some important foreign policy issues, had serious repercussions on Turkish foreign policy as well. Despite all the changes in its composition and its role, the NSC still remains as a securitizing actor in Turkey. As Bilgin (2007: 564) points out, the military remains as the major actor in shaping the contours of the National Security Policy Document in Turkey.

Through their declarations, the military maintained influence on political life until the mid-2000s (Karaosmanoğlu 2011, 253). After that public declarations and speeches made by the chief of general staff were rendered unwelcome in political circles, military authorities pursued a low profile and became less outspoken on foreign policy issues (Özcan 2009: 87).

Within this context, one can argue that the contours of Turkish foreign policy are drawn, under the rubric of "state policies", by the "armed" bureaucracy and its

extensions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Kaliber 2003: 217–275). As Kaliber (2003: 217-275) argues governments had no alternative than to pursue policies already formulated by the Turkish bureaucratic elite, which also includes the military authorities, especially if they were labeled “state policies” and/or “national causes”. Since military authorities have played significant roles in conducting foreign and security policy in Turkey, the chief of general staff and the NSC are going to be evaluated among the securitizing actors in the thesis, besides the president, the prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs.<sup>32</sup>

In line with this information, the thesis will analyze the official texts to understand the influence of those securitizing actors in Turkey (see Table 1). Focusing on the speech acts of elites with special reference to Greece would give insights on securitizations and desecuritizations of Greece by Turkey. In this context, the thesis only focuses on the official statements to understand the influence of discourses of securitizing actors in Turkey in regards to their understanding of Greece from a security perspective, and would enable us to observe whether there is a change or not in the rhetoric about Greece in Turkey’s security perceptions. All the official texts, which were collected from newspapers and official websites of state institutions, used in this thesis include oral and written interviews, statements, and press releases of the related actors. Since the approval by the targeted audience, which refers to the intersubjectivity of the process, is necessary to complete the securitization process, all official documents that are going to be used in this thesis should be unclassified and publicized by the

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<sup>32</sup> It is important to highlight, at this point, the characteristics of the securitizing actors, which can be simply classified within two groups such as hawks (who advocate an aggressive foreign policy stance in international politics) and doves (who prefer dialogue rather than aggression, and try to solve issues without the threat of force), might change in time. For instance, while Mümtaz Soysal (who served as the minister of foreign affairs for a very short period between 27 July 1994 and 28 November 1994), who can be evaluated as a hawk, tried to escalate tension between Turkey and Greece during his tenure, İsmail Cem, who can be evaluated as a dove, worked for creating dialogue between the two countries. It is possible to see both minister of foreign affairs’ stances/discourses in major issues between Turkey and Greece in the following sections of the thesis.

related actors during the implementation of the policies.

The acceptance by the relevant audience is a difficult task to analyze, however, as Wæver (2002: 26-7) points out, public surveys, polls and elections might be used as tools to gauge the perceptions of the public more or less accurately. Therefore, the thesis uses some public surveys as an input to measure the success of the government's policies regarding specific issues and general trends as well. However, it is important to bear in mind that the public has already given its seal of approval to the governments' acts and policies by electing its members in democratic elections. As the thesis determines the securitizing actors as the representatives of the democratically elected government, there would be a natural approval by the relevant audience. As Balzacq points out (2005: 185) "formal decision by an institution (for instance in the form of a vote by a Parliament, Security Council or Congress) that mandates the government to adopt a specific policy." Thus, the legitimacy of the governments' policies and the component of the approval by the audience will be taken for granted in this thesis as they are elected through democratic elections and the government has the natural support of the majority the citizens.

**Table 1: Securitizing Actors in Turkey (1995-2016)**

YEARS	PRESIDENTS	PRIME MINISTERS	MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS	CHIEFS OF THE GENERAL STAFF	SECRETARY GENERALS OF THE NSC		
1995	Süleyman DEMİREL 16 May 1993 - 16 May 2000	51-52. Tansu ÇİLLER 5 Oct. 1995 - 6 March 1996	Murat KARAYALÇIN 12 Dec. 1994 - 27 May 1995  Erdal İNÖNÜ 27 May 1995 - 06 Oct. 1995  A. Coşkun KIRCA 06 Oct. 1995 - 31 Oct. 1995	Gen. İsmail Hakkı KARADAYI 30 Aug. 1994 - 30 Aug. 1998	Gen. İlhan KILIÇ 17 Aug. 1995 - 27 Aug. 1997		
1996		53. A. Mesut YILMAZ 06 March 1996 - 28 June 1996	Deniz BAYKAL 31 Oct. 1995 - 06 May 1996  Emre GÖNENSAY 06 May 1996 - 28 June 1996				
1997		54. Necmettin ERBAKAN 28 June 1996 - 30 June 1997	Tansu ÇİLLER 28 June 1996 - 20 June 1997				
1998		55. Mesut YILMAZ 30 June 1997 - 11 Jan. 1999	İsmail CEM 30 June 1997 - 11 July 2002			Gen. Hüseyin KIVRIKOĞLU 30 Aug. 1998 - 28 Aug. 2002	Gen. Ergin CELASİN 27 Aug. 1997 - 24 Aug. 1999
1999		56. Bülent ECEVİT 11 Jan. 1999 - 28 May 1999					Gen. Cumhur ASPARUK 24 Aug. 1999 - 26 Aug. 2001
2000		57. Bülent ECEVİT 28 May 1999 - 19 Nov. 2002					Gen. Tuncer KILIÇ 26 Aug. 2001 - 26 Aug. 2003
2001		Ahmet Necdet SEZER 16 May 2000 - 28 Aug. 2007	58. Abdullah GÜL 19 Nov. 2002 - 12 May 2003			Şükrü Sina GÜREL 12 July 2002 - 19 Nov. 2002	Gen. Hilmi ÖZKÖK 28 Aug. 2002 - 28 Aug. 2006
2002	Yaşar YAKIŞ 19 Nov. 2002 - 14 May 2003			Amb. Yiğit ALPOGAN 1 Oct. 2004 - 16 July 2007			
2003	59-60-61. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN 14 May 2003 - 28 Aug. 2014		Abdullah GÜL 14 May 2003 - 28 Aug. 2007		Gen. Yaşar BÜYÜKANIT 28 Aug. 2006 - 28 Aug. 2008	Amb. Tahsin BURCUOĞLU 16 Nov. 2007 - 25 Jan. 2010	
2004			Ali BABACAN 29 Aug. 2007 - 02 May 2009		Gen. İlker BAŞBUĞ 28 Aug. 2008 - 27 Aug. 2010		
2005				Ahmet DAVUTOĞLU 02 May 2009 - 28 Aug. 2014			
2006			Abdullah GÜL 28 Aug. 2007 - 28 Aug. 2014	Ahmet DAVUTOĞLU 02 May 2009 - 28 Aug. 2014	Gen. Işık	Amb. Serdar KILIÇ	
2007							
2008							
2009	Abdullah GÜL 28 Aug. 2007 - 28 Aug. 2014	Ahmet DAVUTOĞLU 02 May 2009 - 28 Aug. 2014	Gen. Işık	Amb. Serdar KILIÇ			
2010							

2011				<b>KOŞANER</b> 27 Aug. 2010 - 29 July 2011	1 Apr. 2010 - 26 Apr. 2012
2012				<b>Gen. Necdet ÖZEL</b> 29 July 2011 - 18 Aug. 2015	<b>Governor Muammer TÜRKER</b> 27 Apr. 2012 - 25 Sept. 2014
2013					
2014		<b>62-63-64. Ahmet DAVUTOĞLU</b> 29 Aug. 2014 - 24 May 2016	<b>Mevlüt ÇAVUŞOĞLU</b> 29 Aug. 2014 - ...	<b>Gen. Hulusi AKAR</b> 18 Aug. 2015 - ...	<b>Governor Seyfullah HACİMÜFTÜOĞLU</b> 16 Sept. 2014 - ...
2015	<b>Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN</b> 28 Aug. 2014 - ....				
2016		<b>65. Binali YILDIRIM</b> 24 May 2016 - ...			

### 1.4.3. Defining the Forms of Desecuritization

As previously noted, Lene Hansen's four-forms of desecuritization outlined in her article entitled "*Reconstructing desecuritisation: the normative-political in the Copenhagen School and directions for how to apply it*" provides a systematic framework for empirical studies. These forms are identified by Hansen (2012: 529) as the "change through stabilization", "rearticulation", "replacement" and "silencing." This thesis will use the "change through stabilization" form of desecuritization as it fits into the rapprochement process between Turkey and Greece which started in the late 1990s.

This form derived from the détente period of the Cold War, mainly refers to "a rather slow move out of an explicit security discourse" that paved the way for "political form of engagement" which are the main characteristics of the rapprochement process in the Turkish-Greek case. Despite the political engagement among conflicting parties, the "conflict still looms in the background implies that (re)securitizations remain a possibility" (Hansen 2012: 540), which reflects the prevailing state of the relationship between Turkey and Greece.

Although Hansen (2012: 539) argues that with the disappearance of détente, this

form no longer is empirically relevant as it took place on the backdrop of the Cold War, she leaves an opening by offering cross-border minority conflicts as the new empirical study areas. This thesis argues that besides the cross-border minority conflicts, the rapprochement process in the Turkish-Greek relations can also be explained by using the form of “change through stability”.





## **2. TURKEY'S SECURITIZATIONS OF GREECE**

During the Cold War, the divergence between Turkey and Greece on several issues brought the two countries to the brink of war and threatened the stability and security of the Western Bloc. However, the prospect of taking responsibility for a war convinced leaders to contain all those disputes and avoid escalation, and all crises were diffused with the support of the US and the EU within the alliance system.

The demise of the East-West competition following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the beginning of a US dominated -with its unrivalled economic and military capabilities- unipolar system created a completely different environment in international politics. In the post-Cold War era, the security agenda widened to new issues such as environmental threats, illegal human and drug trafficking, migration, cross-border crime and etc. In addition, the new system heralded an era of inter and intrastate rivalries as a result of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. As Van Coufadakis (1996: 41) stresses, “during the Cold War, the Soviet threat provided a convenient heuristic device to explain events, to assess emerging threats, and to formulate foreign and defense policies, even though many times such simplistic explanations only distorted interpretation of events. The post-Cold War era created great uncertainty as to the role of states and their institutions.” Therefore, in the new atmosphere of the post-Cold War era, foreign and security policy making became very complicated.

The end of the Cold War had significant impact on Turkey and Greece as well. Both countries, like many others, had to reformulate their foreign and security policies in light of new security needs. First and foremost, the absence of a common threat and changes in the nature of security threats led to a re-evolution of both countries' policies. Although Greece's security policy considerations did not change entirely since Turkey

was already listed as the main security threat along with the Soviet Union; the new security environment merely heightened the Turkish threat in Greece's perception. During the Cold War, Greece felt that it could depend on the West to prevent any attack from Turkey (Nachmani 2001: 72; Moustakis and Sheehan 2002: 82). Even the reliance on the Western alliance –mainly the US and NATO- provided ineffective protection for Greece as previous experienced showed that it had a lack of any offensive capacity and deterrence against an external attack as per the Cyprus defeat (Platias 1991: 97-98; Tsakonas and Dokos 2004: 106). The Balkan crisis added another layer of insecurity to Greece along with the existing threat from the east (i.e. Turkey) (Gündoğdu 2001, 108).<sup>33</sup> Turkey felt isolated due to its uneasy start with the EU, which had rejected Turkey's application for membership in December 1989. Moreover, both Turkey and Greece felt a decline in their significance in the eyes of their Western partners as a result of the disappearance of the Soviet threat in international politics. Thus, it was unavoidable to refrain from the changes of the post-Cold War period, where many borders changed and several states were founded in the vicinity of Turkey and Greece. Those changes and Turkey's security perception were reflected in the words of the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Hikmet Çetin as follows,

Because its geopolitical and geostrategic location places Turkey in the neighbourhood of the most unstable, uncertain and unpredictable region of the world, it has turned into a frontline state faced with multiple fronts. It is at all times possible for the crises and conflicts in these regions to spread and engulf Turkey (Sezer 1994: 25).

Soon afterwards, the Gulf War had brought Turkey's strategic importance to the forefront. Turgut Özal's, the then president of the Republic of Turkey, decision to support US efforts in the first Gulf-War in 1991 by granting access to İncirlik Air Base,

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<sup>33</sup> Greek sentiment toward Turkey stemmed from the three historical traumas, as Nachmani (2001: 72) evaluates, such as the fall of Constantinople (1453); the loss of Asia Minor (1922); and the partition of Cyprus (1974).

shutting down its pipelines, and cutting off Iraqi oil exports renewed cooperation between Turkey and the US (Türkmen 2009: 113). This was a turning point in Turkey's traditional policy of caution, non-interference, and support for the status quo towards an active foreign policy, which was labeled by some scholars as "daring" policy (Müfti 1998: 48; Makovsky 2000: 92; Türkmen 2009: 119).

Although the disintegration of Yugoslavia deteriorated Greece's relations with Western allies, Greek foreign policy gradually began to include a more pragmatic dimension in the second half of the 1990s due to diplomatic isolation (Larrabee 2005: 405-410). At the beginning of the crisis in Yugoslavia, Greece was at odds with the US due to divergence about the settlement. However, the new policy line in Greek foreign policy, which was largely in harmony with the US, gained momentum with the solution-oriented Prime Minister of Greece Kostas Simitis (Larrabee 2005: 416).

In the new unstable environment of the 1990s, the two countries came across a range of subsequent issues and crises like Greece's extension of its territorial waters in the Aegean Sea to 12-miles, Turkey's decision of *casus belli* in response to Greece's demands of extension, the incident of Kardak, the S-300 missiles crisis, and the capture of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK terrorist organization, in the Embassy of Greece in Kenya. In addition, the two countries began to compete with each other to form regional stability and balance in the Balkans.

Therefore, in the post-Cold War, the tension between the two countries, as two key actors of the Western security system, remained as one of the most dangerous breaking points in Europe. As Anastasakis points out (2004: 45, emphasis added), "the West [particularly the US] feared that Greece and Turkey would become part of the Balkan problem and that any new war in the region might ignite a conflict between

those two countries.”

In this context, the following section of the thesis will focus on a myriad of challenges between the two in order to understand whether, how, by whom and to what extent Turkish decision-makers’ securitized issues relating to Greece. Hence, the focal point is representing the securitizing discourses of the decision-makers in Turkey, and giving special importance to the statements of those actors rather than focusing on bilateral relations within the logic of diplomatic history. As seen in the following sections, the main contentious issues between Turkey and Greece will be analyzed within the framework of the securitization theory to demonstrate the speech acts of securitizations of Turkish elites. After providing background information for the disputes, the thesis will give special emphasis to cases from the post-Cold War era, more specifically the period starting with the TGNA’s declaration on *casus belli*, since the thesis argues that this was the peak point of securitization in Turkish-Greek relations. The post-Cold War disagreements between the two are classified into four groups such as the disputes in the Aegean Sea with a special focus on the territorial waters and sovereignty issue over the Kardak; the Cyprus issue with a particular emphasis on the S-300 missile crisis; Greece’s support for terrorist organizations; and finally, the Greek use of the veto card during Turkey’s accession process to the EU. The analysis of the first three groups of disputes within the securitization theory shows the successful securitization of these issues; the last issue, however, was quite different than the others. As seen in this section, the securitizing actors used different tones in their statements in contrast to the first three groups of the issues.

## **2.1. The Disputes in the Aegean Sea**

The semi-enclosed Aegean Sea is located between the mainlands of Greece and Turkey,

and is connected to the closed Marmara Sea and Black Sea in the north to the open Mediterranean Sea in the south.<sup>34</sup> The Aegean Sea, which covers about 214,000 square kilometers between the latitudes 41° to 35° North and longitudes 23° to 27°/28° East, is a body of water with over 1800 islands, islets and rocks, where only a hundred of those islands are inhabited while the rest are uninhabitable due to their unsuitable conditions (Başeren 2006: 5-7). As a passage between closed northern seas and the open Mediterranean Sea, the Aegean is not only vital to Turkey, but also to the littoral states of the Black Sea.

As the two littoral states of the Aegean, Turkey and Greece have been at odds for almost five decades. The discords in the Aegean Sea have constituted another hot topic between the two countries alongside with the Cyprus issue. The main sources of the contention are related to the sovereignty rights over the islands, islets and rocks in the Aegean, delimitation of maritime boundaries and the continental shelf, the breadth of territorial waters, control of air space, and Greek fortification of Eastern Aegean islands. In essence, “conflict is not the territory itself, but mainly about control over the vital area of the Aegean Sea” (Siegl 2002: 41). In the eyes of Turkish decision-makers, Greece’s claims regarding extending its territorial waters/air space in the Aegean Sea would effectively turn the Aegean into a “Greek lake” (Bölükbaşı 1992: 38). Turkey’s persistent perception of an existential threat emanating from Greece to its security and to the survival of the referent object might be seen in the statements of the state elites. As Ambassador Şükrü Elekdağ, former undersecretary of the ministry of foreign affairs, pointed out,

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<sup>34</sup> The enclosed and semi-enclosed seas are defined in the Article 122 and 123 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982) as, “a gulf, basin or sea surrounded by two or more States and connected to another sea or the ocean by a narrow outlet or consisting entirely or primarily of the territorial seas and exclusive economic zones of two or more coastal States.” Although Turkey is not a signatory of the UNCLOS, it used the term of “semi-enclosed” in order to identify the Aegean, for the first time, in its note to Greece on 27 February 1974 and has continued to date (Başeren 2006: 10).

The military equipment trend of Greece between 1989-1995 as well as the defence expenditures showed its intention to change the balance of air and naval power in the Aegean in its favor, which are detrimental to the vital interests of Turkey (Elekdağ 1996: 35-37).

In one of statements the Deputy Chief of the General Staff General Ahmet Çörekçi also said that,

It is observed that Greece is in a simultaneous preparation for becoming sovereign over the Aegean and annexing North Cyprus. A miscalculation would make war inevitable. Turkish Armed Forces is standing ready to protect the country's interests, to neutralize the threat" (Milliyet, 1 July 1995).

Turkish securitizing actors have usually feared that Greek policies would cut off Turkey's free access to the seas -vital for its existence- through the Aegean that connects the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea via the Turkish straits of Dardanelle and Bosphorus. This was a continuation of the tradition security discourse, defined by Bilgin (2005: 183) as "fear of abandonment and fear of loss territory" and the assumption of "geographical determinism". As clearly seen in the statement by Elekdağ, any changes in the regional balance of power was perceived as an existential threat, in his words, "detrimental to the vital interests of Turkey." While his statement did not include any "emergency action" in face of the threat, such an emphasis can be observed in the statement of the deputy chief of general staff. In addition to General Ahmet Çörekçi's emphasis on the existential threat, as he perceived the Greek preparations against the "country's interests", he also dramatized the issue by stressing an "inevitable war" as a result of Greek attempts. General Ahmet Çörekçi raised emergency actions in order to neutralize the threat posed by Greece. Although the statement by Ambassador Elekdağ did not contain necessary components of a securitization, the statement by General Ahmet Çörekçi, as the securitizing actor, contained all components such as "emergency action" and "existential threat." As explained on pages 50 and 51, the "approval of the audience" for a successful

securitization, employed by the securitization theory, is apparent in these cases because of the mentioned reasons.

Since the mid-1960s, a series of disagreements in the Aegean Sea have created a potential conflict between Turkey and Greece and this continued with developments in international law, and the collapse of mutual trust between the two countries mainly because of the disputes over Cyprus. Despite the fact that the borders between Turkey and Greece were set by the Treaty of Lausanne, developments in bilateral relations, as well as international politics, woke up a dormant dispute.<sup>35</sup> In the words of Tözün Bahçeli (2004: 98), “the equilibrium established by the Treaty of Lausanne in the Aegean did not pose any large problems for the two neighbors for half a century.” However, the differences over sovereignty rights and delimitation issues in the Aegean began to damage the bilateral relationship between Turkey and Greece.

The developments in the 1990s were not independent from the history of major issues in the Aegean Sea. Although the thesis will have special focus on securitization attempts after the post-Cold War period, the main disputes between the two countries will also be analyzed within the framework of the securitization theory. By doing so, the thesis will help to comprehend the root causes of the contention between Turkey and Greece as well as to see whether there is consistency in the statements of decision-makers in Turkey on the very same issues. In this context, the following sections will focus on the historical background of the contentious issues between the two countries within two categories such as delimitation issues and sovereignty rights. While the first category will focus on issues regarding the extent of territorial waters and airspace and the breadth of the continental shelf; the second category will cover the sovereignty over

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<sup>35</sup> The Treaty of Lausanne referred as the Lausanne Peace Treaty as well.

the islands and islets along with the fortification of the islands in the Aegean Sea. In particular, this thesis will give special focus to issues pertaining to territorial waters and sovereignty over the certain islands and islets as both caused major disputes in the 1990s between the two countries.

### **2.1.1. Delimitation Issues in the Aegean Sea**

#### **2.1.1.1. The Question of Continental Shelf**

New developments in international law regarding the definition of “continental shelf”, which was defined in the Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf of 1958 and entered into force in 1964, added a new dimension to the existing disputes between the two.<sup>36</sup> As a signatory of the Geneva Convention, Greece claimed exclusive offshore mineral rights to about two-thirds of the Aegean and issued a number of licenses to petroleum companies for exploration in the Aegean during the 1960s, during which oil reserves were discovered near the Greek island of Thassos (Hale 2002: 159, İnan and Acer 2004: 29).

In response, Turkey conducted its first seismic research activity in 1968, however, with the intensification of Greek activities in the Aegean, it also decided to grant license to the state owned Turkish Petroleum Company (TPAO) in 1973 for exploration permits in 27 points covering the Aegean -along with the Marmara Sea-

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<sup>36</sup> According to the Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf (United Nations Treaty Series 1964: 311-321), continental shelf referred “(a) to the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas adjacent to the coast but outside the area of the territorial sea, to a depth of 200 meters or, beyond that limit, to where the depth of the superjacent waters admits of the exploitation of the natural resources of the said areas; (b) to the seabed and subsoil of similar submarine areas adjacent to the coasts of islands.” While Greece signed up the new convention, Turkey refused to be a party of that convention due to its concerns about the islands in the Aegean Sea.



that did not exceed the median line between Turkish and Greek mainlands (Bölükbaşı 2004: 239-240, Hamilton and Salton 2012: 41).<sup>37</sup>

While the two countries had no delimitation agreements in the Aegean Sea, both have had contradicting claims on the continental shelf. Traditionally, Greece argued that this is a legal issue and should be resolved with the adjudication of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in accordance with the 1958 Geneva Convention and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea. Greece claimed that most of the continental shelf belongs to itself because “Greece is a state consisting of mainland and its islands” and the situation should be evaluated under the international law of the territorial integrity and indivisibility of the state (Firat 2010: 457). Moreover, Greece only recognizes the continental shelf issue as a legitimate dispute and does not accept Turkey’s claims on other issues (Rumelili 2008:181). In contrast, Turkey preferred bilateral negotiations over the continental shelf and all other interrelated Aegean issues instead of the mediation of the ICJ, because it perceived the issue as a political one rather than a legal question. Turkey argued that much of the continental shelf is geologically an extension of the Anatolian mainland, and the islands located on the natural prolongation of Anatolia cannot have a continental shelf (Aydın 1997: 118; Athanassopoulou 1997: 77; Firat 2010: 457). Therefore, delimitation should be on an equal basis considering the special circumstances of this semi-enclosed sea.

The Geneva Convention set the boundaries of the continental shelf between the neighboring countries in its Article 6 as;

“Where the same continental shelf is adjacent to the territories of two or more States whose coasts are opposite each other, the boundary of the continental shelf appertaining to such States shall be determined by agreement between

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<sup>37</sup> On 10 November 1973, Turkish government published an official map showing the 27 points granted to the TPAO (Turkish Official Newspaper, 1 November 1973).

them. In the absence of agreement, and unless another boundary line is justified by special circumstances, the boundary is the median line, every point of which is equidistant from the nearest points of the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea of each State is measured.

Where the same continental shelf is adjacent to the territories of two adjacent States, the boundary of the continental shelf shall be determined by agreement between them. In the absence of agreement, and unless another boundary line is justified by special circumstances, the boundary shall be determined by application of the principle of equidistance from the nearest points of the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea of each State is measured.”

Although a conflict erupted in May 1974 when a Turkish survey ship, the *Çandarlı*, carried out seismic research in the previously granted areas to the TPAO; developments in Cyprus later that year temporarily pushed the Aegean tension into the background (Hale 2002: 160; Bölükbaşı 2004: 240). However, during this period, the two countries exchanged a large number of diplomatic notes. On 28 January 1975, the Karamanlis administration proposed that the two countries apply to the ICJ in order to solve disagreements on this issue, whereas the Turkish side replied on 6 February 1975, as “in principal it favourably considers the Greek government’s proposal to refer the dispute of delimitation of the Aegean continental shelf jointly to the ICJ” (Bölükbaşı 2004: 242; Heraclides 2010: 83). The subsequent meetings between foreign ministers and prime ministers ended up with a joint communique by Süleyman Demirel, the then prime minister, and Constantine Karamanlis on 31 May 1975. Both sides agreed to solve outstanding problems through negotiations and take the continental shelf issue to the ICJ, or in the words of the Brussels Communique, “they had decided that the problems dividing the two countries should be resolved peacefully through the negotiations and the issue of the Aegean continental shelf through ICJ” (Bölükbaşı 2004: 243). However, then Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel backtracked due to domestic pressure, and declared on 30 November 1975 that substantial negotiations

should first take place and the ICJ option should be the last resort, if needed (Heraclides 2010: 86).

Disputes regarding the potential oil reserves in the Aegean Sea has continued to be a source of threat between Turkey and Greece. The relations stiffened and tensions increased at different times such as in 1976 and 1987 due to issues related to the continental shelf.

The expert meetings between Turkey and Greece started in Berne at the end of January 1976. In the aftermath of two meetings (31 January-2 February and 19-20 June 1976) among experts, which proved fruitless, both sides insisted on their traditional arguments. A potential crisis between Turkey and Greece flared up in the summer of 1976 when Turkey sent a seismic research ship, the *Hora* (or *Sismik I*), accompanied by warships, in order to carry out scientific research in the disputed regions west of Lesbos (*Midilli*) island between 6 and 8 August 1976. While the Greek armed forces went on full alert, some leaders proposed extreme measures, such as Andreas Papandreou, the leader of PASOK (Pan-Hellenic Socialist Party), who called for the sinking of the *Hora* which would have undoubtedly precipitated a war; Karamanlis, on his part, reacted calmly and preferred a double recourse to both the UNSC and the ICJ (Clogg 1992: 176; Heraclides 2010: 88). As Bölükbaşı (2004: 260) points out, the Greek application to the UN Security Council constituted the only occasion in the long history of Turkish-Greek differences over the Aegean.

On 10 August 1976, Ambassador George Papoulias, the permanent representative of Greece to the UN, issued a letter to the president of the UN Security Council to request an urgent meeting on the grounds that “following recent repeated flagrant violations by Turkey of the sovereign rights of Greece on its continental shelf

in the Aegean, a dangerous situation has been created threatening international peace and security” (UNSC 1976a). In response, the UNSC adopted Resolution 395, dated 25 August 1976, which called upon parties “to resume direct negotiations” leading to a “mutually acceptable solution”, and also invited Turkey and Greece to continue “appropriate judicial means, in particular the ICJ, are qualified to make the settlement of any remaining legal differences” (UNSC 1976b).

The Greek unilateral recourse to the ICJ on the same day, on 10 August 1976, requested the services of the ICJ for “interim provisional measures of protection in order to preserve the respective right of the parties” and “to call both Greece and Turkey to refrain from any exploration activity or any scientific research” unless with the consent of the other and the final judgement of the ICJ. On 11 September 1976, the ICJ rejected the Greek request on both counts. While the ICJ denied (in its decision of 11 September 1976) the Greek request for interim measures on the grounds that there was no sufficient risk of irreparable damage to Greece’s rights; it also decided, by 12 votes to 2, two years later, on 19 December 1978, that it did not have jurisdiction to entertain the Greek application on disputes between Turkey and Greece over the continental shelf (İnan and Acer 2004: 31; Bölükbaşı 2004: 267-268; Fırat 2010: 456).

Following the UNSC Resolution 395, both sides decided to resume bilateral dialogue that led to the signing of the “Berne Agreement on Continental Shelf” on 11 November 1976 between the two countries.<sup>38</sup> After a series of meetings, parties agreed to ten-points which contained principles for the negotiations that would resume in secrecy in order to “reach an agreement based on mutual consent regarding the delimitation of the continental shelf.” Moreover, both parties would also refrain from

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<sup>38</sup> The document known as the “Berne Communiqué” in Greece in order to downgrade the significance of the document, whereas Turkey called it “Berne Declaration” in an attempt to upgrade its significance (Heraclides 2010: 90). The agreement is still valid and binding for the two countries.

any initiative or act concerning the continental shelf. According to the sixth and seventh clauses of the Berne Agreement (1976):

6. Both parties undertake to abstain from any initiative or act relating to the Continental Shelf of the Aegean Sea which might prejudice the negotiations.

7. Both parties undertake, as far as their bilateral relations are concerned, to abstain from any initiative or act which would tend to discredit the other party.

The positive atmosphere continued with a summit between then Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit, who had recently taken over the government from Süleyman Demirel, and his Greek counterpart Constantine Karamanlis. The two leaders met in Montreux on 11-12 March 1978 to build trust between the two countries. As Heraclides (2010: 96) stresses, “Montreux is unique and of considerable value, for it was the first and in fact the last time that the leaders of two countries discussed, at length and in detail, the Aegean dispute as a whole.” Two countries resumed *ad referendum* talks at different levels ranging from expert levels to secretary generals to foreign ministers for three and a half years. During the period of July 1978 and September 1981, some 14 meetings were held, eight of them scheduled, at the secretary general level and the parties touched upon all issues with a central focus on the continental shelf (Heraclides 2010: 98-100).

However, the Montreux spirit, which had created hopes towards normalization of relations and resolving disputes, dramatically collapsed in late 1981. There were several reasons that fundamentally changed the shape of long-term relations of the two countries such as the victory of Andreas Papandreou’s, who regularly criticized the resumption of talks with Turkey, PASOK in the general elections on 18 October 1981, and the accession of Greece to the European Economic Community (EEC) as the tenth member state on 1 January 1981.

Meanwhile, after the failure of the dialogue on the Aegean dispute, Turkey declared Greece to be the primary threat in its updated National Defence Concept Paper (Firat 2010: 457). Likewise, in December 1984, the Papandreou government also announced that Turkey would be regarded as Greece's main external threat in its new defence doctrine, following an incident on 8 March 1984 when five Turkish warships fired upon a Greek destroyer patrolling the Aegean (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 23). Despite the fragility of the relationship between Turkey and Greece as well as the Greek government's reservations regarding Turkey, Turgut Özal, the new prime minister of Turkey showed his willingness to start the dialogue channels between the two countries. Turgut Özal's approach to foreign policy was mainly driven by economic interests rather than focusing on problems. This is the reason that he extended an "olive branch" to the Greek government with his overtures ranging from lifting the visa requirement for Greek citizens visiting Turkey to calling for an agreement on cooperation in order to enhance trade between the two countries to granting some permissions to the Greek minority (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 23-24; Heraclides 2010: 118). Despite all his efforts to put aside all problems and start a dialogue between Turkey and Greece, his Greek counterpart Papandreou continued his tough line.

Another crisis erupted in the Aegean in March 1987, due to a series of misunderstandings regarding oil exploration. When Greece announced the purchase of shares of the Canadian-led North Aegean Petroleum Company (NAPC), which had active drilling permission in the Aegean, on 18 February, in order to carry out oil explorations outside of Greece's territorial waters (more specifically the areas adjacent to Thassos Island), Turkey also issued a license on 25 March to the state-owned Turkish Petroleum Company for explorations in the areas under dispute (Aydın 1997: 118; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 24-25; Heraclides 2010: 120-121). Turkey considered Greece's attempts

as a violation of the Bern Agreement. In one of the statements by Yalım Eralp, the spokesman of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is pointed out that Turkey opposed Greek attempts, which were in violation of the Berne Agreement, as follows:

Greece's oil exploration activities beyond its continental shelf, until the signature of a delimitation agreement between the two countries on continental shelf, is a violation of the Bern Agreement of 1976, which suggested to abstain from such behaviors. So far, Turkey has follow the Bern Agreement with maximum sensitivity and abstain from any initiatives relating to the continental shelf. In this context, Greece should immediately stop its violations. Otherwise, Turkey would take all necessary precautions in order to protect its rights and interests in the Aegean Sea (The Directorate General of Press and Information, 5 March 1987).

Following Greece's oil exploration activities outside Greek territorial waters, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the statement of the spokesman, warned Greek officials of their breach of the Berne Agreement by emphasizing "Turkey's rights and interests in the Aegean Sea". As reflected in Eralp's statement, Greece's activities had a negative impact on Turkey's rights and interests on the continental shelf issue in the Aegean Sea, thus Turkey called for an "immediate" stop of Greek activities. In terms of the emergency measures, Yalım Eralp urged that if Greece continues its activities, "all necessary precautions" would be taken by the Turkish government. The statement included an existential threat as well as emergency measures, thus it can be evaluated as a securitization of the issue. As mentioned on pages 50 and 51, the thesis considers the approval by the audience, which is an essential component of securitization, as being taken for granted.

The tension increased between the two countries soon afterwards Turkey sent the Turkish seismic research vessel, *Piri Reis*, to conduct research off the coasts of the Greek islands of Lemnos (*Limni*), Lesbos (*Midilli*) and Samothrace (*Semadirek*), which are considered by Greece to be in its own continental shelf (Aydın 1997: 118; Ker-

Lindsay 2007: 25).<sup>39</sup> In response, then Prime Minister of Greece Andreas Papandreu issued a harsh warning which included use of military force to halt the vessel, which was considered by Turkish officials as unacceptable and triggered an according response. (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 25; Heraclides 2010: 120). The statement of General Güven Ergenç, the secretary-general of the Turkish Chief of Staff reflected Turkey's stance on the issue. During the crisis, he announced that:

The air force, navy and army are in a state of alert. ... If there is an attack it is clear what has to be done. An attack on a warship is a cause for war (*New York Times*, 28 March 1987).

In addition, Prime Minister of Turkey Turgut Özal also stated in an interview to the BBC2 television on 27 March 1987, that,

If (Greeks) take an action for the oil exploration in the international seas, it would be our natural right to sail to the international seas, even if not the same place, and make research activities as well. But if they touch our ship by arguing that international sea is under our control, it would be a *casus belli* (The Directorate General of Press and Information, 28 March 1987 emphasis in original)

Even though the statements by Secretary-General of the Chief of General Staff General Güven Ergenç and Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal did not contain the necessary components of a securitization, their statements are important to see the security grammar that utilized when they emphasized "*casus belli*" in case of Greek interference to the Turkish ships that were conducting oil exploration in international waters.

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<sup>39</sup> This was the one of the most serious tensions between the two countries since 1974. The crisis was also important in terms of the balance of power between hawks and doves in Turkish decision-making mechanism as well. As reflected to the Turkish media few years after the crisis, the tension created by Minister of State Hasan Celal Güzel in 1987 in the absence of both Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal, who was out of the country for a heart surgery, and Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Vahit Halefoğlu, who was abroad for a meeting as well. Turkish Minister of State Hasan Celal Güzel unveiled his strategy, during the crisis of 1987, in an interview by saying "We [Turkey] missed a historical opportunity when Turgut Özal stepped in. If we [Turkey] could have put more pressure, Greece would never sail in the Aegean Sea anymore. The U-turn on this issue was against to the Turkey's national interest. But, unfortunately, Turgut Özal run counter to it and destroyed our plans" (*Cumhuriyet*, 9 July 1994, emphasis added).



The controversy between the two was defused once again with the encouragement of the US and NATO. On 28 March 1987, Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal guaranteed that Turkish ships would avoid any exploratory activities outside Turkish territorial waters if Greece did not enter the disputed waters (*New York Times*, 29 March 1987).

Soon after the crisis the two prime ministers, Turgut Özal and his Greek counterpart Andreas Papandreou, met at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 1988 with the aim of establishing a dialogue mechanism between two countries in order to prevent further crises. The Davos Process was a significant deviation from Papandreou's traditional "no-dialogue policy" vis-à-vis Turkey (Aydın 1997: 121; Tsakonas 2010: 46-47). Within the framework of the Davos process, which might be evaluated as an attempt to reduce tension between Turkey and Greece as well as create a confidence building process, two countries signed the Memorandum of Understanding on 27 May 1988, and Guidelines for the prevention of accidents and incidents on the high seas and airspace on 8 September 1988 to create mutual trust in relations (Aksu 2001: 4; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 27).

Following the two crises over the continental shelf, first in 1976 and later in 1987, the leaders of the two countries solved the crises by effectively using dialogue channels. Even though the Davos Process is evaluated as the third rapprochement process by several scholars and "as the fore-runner of the more recent rapprochement between two countries", (Öniş and Yılmaz 2001: 2; Kutlay 2009) this thesis considers the Davos Process as a short-term cooperation initiative engineered by the Prime Minister of Turkey Turgut Özal that quickly crumbled by the end of 1989. Although some progress was made in developing a set of confidence building measures regarding

accident prevention in international waters of the Aegean, the uncooperative attitude of public opinion and the press, increasing domestic pressure and attack from the opposition parties quickly caused the loss of momentum of the “Davos spirit” (Aydın 1997: 121; Rumelili 2004: 5). Even the Greek-Turkish Business Council, which was founded under the spirit of the Davos Meetings to deepen economic ties between the two countries, remained inactive as well (Liargovas 2003: 133; Oğuzlu 2004: 95; Heraclides 2010: 151). In the words of Tsarouhas (2009: 44), “business attempts at cooperation were kept in the shadow of the complex political agenda.”

The dispute over the continental shelf between Turkey and Greece remains politically and legislatively unresolved. Like the all other problems in the Aegean, both parties have been looking for compromises instead of trying to come to a consensus on the issues (Aksu 2002:111). Therefore, these fundamental issues would continue to be the weak spot in their relations and would trigger both countries into the conflict.

#### **2.1.1.2. The Breadth of Territorial Waters**

The principles regarding the breadth of territorial waters were set by the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, which gave littoral states a three nautical mile limit. In 1936, Greece unilaterally extended its territorial waters from three to six nautical miles, during a prevailing atmosphere of friendship between Turkey and Greece. At the time, Turkey did not perceive Greece’s unilateral extension as hostility against itself. Turkey, for its part, extended its territorial waters to six nautical miles on 15 May 1964, when relations between two countries were tense because of the Cyprus issue.

As late as the 1960s, the two countries were not at odds since both countries held similar positions regarding the breadth of the territorial waters. Until 1958, at the

first UN Conference on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS I) both Greece and Turkey supported the three-mile limit, despite the fact that Greece had already extended its territorial waters to six nautical miles. Even at the UNCLOS II, held from 17 March to 26 April 1960, Greece opposed a 12 nautical mile limit and favored the six mile by arguing that extending the breadth of territorial waters would not be in the interests of the international community, as it would close seas such as the Aegean from international navigation, hinder trade and cause friction (Bölükbaşı 2004: 129-130; Heraclides 2010: 181-182).

However, in 1974, Greece significantly changed its position regarding the breadth of territorial waters and altered its position to favor the 12 nautical mile limit. The significant change in position coincided with the increased tensions between the two countries over the Cyprus issue. During that time, the early signals of securitization of the issue in Turkey appeared with the letter Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil sent to US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on 15 April 1976. In his letter, Turkish minister of foreign affairs, as one of the securitizing actors in Turkey, stated that:

... It is obvious that the Greek government's fundamental aim is to create a *fait accompli* by extending its territorial waters to 12 miles, and by doing so, gaining a political victory over Turkey. Such a move might cause the Aegean Sea to be transformed into a Greek lake, and as a result it would *de facto* abolish Turkey's inherent and traditional rights in this sea [the Aegean]. This situation will give Turkey no choice, but to consider this development as *casus belli*. ... (Milliyet, 11 February 1996 emphasis added).

Following the changes in Greece's position in favor of 12 miles in the territorial water limits, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Çağlayangil urged the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger of the *threat* posed by the Greek government's policies, and pointed out its negative implications on Turkey's rights and interests in the Aegean Sea.

Any Greek political victory in the Aegean would landlocked Turkey with no access to high seas, which is an *existential threat* to Turkey's national security. The Greek government's intention to extend its territorial waters was also *dramatized* by the Turkish minister of foreign affairs with a special emphasis on the "Greek Lake." In his letter, Çağlayangil urged the US secretary of state about the *emergency measures* that would be taken by the Turkish government and that it considered Greek policy as *casus belli*. The letter included a direct and explicit call for emergency measures by going beyond the established rules and lifting it above normal politics by emphasizing "no choice" other than taking necessary measures. The discourse of this letter clearly demonstrates the change in the rhetoric of securitizing actors in parallel with the changes in the Greek government's policies. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the representative of a democratically elected government, naturally takes the approval by the relevant audience, which is an essential component of the securitization, therefore, this letter reflected a successful securitization. The beginning of the early changes regarding the breadth of the territorial waters became more explicit in the discourses of the securitizing actors' in the 1990s.

The issue continued without any serious crisis because both sides refrained from any confrontation until the approval of the UN Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on 10 December 1982. The convention added a new dimension to the ongoing dispute as Article 3 of the UNCLOS confirmed that "every state has the right to establish the breadth of its territorial sea up to a limit not exceeding 12 nautical miles, measured from baselines determined in accordance with this Convention" (UNCLOS 1982). Greece, as a signatory of the Convention, was one of the champions of the 12 nautical mile limit, whereas Turkey opposed the idea of 12-mile limit in enclosed or semi-closed seas like the Aegean (Heraclides 2010: 182; Firat 2010: 453-454).

Two countries have different positions in terms of breadth of territorial waters. Greece advocates that every state has a right to establish the 12-mile limit of territorial waters as confirmed by Article 3 of the UNCLOS. Thus, the determination of the width of territorial waters both for Greek mainland and the Greek islands emanated from UNCLOS and cannot be restricted (Aydın 1997: 116; Fırat 2010: 454). In contrast Turkey claims that the limits determined in UNCLOS constitutes a maximum limit and cannot be an automatic unilateral act (Fırat 2010: 454; Heraclides 2010: 184). The semi-closed Aegean Sea, with a great number of Greek islands, has special geographic features therefore any unilateral extension would have adverse effect on rights and interests of Turkey with respect to navigational freedoms and sovereignty (Bölükbaşı 2004: 186; Fırat 2010: 454; Heraclides 2010: 184). Under the existing 6-mile limit, Greece controls approximately 43,5 percent of the Aegean Sea and Turkey 7,5 percent, leaving the high seas with some 49 percent. If the 12-mile limit applied in the Aegean Sea, Greek territorial waters would increase to 71,5 percent while Turkey's share would have 8,8 percent and the high seas would be reduced to 19,7 percent (Wilson 1979/1980: 36-37). This would drastically limit Turkish vessels access to the high seas and Turkey would become landlocked with no access to high seas since all Turkish vessels would be obliged to pass through Greek territorial waters in order to reach the Mediterranean (Athanasopoulou 1997: 86; Aydın 1997: 116-117; Heraclides 2010: 184).

From 1982 onwards, the Greek government made several statements claiming its right to adopt the UNCLOS' provisions, and the Turkish government, in response, consistently reminded its objection to a unilateral extension by Greece, which would be a violation of international law, and Turkey would consider it as an unfriendly act. After the latest crisis in 1987 over the continental shelf issue (as mentioned in the previous

section), the tension between Turkey and Greece increased once again when the UNCLOS entered into force on 16 November 1994.

The possibility of Greece's extension of its territorial waters into 12 nautical mile right after the UNCLOS became effective reflected to statements of the Turkish decision-makers. For instance, in an interview Mümtaz Soysal, the then minister of foreign affairs, answered a question regarding who will benefit in case of a potential conflict between Turkey and Greece as follows:

In case of a conflict we know who will be more advantageous. However, we think that such benefit does not befitting to us. We can defeat Greece. But this mean war, people would die. It is not right to ask for it, so we do not want it either. ... we want to provide peace by saying we will fight in order to defend our rights. Extension beyond six mile is a *casus belli* (*Cumhuriyet*, 15 November 1994).

Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Mümtaz Soysal's statement was a continuation of Turkish official position in case of an extension attempt by the Greek government. His statement includes both defiant and prudent tones together. While he warned Greece about Turkey's capability to defeat it in case of an armed conflict in order to defend Turkey's rights, he also made an emphasis to peace as well as Turkey's hesitancy towards a conflict.

A day before the UNCLOS became effective, both Turkish and Greek air and naval exercises, code-named *Denizkurdu 2-94* (Sea Wolf 2-94) and *Niriis-94* respectively, took place in the Aegean Sea at the same time. The maneuver plans of the two countries' exercises overlapped with each other, however the exercises completed without any incident (*Cumhuriyet*, 15 November 1994).

The traditional perception of Turkey inflamed once more when the Greek Parliament ratified the UNCLOS on 31 May 1995, that gave Greece the right to extend

its territorial waters from six to twelve miles (Athanasopoulou 1997: 76; Müfti 1998: 34; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 29; Grigoriadis 2011: 129). The Greek government viewed limiting territorial waters to six naval miles as a threat to territorial continuity in the Eastern Aegean and to the links between the islands and the Greek mainland due to the geographically dispersed character of the Greek islands (Siegl 2002: 41). In contrast, Turkey, which refused to sign the convention and declared itself as a “persistent objector”, contended that Greece’s demand regarding extending its territorial waters to twelve nautical miles would virtually sever Turkey’s maritime communication with high seas, and would enclose Turkey (Aydın 1997: 116; Siegl 2002: 41). Turkey’s official position regarding such a unilateral extension was the adoption of a verbal declaration by the Turkish parliament in June 1995 that stated Greece’s extension of territorial waters beyond 6 nautical miles to be a *casus belli*.

When the early signals came from the Greek Parliament regarding the ratification of the UNCLOS, Turkish decision-makers made relatively calm statements on the issue. For instance, Murat Karayalçın, Turkish minister of foreign affairs, stated: “*We are closely observing Greece’s attempts, however the current situation does not necessitate any concrete reactions yet*” (Milliyet, 1 January 1995). However, after Greece’s ratification of the UNCLOS, Turkey, which was not a signatory of the UNCLOS, changed its stance considerably.

In response to Greece’s attempt, the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) unanimously agreed on the declaration on 8 June 1995. In the official announcement of the resolution by the TGNA stated that:

While it [TGNA] is hoped that the government of Greece will not decide to expand its territorial waters in the Aegean beyond six miles in a fashion which will disrupt the balance established in [the Treaty of] Lausanne. It [TGNA] is

decided that all powers, including ones that would be deemed military necessary, to be given to the Turkish government in order to safeguard and defend the vital interests of our country in such a case; and to announce this to the Greek and world public opinion with a friendly sentiment (Milliyet, 9 June 1995, emphasis added).

With this declaration, the TGNA granted to government the right to take all necessary measures known as “*casus belli*.”

The official statement by the TGNA is important since it includes the components of a successful securitization. The Greek attempt to expand its territorial waters was accepted as an existential threat to Turkey’s vital interests by the TGNA. By disrupting the system that was established by the Treaty of Lausanne, Greece was trying to change the status quo in the Aegean Sea, which is a direct threat against Turkey’s sovereignty and security. The wording of the statement moved the issue out of the normal bargaining process and granted the Turkish government to take emergency measures “including military ones” in order to protect and defend the vital interests of the country. Even though there is an emphasis of a “friendly sentiment”; the warning about taking necessary actions in case of a Greek attempt was a direct outcome of the securitized discourse of the TGNA. It is possible to evaluate natural approval by the relevant audience in the decisions taken by the TGNA, since it is composed of democratically elected representatives and the members of the Council of Ministers.

The securitizing actors continued their statements in a similar tone even after the TGNA’s declaration. For instance, Turkish Armed Forces reiterated the emergency measures in case of threat by stating that “any situation that breaks the status quo in the Aegean Sea would make a potential war unavoidable” in a press briefing by the representative of the Turkish Armed Forces (Milliyet, 23 July 1995). Likewise, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Erdal İnönü stated that “Turkey would see Greek



enforcement of the treaty as a hostile act”, after saying “[I do] not expect Greece to extend its waters, and hoping to hold talks on the topic” (*New York Times*, 2 June 1995, emphasis added). In response to a Greek accusation at the level of the UN Secretary General, the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations Ambassador İnal Batu issued a letter which was sent to the UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali on 22 June 1995 to share Turkey’s concerns about Greek intentions regarding the Aegean Sea as well as its determination not to allow any violations in the territorial waters. In his letter Ambassador İnal Batu stated that:

... Turkey would not hesitate to take necessary precautions based on the developments, and it is determinant to protect its rights and interests, including the preserve the status-quo in the Aegean Sea, from *fait accompli* attempts (The Directorate General of Press and Information, 23 June 1995).

The points that were made in the letter were a continuation of the previous discourse of the securitizing actors. As the high-ranking official of Turkey to the United Nations, Ambassador İnal Batu’s statement clearly reflected the official position of the Turkish government, and Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The emphasis on the existential threat mainly posed by the “Greek *fait accompli* attempts” through extending its territorial waters was once more raised by Ambassador İnal Batu to remind the measures that would be taken by the government. The existential threat against the referent object’s rights and interests was also pointed out in the letter. The discourse in the letter clearly showed the rhetoric of securitization, which previously became explicit with the Turkish Parliament declaration about *casus belli*.

In addition to the declaration and statements, Turkish Armed Forces carried out military exercises in the Aegean Sea, which were called Efes-95 and Denizkurdu-1/95, right after the ratification of the UNCLOS in the Greek Parliament. Greek officials accused Turkey of increasing tensions in the Aegean Sea by retaliation; however,

Turkish Armed Forces officials denied the Greek allegations and emphasized that those exercises were scheduled in advanced. A Turkish Ministry Official stated “The exercise is a scheduled one which has been advised to all countries concerned long before. There is nothing about it to escalate tension.” (*New York Times*, 2 June 1995).

The contention over the breadth of territorial waters and the status of the islands, islets and rocks in the Aegean brought parties face to face in the following years as well. One particular incident was when a Turkish ship named *Figen Akat* caused a serious crisis between Turkey and Greece on 25 December 1995 when the ship ran aground in the Aegean Sea. This crisis constitutes another significant case-study for the thesis in order to show the continuation of securitization in Turkey. Therefore, it is worth examining the background, reasons and the events that followed in a different section after focusing on two other disputes between Turkey and Greece in the Aegean Sea: the airspace issue and the (de)militarization of the Aegean islands.

### **2.1.1.3. The Airspace of the Aegean**

Like the divergences about maritime issues, Turkey and Greece have been at odds since 1974 regarding the national airspace and the Flight Information Region (FIR).<sup>40</sup> According to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation (1944), “every state has complete and exclusive sovereignty over the airspace above its territory” which shall be deemed to be the land areas and territorial waters. On 6 September 1931, Greece extended its airspace from 3-mile to 10-mile with a presidential decree, despite the fact that the limit of its territorial waters was 3-mile at that time. According to the presidential decree (1931);

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<sup>40</sup> According to the Annex 2 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation entitled “Rules of the Air” dated July 2005, the definition of the flight information region (FIR) is “an airspace defined dimensions within which flight information service and alerting service are provided.”

... The extent of the territorial waters referred to in Article 2 of Act No. 5017<sup>41</sup> shall be fixed at ten nautical miles from the coast of the State. The Minister of Aviation shall be responsible for publishing and giving effect to this Decree.

However, as mentioned in the previous section, Greece unilaterally fixed its breadth of territorial waters from three to six nautical miles in 1936 in the prevailing atmosphere of friendship between the two countries. Therefore, it caused a contradiction between the Greek territorial water and the airspace in the Aegean Sea, where Greece claimed six nautical miles of territorial waters and ten nautical miles of airspace.

Turkey for its part did not recognize the Greek extension of airspace; moreover, it did not challenge the legal basis of the Greek airspace regime until 1974. Turkey claimed that a lack of knowledge lies behind its silence of four decades. As Ümit Pamir, an esteemed Turkish ambassador, stressed in an interview “Athens only included its 10 nautical mile regulation in its Aeronautical Information Publication in 1974” (ICG 2011: 9). The prevailing atmosphere of friendship between Turkey and Greece might also have had some effect in Turkey’s silence for forty years.

Greece made its first official notification to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) on 2 June 1974 and Turkey’s reaction regarding Greece’s claim to ten miles came a few months later, on 15 April 1975, with a note to ICAO to declare not to recognize Greece’s 10 nautical mile airspace implementation (Pazarcı 1990: 117). In addition, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a note to the Greek embassy in Ankara on 1 September 1975 that declared (Bölükbaşı 2004: 594-598):

“... the area lying outside the 6 nautical miles territorial sea surrounding the Greek territory is and will be held as part of the high-sea by the Republic of

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<sup>41</sup> Article 2 of Act No. 5017 of 3/13 June 1913 to regulate civil aviation provided: “The State exercises complete and absolute sovereignty over the airspace over its territory. The term “Greek territory” as used in the Act or in the regulations made pursuant thereto shall be deemed to include the territorial waters and the air space above those waters” (Bölükbaşı 2004: 580).

Turkey and consequently, Turkish aircraft will fly freely over this portion of airspace.”

With the declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey officially refused to recognize Greece’s claims on the 10 nautical miles airspace. The wording of the declaration by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not include any emphasis on an existential threat or any dramatization. However, in order to show its determination Turkey announced its measure of flying over the contested area in the Aegean. Following the declaration of the Turkish official position to Greece, Turkey started to send its military aircrafts, on a regular basis, into the disputed 4-mile of airspace, which lies between the legal 6-mile overlapped Greek territorial waters and Greece’s claimed 10-mile limit, in order to demonstrate its non-recognition of Greece’s claims.

Turkey’s determination about the issue and Greece’ protests and interceptions by Greek aircrafts paved the way for well-known dogfights between Turkish and Greek fighters over the Aegean Sea.<sup>42</sup> The long-lasting dogfights, inflicted because of ongoing airspace dispute, between Turkish and Greek fighters are still generating tension between Turkey and Greece. Nevertheless, Greek claim of a 10-mile airspace is a unique case and recognized by no other state, and even NATO countries have “violated” Greek airspace during NATO exercises in the Aegean (Aydın, 1997: 119).

Another issue between Turkey and Greece is related to the FIR over the Aegean Sea. FIR is designed to ensure security of air traffic by establishing control zones over state territory. The existing FIR regulation on the Aegean was established in the ICAO

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<sup>42</sup> The concept of dogfight is used to define a fight between two military aircraft in order to prevent an air violation. In the Turkish-Greek version, aircrafts of both countries fight each other, time to time by intercepting each other, in the contentious airspace in the Aegean. The very close flight and dangerous maneuvers by the pilots caused casualties as well. A Turkish jet was downed by gunfire from Greek warplanes on 8 October 1996 over the Aegean (Daily Sabah, 12 December 2014). In May 2006, Turkish and Greek F-16 jet fighters collided in mid-air during a dogfight over the disputed region of the Aegean Sea (Hurriyet Daily News, 24 May 2006).

Regional Conferences on 23 May 1952, which gave the control of air traffic over the Aegean Sea to Greece whereas Turkey would be responsible only for the traffic in the airspace over its territorial waters (Fırat 2010: 458; Bölükbaşı 2004: 592).

In the wake of Turkey's Peace Operation to Cyprus in 1974, Turkey formally contested the Greek airspace regime in the Aegean Sea by issuing NOTAM 714 on 6 August 1974. It was an attempt to unilaterally extend Turkey's area of responsibility up to the median line in the Aegean in order to obtain security for itself when it was on the brink of a war with Greece (Aydın 1997: 119; Moustakis 2003: 36; Heraclides 2010: 214-215). In response, Greece issued NOTAM 1157 on 7 August 1974 and declared the area unsafe for international civil aviation that caused the halt of all international flights over the Aegean for six years, until mid-1980 (Aydın 1997: 119; Heraclides 2010: 82).<sup>43</sup>

Even though the dispute over civil aviation was solved with the withdrawal of both sides' NOTAMs in 1980, another issue related to military aircraft is still a continued source of anxiety between Turkey and Greece. Turkey claimed that the Chicago Convention did not require military aircrafts, furthermore, the military "do not want to submit plans to the political authorities of another country, for them it is a matter of principle" as retired Ambassador Kamuran Gürün points out in his memoirs (Heraclides 2010: 104; Moustakis 2003: 36). This contention has been maintaining one of the securitized disputes in the Aegean Sea as Turkey's official position has maintained a similar direction. Even though the rapprochement process of the late 1990s prevents any further conflict between Turkey and Greece, the routine skirmishes over the disputed area of the Aegean Sea have continued without any progress.

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<sup>43</sup> The flights resumed in late 1980 after the reciprocal withdrawal of NOTAMs by two countries.

### 2.1.2. The Sovereignty Issues in the Aegean Sea

Since the Ottoman Empire's sovereignty over the Aegean islands, islets and rocks, which date back to the fifteenth century -following its conquest of Constantinople in 1453-, all developments over these islands, islets and rocks, have had ramifications on the current status of sovereignty.<sup>44</sup> The status of the islands, islets and rocks in the Aegean Sea were set in several documents such as the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), the Montreux Straits Convention (1936), and the Paris Peace Treaty (1947) to which Turkey is not a signatory.

The islands in the Aegean Sea can be grouped according to their geographical locations as “the North Sporades”, “the Cyclades”, “the Strait Region Islands”, “the Saruhan Islands” and “the *Menteşe* (Dodacanese) Islands”, the last three groups of islands are also named as the “Eastern Aegean Islands” (Kurumahmut 1998: 4; İnan and Acer 2004: 1; Başeren 2006: 7). While the North Sporades and the Cyclades islands are under Greece's sovereignty, there have been disagreements between Turkey and Greece over the Eastern Aegean Islands as they are located closer to Anatolia. The main disputes over the sovereignty rights of these islands as well as their military status will be examined in the following chapters as the issue has continued to be one of the contentious issues between the two countries.

#### 2.1.2.1. The (De) Militarization of the Islands

In addition to the disagreements over the territorial waters, airspace, and the continental

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<sup>44</sup> For the historical background of the sovereignty rights in the Aegean Sea, see A. Kurumahmut, A. (1998) *Ege'de Temel Sorun: Egemenliği Tartışmalı Adalar* [The Basic Dispute in the Aegean: The Islands Whose Sovereignty is Disputed]. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu; Küçük, C. (2001) *Ege Adalarının Egemenlik Devri Tarihi* [The History of the Sovereignty Era of the Aegean Islands]. Ankara: Stratejik Araştırma ve Etüdler Milli Komitesi; Başeren, S. H. (2006) *Ege Sorunları* [The Aegean Disputes]. İstanbul: Türk Deniz Araştırmaları Vakfı.

shelf, as discussed under the delimitation section, Turkey and Greece have been at odds about the fortification and militarization of the eastern Aegean islands. Both Turkey and Greece have interpreted the legal effects of treaties', as mentioned above, regarding the status of the islands in different ways; thus the two countries could not reach an agreement about the issue.

The first discord is related to the islands located off the entrance of the straits - also known as the Strait Region Islands- called *Limni* (Lemnos) and *Semadirek* (Samothrace), which were demilitarized along with both shores of the straits, and the Turkish islands of *Gökçeada* (Imbros), *Bozcaada* (Tenedos) and *Tavşan Adaları* (Rabbit Islands) under the Treaty of Lausanne. (Treaty of Lausanne 1923; Heraclides 2010: 201; Fırat 2010: 459). Article 4 of the Convention Relating to the Regime of the Straits annexed to the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 regulated the demilitarized status of the islands as follows:

The zones and islands indicated below shall be demilitarised:

1. Both shores of the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus over the extent of the zones delimited ...
2. All the islands in the Sea of Marmora, with the exception of the island of Emir Ali Adası.
3. In the Aegean Sea, the islands of Samothrace, Lemnos, Imbros, Tenedos and Rabbit Islands.

Article 6 of the abovementioned Convention gave details about the sort of military units and the equipment in these demilitarized zones and islands. For instance, Article 6 only allowed police and gendarmerie forces in the demilitarized zones and islands with the armament of revolvers, swords, rifles and four Lewis guns per hundred men.

In 1936, Turkey asked for the revision of the Convention on the Turkish Straits in accordance with the developments in international politics. On 20 July 1936, the

conditions of the islands were changed and the 1936 Montreux Straits Convention gave Turkey the right to “remilitarize the zone of the Straits.” Greece claimed that the Montreux Straits Convention replaced the Lausanne Convention; thereby Greece has the right to militarize both *Limni* (Lemnos) and *Semadirek* (Samothrace) as well. Even though there was no explicit mention about these two islands, Greece showed the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Tevfik Rüştü Aras’ speech at the Turkish parliament, on 31 July 1936, in order to legitimize its militarization act in the two islands. Tevfik Rüştü Aras stated that (Moutakis 2010: 37; Heraclides 2010: 202; Fırat 2010: 459),

Provisions concerning the islands of Lemnos (*Limni*) and Samothrace (*Semadirek*), which belong to our neighboring and friendly country, Greece, and which were demilitarized in conformity with the Convention of Lausanne of 1923, are also cancelled by the new Montreux Convention and we are pleased for this.

In contrast, Turkey argued that the provisions of the Lausanne Convention remained valid as the Montreux Convention just regulated the status of the Turkish islands. The protocol annexed to the Montreux Convention explicitly stated that “Turkey may immediately remilitarise the zone of the Straits as defined in the Preamble to the said Convention” but it did not have any reference to Greece. Turkey accepted Aras’ statement about the issue, however, claimed that his statements did not have any legal validity as Turkey continuously sent notes to Greece to show its discomfort about Greece’s actions (Fırat 2010: 459).

The second group of islands -also known as the Saruhan Islands- including Mytilene, *Sakız* (Chios), *Sisam* (Samos) and *Nikarya* (Nikaria) were also partially demilitarized under Article 13 of the Treaty of Lausanne as follows:

... to ensuring the maintenance of peace, the Greek Government undertakes to observe the following restrictions in the islands of Mytilene, Chios, Samos and Nikaria:



1. No naval base and no fortification will be established in the said islands.
2. Greek military aircraft will be forbidden to fly over the territory of the Anatolian coast. Reciprocally, the Turkish Government will forbid their military aircraft to fly over the said islands.
3. The Greek military forces in the said islands will be limited to the normal contingent called up for military service, which can be trained on the spot, as well as to a force of gendarmerie and police in proportion to the force of gendarmerie and police existing in the whole of the Greek territory.

Since the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, Turkey's security and foreign policy regarding the fortification of the islands in the Aegean Sea has been consistent, despite proposing some revisions in line with developments in international politics. The islands surrounding Anatolia in the Aegean Sea is a highly sensitive issue for the referent object's, named Turkey, security. As Aksu points out (2002: 109), Turkey's concerns regarding its security appeared during the Lausanne Conference. Then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmet İnönü<sup>45</sup> explained the Turkish thesis about the islands in two steps:

- 1) Gözçada (Imbros), Bozcaada (Tenedos) and Semadirek (Samothrace) as well as small and close islands should be given to Turkey;
- 2) the remaining islands should be demilitarized, and also be neutral and autonomous.

The Mediterranean and Aegean islands are a part of Anatolia geographically and they are extremely important for Anatolia's security. The islands are near the coast and they are small and big in size. For this reason, those within the territorial water limits should be given to Turkey's sovereignty. Because of its being near the Straits, Semadirek (Samothrace) should also be given to Turkey. Limni (Lemnos), Midilli (Lesbos), Sakız (Chios), Sisam (Samos) and Nikarya (Nikaria) islands were ceded to Greece by the States. These islands are vitally important for Turkey's safety. Economically, these should also be joined to Anatolia. For this reason, Turkey did not accept the decisions that were taken regarding these islands. The decisions regarding these islands are to be taken by the Big States<sup>46</sup>; these decisions should be taken with respect to both countries security. The present decision does not satisfy Turkey. Greece's world known

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<sup>45</sup> İsmet İnönü was the chief negotiator of the Turkish delegation for the Treaty of Lausanne. He served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs between 26 October 1922 and 21 November 1924. He was also appointed as first Prime Minister of Turkey the after the declaration of the Turkish Republic.

<sup>46</sup> The "Big States", more generally called "major powers" or "great powers", refers to the states which have military, economic and diplomatic influence in international politics in the wake of the First World War. The Great Powers determined the sovereignty over the Aegean Islands were France, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, Italy and Austria-Hungary.

ambitions on Anatolia, the artificial ambition created by the Greek government in its country to create another Greece in Anatolia has shown how dangerous it is for Turkey for these islands to belong to Greece. For peace, these islands should be demilitarized and none should become naval bases. Turkey should be reassured on this account; these islands should be neutral and should have a political existence of their own. (Bilsel 1998: 243-244, emphasis added).

The abovementioned statement by the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmet İnönü clearly stated the existential threat against the referent object's safety and security. Greece's ambitions on Anatolia, which is the continuation of the long-desired goal of uniting all Greeks under a single flag and country, posed serious danger for Turkey's security both economically and politically. This is the reason that he pointed out how "extremely" and "vitaly" important those islands for Turkey. All those islands are considered the geographical extension of Anatolia. Turkey also criticized the decisions regarding the fate of the islands given by the "great powers" without taking into account security considerations of Turkey and Greece. Even though there was no emphasis on measures -considering Turkey's situation on the eve of the foundation of the Turkish Republic even raising concerns of the country was an important issue-, those points were made by the minister of foreign affairs, who became the prime minister right after the foundation of the Republic, totally reflected the official position of the country. The issue of (de)militarization of the Aegean Islands when viewed through the security lens showed that the statements by the Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmet İnönü did not include the securitization theory's necessary components such as an "existential threat" and "emergency action". However, securitization attempts in the early Republican Era will transform into a successful securitization, as clearly seen in the following statements of the securitizing actors in the follow up crises between the two.

The last group of islands, the Dodecanese Islands -also known as the Twelve

Islands- in the southeastern Aegean that were handed over to Greece under Article 14 of the Paris Peace Treaty of 10 February 1947 presents another contentious issue between Turkey and Greece. According to provision of the treaty (1947):

Italy hereby cedes to Greece in full sovereignty the Dodecanese Islands indicated hereafter, namely *Stampalia (Astropalia)*, *Rhodes (Rhodos)*, *Calki (Kharki)*, *Scarpanto*, *Casos (Casso)*, *Piscopis (Tilos)*, *Misiros (Nisyros)*, *Calimnos (Kalymnos)*, *Leros*, *Patmos*, *Lipso (Lipso)*, *Simi (Symi)*, *Cos (Kos)*, and *Castellorizo*, as well as the adjacent islands.

These islands shall be and shall remain demilitarised.

The procedure and the technical conditions governing the transfer of these islands to Greece will be determined by agreement between the of the United Kingdom and Greece and arrangements shall be made for the withdrawal of foreign troops not later than 90 days from the coming into force of the present Treaty.

Turkey's official position, during that time, regarding the handing over of the islands to Greece can clearly be seen in an interview by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Feridun Cemal Erkin (he served as the undersecretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 1945 and 1947) to the Greek newspaper *Elefteria* in 1964 in which he stated that:

I was working as the undersecretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1946. When I learned the decisions of the Great Powers about the Twelve Islands, I immediately summoned the ambassadors of the United States and the United Kingdom to Ankara in order to explain the risks of the implementation of those decisions for the future of the relationship between the two countries [Turkey and Greece]. I draw their attention to the disruption of the balance in the Aegean Sea against Turkey. The outcome of these decisions would be serious. It is impossible to predict about the repercussions on our [Turkey's] relations with Greece. ... At least the half of the Twelve Islands, which are close to Turkey, should be given to Turkey ... (*Cumhuriyet*, 25 May 1964, emphasis added).

The statements by the then undersecretary of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to a Greek newspaper regarding the official position of Turkey during the negotiations between the Great Powers was a continuation of the securitized perception

which dates back to the early Republican Era. In his interview, Feridun Cemal Erkin stressed to the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom about the potential risks of the changes in the balance of power in the Aegean Sea against Turkey. Turkey perceived the handing over the islands to Greece as a direct threat towards the referent object's security and its bilateral relations with Greece. Similar to the securitization attempts of the early Republican Era -as seen in the statements by İsmet İnönü during the Lausanne Conference- Feridun Cemal Erkin also maintained the same discourse even twenty-five years later.

Although Greece respected the above-mentioned regulations in the so-called treaties, it started remilitarizing these islands starting in the mid-1960s onwards by claiming that the islands are faced with an actual threat and the provisions for the demilitarization of the islands no longer apply as Greece has the right to defend its territory against Turkey (Heraclides 2010: 203; Fırat 2010: 459). For its part, Turkey protested Greece on 29 June 1964, for the first time, due to its militarization activities in the islands (Başeren 2006: 75-76). In parallel with the developments in Cyprus in the mid-1970s, both countries took significant steps to defend themselves. Particularly, Greece argued that it has a legitimate right to self-defence in view of Turkey's aggressive stance from 1974 onwards and thus started to militarize islands accordingly (Bölükbaşı 2004: 722; Aksu 2002: 121; Başeren 2006: 106; Heraclides 2010: 204). Turkey argued that there is no threat to the islands originating from Turkey therefore, Greece could not interpret the right to self-defense extensively and remilitarize the islands on the grounds of a threat (Fırat 2010: 459). In addition, Turkey raised its concerns in a letter sent to the UN secretary general on 8 April 1975 and stated that:

The government of Turkey considers those unlawful and unilateral actions by Greece as tending to compromise the balance in Aegean, constituting thus a

threat to security of Turkey and increased the tension in the region. ... It is the earnest hope of the Turkish government that the Greek government will realize her obligations under international treaties and recognize her duties to return the island to their demilitarized status (Bölükbaşı 2004: 730)

The abovementioned letter by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs clearly emphasized the existential threat against the referent object's security. Similar to the previous statements of the securitizing actors, Greek attempts to change the balance of power in the Aegean Sea were considered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a direct threat to the security of Turkey. There was also a special emphasis on Greece's "unlawful" and "unilateral" fortification of the islands in the Aegean Sea. Although the grammar continued in the letter, there was no "emergency action" against Greece's attempts. Therefore, this statement could not be evaluated as a successful securitization. Rather, it might be evaluated as an attempt toward securitization as it was in line with the arguments of the securitization theory.<sup>47</sup>

Though Greece claimed the right to militarize the islands with reference to the 51<sup>st</sup> article of the UN Charter, which gives member states a right to make legitimate defence, the so-called article is far from granting Greece such a right. Pazarıcı (1988: 160) evaluates the legal aspects of Greece's policy by arguing that:

Initially, in the 51st Article of the UN Charter after accepting the right of self-defence as an inherent right, it goes about defining the way this right should be applied and sought. Primarily this right can only be used when there is an armed attack. Therefore, using the right of self-defence when there is a threat is out of the question. Also, the nature of the right of self-defence necessitates that in case of an armed attack there can be an armed response. If there is no such attack, the right of self-defence is automatically out of the question. In this perspective, the endeavors to militarize the islands have no ground within the legitimate defence right.

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<sup>47</sup> The securitization theory identified the securitization attempts in case of absence of an approval by the audience that is the third component of a securitization. According to the securitization theory, the process remains incomplete without approval by the related audience and it is no more than an attempt. However, the thesis uses the "attempt" for cases in which do not contain three components –existential threat, emergency action and approval by audience- as well.

While Greece continued to remilitarize islands in the Aegean Sea on all occasions, Turkey established its 4<sup>th</sup> Army (the Aegean Army), which was formed in 1975 and has its headquarters in İzmir, with reference to national security. Turkey continued to raise the issue to the agenda of the UN on every occasion. The tension increased between the two in the summer of 1976 due to Turkey's seismic researches in the disputed islands of the Aegean. In a debate that took place in the UN General Assembly as a result of Greek complaints over Turkey's violations of its continental shelf, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil restated Turkey's concerns on the demilitarized status of the islands on 13 August 1976, as follow:

At present, Greece has barred the chances of any peaceful settlement and has embarked upon a dangerous course of action in a frenzy of warlike activities. This egocentric and self-righteously aggressive attitude of Greece is reflected not only in the recent situation. Since 1963 a grave situation has existed in the region because of the very dangerous path Greece has set for itself. Simultaneously with the effort to annex the independent island of Cyprus, in utter defiance of international treaties governing the status of Greek islands along the coast of Turkey, Greeks have heavily armed and militarized those very islands, thus creating a serious threat to the security of Turkey.

... Greece assumed the solemn international commitment of respecting the status of all these islands, and yet at present practically all these islands are heavily militarized. The islands have been fortified with guns, missiles, tanks, military installations and tens of thousands of troops. Since 1964 Turkey has repeatedly drawn the attention of the Greek Government to these flagrant violations and to the grim consequences that could follow. For a long time, Greek Government denied these violations of the Treaties and argued that the measures that had been taken in the islands were only for touristic and economic purposes. It was only very recently that the Prime Minister of Greece himself finally admitted the truth. The Turkish Government believes that the unlawful militarization of the island constitutes a serious threat to peace and security in the region. Therefore, it is now incumbent upon the Security Council, which is entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security to consider what steps it deems appropriate to remedy the situation. (Bölükbaşı 2004: 731-732).

The statement of the Turkish minister of foreign affairs in the UN Security Council was an explicit continuation of Turkey's securitized perception on the very same issue. He emphasized Turkey's concerns about its security in front of the members

of the UN Security Council. As the framework of the securitization theory states, there was an explicit emphasis on the existential threat -namely Greece's militarization of the islands on the coasts of Turkey along with its effort to annex Cyprus- to the security of the referent object -namely the security of Turkey. He dramatized by emphasizing Greece's "course of actions in a frenzy of warlike activities", "utter defiance of international treaties" as well as "flagrant violations" for years to fortify the islands close to Turkish coasts. Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Çağlayangil also stressed the risks towards regional peace and security. He implied the "grim consequences that could follow" the Greek violations, when he appealed to the UN Security Council to consider necessary steps to prevent Greek attempts. Both his emphasis on the "grim consequences" and appeal to the UN Security Council can be evaluated as the emergency measures securitization theory searches for. The statement of the prime minister of Turkey in parallel with the discussion at the UN Security Council, was a follow-up to the emergency measures raised at the international level. Thus, consideration of statements by the securitizing actors of Turkish minister of foreign affairs and the prime minister simultaneously make the interpretation of a successful securitization possible.

In this regard, Prime Minister of Turkey Süleyman Demirel's statement regarding the militarized status of the islands, which was considered as an attempt to escalate the issue by Greek authorities, constituted further emergency action. When he stated that "don't forget, the islands cannot remain armed. If the other side [Greeks] continues to violate our rights, we know how to protect ourselves", he emphasized an emergency action. Similar to the Turkish minister of foreign affairs, the prime minister also stressed the existential threat against the referent object's rights and the emergency measures that will be taken in order to protect the rights and interests of the referent

object.

The policy of the two made significant changes in the military balance in the Aegean and also indicates an important fact about the problem. Aksu (2002:124) evaluates the situation in the Aegean as “the problems at hand could not be solved through peaceful, just and permanent means not only increased the lack of trust, but also sharpened the belief that the only way to an expedient solution would be through war.” Despite Turkey’s objections as well as various exchanges of notes between Turkey and Greece, the issue remains unresolved and makes the military preparations inevitable as the national securities of both countries are at stake.

#### **2.1.2.2. The Sovereignty over Islands, Islets and Rocks: The Kardak (Imia) Crisis**

As already noted, the Great Powers in various documents determined the sovereignty over islands, islets and rocks in the Aegean Sea. The changes of the sovereignty rights between Italy, the Ottoman Empire and Greece especially in the last century triggered contentions among them. While Italy occupied the Twelve Islands during the Tripolitania-Benghazi War of 1911-1912 between Italy and the Ottoman Empire, Greece occupied the Strait Region Islands and the Saruhan Islands during the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. Since the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 the Twelve Islands remained in Italy’s control, and the other group of islands -except *Gökçeada*, *Bozcaada* and *Meis* (Castellorizo)- were under the occupation of Greece.

The Treaty of Lausanne clearly regulated the sovereignty rights over the islands in the Aegean Sea through articles 6, 12, and 15. While Article 6 of the Treaty stated that “islands and islets lying within three miles of the coast are included within the frontier of the coastal state”, Article 12 confirmed the sovereignty of Greece and Turkey



as follows:

... regarding the sovereignty of Greece over the islands of the Eastern Mediterranean, other than the islands of Imbros, Tenedos and Rabbit Islands, particularly the islands of Lemnos, Samothrace, Mytilene, Chios, Samos and Nikaria, is confirmed, subject to the provisions of the present Treaty respecting the islands placed under the sovereignty of Italy which form the subject of Article 15.

Except where a provision to the contrary is contained in the present Treaty, the islands situated at less than three miles from the Asiatic coast remain under Turkish sovereignty.

Although the status of the Twelve Islands was arranged in Article 15 of the Treaty of Lausanne, their status was finally settled in the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947. According to Article 14 of the Paris Peace Treaty, Italy transferred the sovereignty of the Dodecanese Islands (Twelve Islands), as well as the adjacent islands to Greece.

Turkey and Greece interpret the provisions of these treaties differently. Greece supports the argument that all the islands beyond 3 miles, except Gökçeada, Bozcaada and Tavşan Islands were left to Greece, whereas Turkey argues that only those that are clearly named by the Treaty deemed to be left to Greece (İnan and Acer 2004: 6-7). Turkey also put forth the idea that “islands beyond 3 miles distance but not mentioned in name should be regarded as inherited by Turkey as the successor of the Ottoman Empire” (İnan and Acer 2004: 7). In addition, Turkey also declared its intention to determine the sovereignty over the islands beyond 3 miles and were not explicitly left to Greece through negotiations between Turkey and Greece (İnan and Acer 2004: 7). According to Başeren (2006: 49), there are around 150 islands, islets and rocks, whose sovereignty status were not determined yet, in the Aegean Sea.

The vagueness over the islands, islets and rocks that were not mentioned explicitly by the treaties has been a source of dispute between Turkey and Greece.

Despite the burden of the disagreements, both countries have avoided serious provocations in the Aegean Sea. However, the two allies came close to conflict in the Aegean, due to the tiny uninhabited islets called Kardak (known as Imia in Greek) in the Eastern Aegean while the influence of the previous tension in bilateral relations had not eased yet. The crisis, the worst of its kind, was sparked by an incident when a Turkish ship named *Figen Akat* ran ground on 25 December 1995 over one of the islets in the eastern Aegean, around 3.8 nautical miles off the Turkish coast.<sup>48</sup> At the time, nobody could foresee that this simple incident would start a series of events that brought two allies to the brink of war and threatened the whole peace and stability in the Aegean (Aydin 2003: 224; Larrabee 2012: 477). Right after the accident, the Greek naval forces offered a rescue, however the captain of *Figen Akat* refused it by claiming that the ship was still in Turkish waters. Actually, this dispute was essentially a continuation of the disagreements over the sovereignty rights of the islands, islets and rocks beyond 3 nautical miles.

Due to the involvement of the media, the incident remained within the bounds of diplomacy and both countries exchanged diplomatic notes that claimed the islets for themselves. While the rescue operations continued in the Aegean Sea, Greece sent a note to Turkey on 25 December 1996, and called for the halt of its rescue mission by claiming that the ship is in Greek territorial waters. In response, Turkey sent a note within the same day, and refused Greece's claims (Başeren 2006: 46). However, the involvement of the media in both countries escalated the crisis unexpectedly. Especially the nationalist and offensive language that was used in the news contributed to the polarization of the communities, increased the pressure on decision makers, and

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<sup>48</sup> The Kardak islets are composed of two pieces 385 meters apart, and located in the Menteşe [Dodacanese] Islands region. The east Kardak covers about 19.730 square meters, whereas the west Kardak covers 16.680 square meters, and the two islets 3.6 and 3.9 nautical miles off to Turkish coasts respectively.

sharpened their stance against each other. As Evin highlights (2005: 398), “public opinion remains potentially volatile on both sides of the Aegean, and any event that is misunderstood, misrepresented or exaggerated by the media could rekindle old doubts and hostilities in public opinion.” At that time, the media was used by the decision makers, intentionally or unintentionally, as a tool of manipulation because of its impact on public opinion. Heraclides (2010: 134) stresses the role of the media as “routine events got out of hand due to the irresponsible stance of the media and press, in what could have been the first media-triggered war in history.” Nevertheless, the Kardak crisis constituted an important case study to understand the role of media in shaping public perception as well as its role in decision making as the involvement of the media one month after the crisis brought the two countries to the brink of war.<sup>49</sup>

On 20 January 1996, the incident was leaked to Greek magazine *Gamma*, only a day after Kostas Simitis was named to form the new Greek government due to the resignation of the Prime Minister of Greece and Chairman of PASOK Andreas Papandreou because of health issues (Aydın 1997: 109; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 29; Bayar and Kotelis 2014: 248). Following the leak of the incident to the media, a group of Greek civilians accompanied by the mayor of the island of Kalymnos and a local TV channel went to Kardak on 26 January 1996, to raise a Greek flag. While Turkish media broadly covered the scenes of the event next day, on 27 January, journalists from the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet* went to the islet to replace the Greek flag with a Turkish one. The broadcast of the tape of the flag hoisting competition in both Turkey and Greece inflamed public reaction. Moreover, the retaliation continued when the Greek

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<sup>49</sup> For an analysis of the important role of the media during this crisis and in general, see Hadjidimos, K. (1998/99) “The role of the Media in Greek-Turkish Relations: ‘Co-Production of a TV Programme Window by Greek and Turkish Journalists’”, *Robert Bosch Stiftung, Kolleg für Internationale Aufgaben, Programm*; Sunar, B. (2007) “Meaning Beyond Words: How Turkish Media Reflect the Greek Media”. *An unpublished MA Thesis*, Istanbul Bilgi University.

government took a decision to send the Greek navy to the islet to hoist and protect the Greek flag, which was considered “an act of aggression and armed hostility against Turkish sovereignty” by the Turkish government (Aydın 1997: 110). In response to Greece’s mobilization of its naval and air forces on 29 and 30 January, Turkey also increased its measures by deploying assault boats around the islet under the intense pressure by the media and public opinion.

With the exchange of notes between Turkey and Greece (Turkey’s note dated 29 January 1996 and Greece’s note of 16 February 1996), the sovereignty issue over the islands, islets and rocks became an official issue between the two (Kurumahmut 1998: 14; Başeren 2006: 47-48). Henceforth, the Kardak crisis has marked a breakthrough in Turkey and Greece’s bilateral relations with its political and legal implications, particularly considering the vagueness of the sovereignty rights over 150 islands, islets and rocks in the Aegean Sea.

During the crisis, *Hürriyet* played a central role in galvanizing Turkish public opinion into a belligerent mood, and this mood reflected on the securitizing actor’s statements as well (Çarkoğlu and Kirişci 2004: 117). Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Deniz Baykal shared Turkey’s official position over the islet in a meeting with Greece’s Ambassador to Turkey, Dimitrios Nezeritis on 29 January 1996, as follows:

... attempts by Greece to inhabit the small islands, islets and rocks in question in an artificial and demonstrative fashion can in no way create any legal consequences in regard to their status.

The Government of Turkey is ready to enter into negotiations with Greece with a view to determining the possession of small islands, islets and rocks in the Aegean. After such negotiations, the issue of the delimitation of the territorial waters could also be discussed and finalized. In the meantime, the Ministry would like to suggest that the Parties should refrain from any unilateral act that would aggravate the situation in the region.

In this context, Turkey requests that the unacceptable deployment of Greek troops on the Kardak rocks be terminated and all signs of sovereignty be removed with delay. (Bölükbaşı 2004: 827).

In addition, according to the press releases, Deniz Baykal as the Turkish minister of foreign affairs warned Greece's ambassador to Turkey by saying that "Turkey would not accept Greece's *fait accompli* in the Aegean, it is beside the point. We know how to protect our rights" (The Directorate General of Press and Information, 29 January 1996).

The subsequent statement by Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Deniz Baykal were quite important to see the way problems were handled when faced with a threat. Even Deniz Baykal was prudent and responsible for the continuation of the dialogue between the two. In his first statement, he evaluated the Greek activities on the Kardak rocks as "unacceptable", and underlined the "sovereignty" issue, as raising a flag can be considered as one of the symbols of sovereignty. In his following statement, it is obvious that Turkish decision makers considered Greek activities on the rocks as an existential threat against Turkey's rights in the Aegean Sea. This is the reason that he emphasized an implicit emergency action in face of "Greece's *fait accompli*", while warning Greece's ambassador to Turkey that "We know how to protect our rights." Thus, Deniz Baykal's statements, which emphasize the "existential threat" as well as an "emergency measure", can be evaluated as a case of successful securitization.

During the crisis, the most significant security grammar was used by the then Prime Minister of Turkey Tansu Çiller. For instance, following an emergency security meeting in the NSC on 29 January 2016, she promised in a press conference "Kardak is Turkish soil. We cannot accept a *fait accompli*. That flag will be removed, those troops will leave", and continued, "I say we must act in a peaceful manner, but it is not

possible for us to accept any *fait accompli* on the island” (*Milliyet*, 30 January 1996). In another statement on the same day, she remained adamant that Greek forces should be withdrawn since “this is our legacy: we do not give away territory. We do not concede even an inch of territory or a pebble. We can sacrifice lives, but not pebbles. The Turkish state is right and it will do what is necessary” (BBC, 30 January 1996).

As seen in the abovementioned statements by the Prime Minister of Turkey Tansu Çiller, she defined the Kardak islets as Turkish soil and assessed the Greek attempts as *fait accompli*. Her assessment regarding the sovereignty over the islets stemmed from the Turkish official position, which argues the vagueness of the related article of the Treaty of Lausanne.<sup>50</sup> In line with the official position, Greece’s attempt in that region was considered as the existential threat to Turkish sovereignty. While she was stressing the violation of Turkish sovereignty rights in the so-called region, she also dramatized the issue by making an emphasis on a “pebble.” As she pointed out, the government is ready to take necessary measures in order to protect its rights and interests in the Aegean Sea, or in the dramatized words of Çiller, “we can sacrifice lives, but not pebbles”. These measures became obvious in the following statements of the other securitizing actors as well. Thus, the security grammar, dramatization as well as the components of a successful securitization such as “existential threat”, “emergency measure”, and finally “approval from the relevant audience” can be clearly seen in Prime Minister of Turkey Tansu Çiller’s statements during the crisis. As already noted, as a representative of a democratically elected government she had already gotten

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<sup>50</sup> According to the Article 15 of the Treaty of Lausanne, “Turkey renounces in favour of Italy all rights and title over the following islands: Stampalia (Astrapalia), Rhodes (Rhodos) Calki (Kharki), Scarpanto, Casos (Casso), Piscopis (Tilos), Misiros (Nisyros), Calimnos (Kalymnos), Leros, Patmos, Lipsos (Lipso), Simi (Symi), and Cos (Kos), which are now occupied by Italy, and the islets dependent thereon, and also over the island of Castellorizzo” (Treaty of Lausanne, 1923). Turkey argues that there was vagueness about the status of the “islets dependent thereon” as there are several other islands in the same region which did not referred explicitly in the Treaty (Başeren 2006: 57). To further details about the Turkish thesis on the sovereignty rights over these islands, islets and rocks, see Başeren, S. H. (2006) *Ege Sorunları* [The Aegean Disputes]. İstanbul: Türk Deniz Araştırmaları Vakfı.

the approval of the Turkish public as well.

As a follow-up to the Turkish prime minister's statements, İsmail Hakkı Karadayı, the chief of general staff, suggested landing troops on the other islet near Kardak, which was the idea of Ambassador İnal Batu, the deputy undersecretary of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador İnal Batu explained the critical night in his interview in TRT Türk as follows (from his interview to Cansu Çamlıbel in August 2009, emphasis added):

... If we deploy our troops to the second islets and to raise our flag by taking the advantage of nightfall that will enable involvement of the US and the EU, which will equalize our position with Greece. Within twenty-four hours either they [Greece] or we [Turkey] will withdraw, and the crisis would be overcome, the issue of Kardak would be faded away. ... Suddenly Güven Erkaya, the Commander of the Turkish Naval Forces, after saying "Dear Batu's formula is important", stood up and turned to the Prime Minister of Turkey and asked "If you would excuse, can we evaluate Dear Batu's formula?"

The tension during the security meeting was also reflected in the memoirs of the Commander of the Turkish Naval Forces Admiral Güven Erkaya. Reading Admiral Erkaya's comments with the previous statements by Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller, it provides insights regarding the emergency measures that would be taken in order to prevent Greek *fait accompli* in the Aegean Sea. In his conversations, he said:

While I was on my way to meeting, they told me the Prime Minister [Tansu] Çiller is on the phone. Prime Minister asked for a briefing and my personal opinion regarding the Kardak issue. I told her that "the Chief of the General Staff would give you related information in detail, but if asked my opinion, I can tell you that Kardak is a Turkish island, thus all political preparations and initiatives should be made and implemented accordingly." ... In this meeting, I declared to make any military operation in the Kardak, in line with the order from the government, successfully. The political decision might rest on two alternatives; the first was to give up everything by saying "the island does not belong to us", and the other was to defend the island at full blast and remove the Greek troops from there by saying "the island is belong to us" (Erkaya and Baytok 2001: 192, emphasis added).

Turkey's alternatives in this crisis were also reflected in the memoirs of one of

the Turkish securitizing actors. As Admiral Güven Erkaya evaluated “Kardak as a Turkish island”, therefore it is important to protect the sovereignty of the Turkish state in face of the threat posed by Greece, which was trying to claim sovereignty by raising its flag on the so-called island. He stressed both political and military measures - including military operation to Kardak- in his conversation with Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller. As seen in his statement, he dramatized the issue while he offered an alternative consisting of “defending the island at full blast” in order to remove the Greek troops from the island. These statements by Admiral Güven Erkaya included both an “existential threat” and “emergency action”, thus they could be considered as examples of a successful securitization.

The single voice statements of the securitizing actors, such as the prime minister, the minister of foreign affairs and high-ranking military officers, demonstrate how securitizing actors used security grammar in their evaluations of a source of threat, and what was at stake for Turkey, namely violation of sovereignty of the referent object.

It is possible to assess that the determination and intervention of Turkish President Süleyman Demirel prevented further crisis between the two countries, as he stressed during his interview regarding that night:

The ships surrounded the islets... The Prime Minister came and said “Let’s deploy our troops to islets, and raise a flag”. The military officials gave advise to her, then visited me. ... I asked if there is another way to solve the crisis? ...

I said explicitly... You as a Chief of the General Staff cannot carry the burden of this! You as a Prime Minister cannot either. You as Minister of Foreign Affairs cannot take the responsibility... No one can bear it. Find alternatives. You can always intervene but it should be the last resort (Batur 2004: 51-52).

Consequently, the idea of the Deputy Undersecretary of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador İnal Batu, regarding landing marines going to and hoisting



the Turkish flag on the next smallest islet of the Kardak rocks eased the tension and prevented its further escalation (Aydın 1997: 110). Since the beginning of the crisis, there was growing international concern regarding the tension between the two. Apart from the statements by NATO and the UN, the US played a significant role to avert any military clash between the two allies. In addition to US President Bill Clinton's efforts, senior members of the US administration started intense telephone diplomacy with Ankara and Athens to ease the tension and secure an agreement (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 30). During this diplomacy traffic, US special envoy Richard Holbrooke warned both parties of the conflict by saying the "first party to fire would be responsible for the consequences and get into serious trouble with the US" (Bayar and Kotelis 2014: 252). In the end, diplomatic pressure on both governments doused the flame in the Aegean Sea and the two countries withdrew their troops and lowered their flags, under US supervision, on 1 February 1996 without any incident.

As already mentioned, at the beginning of the crisis, both Turkish and Greek officials tried to solve the issue in a peaceful manner through prudent negotiations. However, increases in domestic pressure after the involvement of the media changed the tone and the way decision makers' handled problems in Turkey. As Bayar and Kotelis (2014: 253) pointed out, "democratic actors, namely the media, opposition parties, opinion-makers, and activists, pushed their governments to win the conflict, rather than to seek a common ground through dialog and mutual respect, and the democratically elected governments had clear 'red lines' for which they risked war". Officials from both sides "adopted a hardline approach as, on the one hand, if handled successfully the crisis offered them a chance to strengthen their political position, but, on the other hand, the political cost would be great had they been perceived as the yielding party to the threats of the other side" (Bayar and Kotelis 2014: 248). The crisis and the subsequent

securitized discourse was used to a large extent by Prime Minister of Turkey Tansu Çiller as a political maneuver in the wake of elections. She even had a tougher stance than the other securitizing actors since she was trying to utilize the Kardak crisis to boost her popularity (Athanasopoulou 1997: 86; Bağcı 1997: 160-161; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 30; Heraclides 2010: 135).

Even after the tension calmed down, Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller continued her securitized discourse by using the very same security grammar. For instance, in a TV program she said, “we had a promise. We do not have a pebble to give. We will not give a rock away at all. We said, that the flag will be lowered and that soldiers will depart. The flag was lowered and the troops have departed...” (*Milliyet*, 1 February 1996). In one of the interviews on television, Prime Minister of Turkey Tansu Çiller restated the possible existential threat against the referent object, and the emergency actions for how to deal with it, as follows:

If they [Greece] bring soldiers to Kardak and hoist a flag once again, the same thing will happen. We [the Turkish government] are saying: Do not create a *de facto* situation by opening up the place for settlement. We [Turkey] will not allow this. We [Turkey] would regard this as a genuine provocation and a cause for war. ... (Interview with Mehmet Ali Birand, Show TV, 13 February 1996 cited from Kesgin 2012: 43).

In parallel to her previous securitized discourse, her interview also reflected all components of a successful securitization. She stressed that any Greek attempts in the Kardak islets or any of the islands, islets or rocks, whose sovereignty are not yet determined, to open up settlement are considered to be a “provocation and “cause of war.” In response to the existential threat against Turkish sovereignty, she reminded, “the same thing will happen” which she was referring to the emergency actions of the previous experiences. As seen during the Kardak crisis, the Turkish government took the necessary actions by deploying troops to the so-called islets and by considering

decisive actions to prevent threats directed to the referent objects sovereignty. This statement by the prime minister of Turkey was another example of a successful securitization.

The crises in the Aegean reflected how securitizing actors in Turkey handled issues from a normal bargaining process and securitized issues by using the speech act. The abovementioned statements by securitizing actors during the Kardak crisis clearly reflected successful securitization of sovereignty rights in the Aegean Sea by presenting/dramatizing the existential threat posed by neighboring Greece through claiming sovereignty rights over islands, islets and rocks against the territorial integrity, sovereignty and national security of the referent object. In response, the Turkish government instituted some emergency measures such as deploying troops, as seen in the Kardak case, in order to protect its rights and interests. To that point, an evaluation by Siegl (2002: 43) regarding the Kardak crisis states that “it was not about the real control of these islets, but about preventing the opposite side from capturing them and asserting the ‘right’ in the Aegean.” This clearly reflected the stance of the securitizing actors in Turkey. Whenever a crisis erupts in the Aegean, the securitizing actors in Turkey considered it as an “existential threat” for Turkey’s security and sovereignty and thus continue its traditional view about the issue.

The Kardak crisis added one more layer to the already overloaded issues between Turkey and Greece and brought their bilateral relationship under the international spotlight once again. In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, the US initiative to mediate between Turkey and Greece which was accepted by the leaders of both countries, was something new for both since they both had opposed the idea of the involvement of a third party (Athanasopoulou 1997: 77). Mesut Yılmaz, the Prime

Minister of Turkey called upon Greece on 24 March 1996 to “enter into a procedure of peaceful settlement, which will not exclude from the outset any method of settlement including third-part arbitration” (Heraclides 2010: 137). As a result, Kostas Simitis, the Prime Minister of Greece and Süleyman Demirel, the President of the Republic of Turkey met on the margins of the NATO summit in Madrid on 8 July 1997, and expressed their mutual commitment to peace, respect for each other’s sovereignty, for the principles of the international law and international agreements as well as for each other’s legitimate, vital interests and concerns in the Aegean (The Madrid Joint Declaration, 1997). In addition, they declared their commitment to refraining from unilateral acts and willingness to avoid conflicts; and promised to settle disputes by peaceful means without use of force or threat of force. The centerpiece of the declaration was suspension of Greece’s unilateral initiatives in the Aegean and Turkey’s decision of “*casus belli*”.

The Madrid declaration as a good-will text played a significant role in dousing the flame between the two in the Aegean. Both countries had accepted to freeze their policies -*casus belli* on the Turkish side and suspension of unilateral activities on the Greek side- however, they did not renounce their claims. Undoubtedly, the declaration has become a good reference point to initiate dialogue between two countries afterwards. Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem proposed a meeting of foreign ministers to resolve the differences in the Aegean Sea on 12 February and 11 March 1998, since he considered the Madrid declaration as a win-win outcome for both sides (Cem 2009: 86-92).

Even though there were some attempts to ease the tension between the two, as seen with the Madrid Joint Statement of July 1997, however there was little move

towards change. The relations between Turkey and Greece have continued to be strained because of different issues such as Cyprus, the EU and Greek support for the leader of a terrorist organization. The following chapter focuses on one of the major disputes between Turkey and Greece for several decades.

## **2.2. The Cyprus Issue: The Case of S-300 Crisis**

The Cyprus issue has been the most serious and challenging dispute between Turkey and Greece since the mid-1950s. It is important to remember that this thesis is not going to give a chronological account of the Cyprus events, but it will provide a brief background on the issue by focusing on significant turning points such as the foundation of the Republic of Cyprus (RoC), the 1964 and 1967 crisis, the Peace Operation of the Turkish military to the island in 1974 and its impact on bilateral relations.<sup>51</sup> This background information will familiarize readers with the official positions of the two countries about the Cyprus issue. However, the main focus of the thesis in this chapter will be the S-300 crisis, which is evaluated as another securitization case.

### **2.2.1. The Developments in Cyprus and its Reflection to Turkish-Greek Relations**

Cyprus was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire since its conquest in 1571 until 1878 when it was leased to Britain in return for an alliance against Russia. According to the Congress of Berlin, held on 4 June 1878, Britain could use the island as a *de facto* base for the protection of the Ottoman Empire. Britain's annexation and the cessation of Turkish sovereignty on the island was completed with the Treaty of Lausanne signed on 24 July 1923. Even though the strategic location of Cyprus, which is situated at the

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<sup>51</sup> Please see the footnote 8 on page 6.

center of the maritime lines of trade in the Eastern Mediterranean, constitutes vital importance for the security of Turkey, the peaceful foreign policy adopted by the founders of the Turkish Republic -or the existing international balances of power- brought the formal acceptance of such a result (Kaliber 2003: 143; Elekdağ 2006: 34). The importance of the island was reflected in the words of Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, as he stressed:

... If Cyprus was in the hands of a hostile country all supply routes to Anatolia would be cut off and Turkey's security would be threatened (Manizade 1975: 17 cited from Elekdağ 1996: 43).

Throughout the British control over the island, there was no conflict between Turkey and Greece, however, the outbreak of the Cyprus issue in the mid-1950s brought the two countries into a diplomatic conflict and much of the goodwill, which had developed between the two governments, was quickly lost (Ker-Lindsay 2000: 216). Actually, Turkey considered the Cyprus issue as "an internal affair of Britain" even until the foundation of the independent RoC in 1960 (Kaliber 2003: 144). It was clearly reflected in the statements of the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Necmettin Sadak in an interview on 25 January 1950, as,

There is not a Cyprus problem as such. I had clearly told it to journalists long time ago. For, Cyprus is today under the British sovereignty and rule and we are convinced that Britain is neither intended nor inclined to surrender Cyprus to any other state (Kaliber 2003: 145).

However, the eruption and intensification of inter-communal troubles in Cyprus due to the attacks of the National Organization of the Cyprus Fighters (EOKA - *Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston*) in April 1955 and the reaction within Turkey brought the issue to the forefront in Turkish foreign policy, particularly in its relations with Greece. The initial signs of change in the Turkish position related to the Cyprus issue appeared in the discourse of the government. The acting government, formed by Prime Minister

Adnan Menderes, gradually started to pursue a more active policy and transformed its position of maintaining the status quo in Cyprus to that of returning the island to Turkey (Kaliber 2003: 148-153). Under these circumstances, the Cyprus issue had finally brought about the end of three decades of good relations between Athens and Ankara. It is important to stress that at that time, the US had no strategic interest in Cyprus, and considered the issue as a potential source of enmity between Turkey and Greece. Thus, the US's main concern was to prevent any dispute that would destabilize NATO's southeastern flank.

Between 1955 and 1959, a series of conferences took place with Britain's initiative, which also was supported by Turkey and the US. While Britain organized a conference in London to discuss political and security issues in the Eastern Mediterranean, in particular the Cyprus issue, with the participation of Turkey and Greece, a major anti-Greek riot in İstanbul and İzmir on 6-7 September 1955 brought relations between two countries to the breaking point.<sup>52</sup> According to Firat (2010: 359), the events of 6-7 September had two important consequences: first, whenever Ankara felt under pressure on Cyprus, it would respond by exerting pressure on the Greek minorities living in Turkey, and second, the events created another layer of mistrust in Turkish-Greek relations. More generally, hereafter every single issue relating to the Cyprus issue has had repercussions in Turkish-Greek relations.

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<sup>52</sup> The 6-7 September riots were a reaction to two widely circulating stories in the Turkish press. According to the first the Greek Cypriots were preparing to attack the Turkish minority on 28 August. While in a speech on 25 August, Prime Minister of Turkey Adnan Menderes gave official credence to this rumor. Turkish newspaper called *Hürriyet* threatened that "if the Greeks dare touch our brethren, then there are plenty of Greeks in İstanbul to retaliate upon." The second story was first reported in a news bulletin in the state radio at 4 p.m. on 6 September and it was repeated in the pro-government afternoon daily, *İstanbul Ekspres*. According to this account "the birthplace of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk [the founder of the Republic of Turkey] in Thessaloniki had been bombed" (Alexandris 1992: 256, emphasis added). The demonstration in İstanbul was transformed into widespread riots against the property of the Greek element in the city. "There were number of deaths and the damage to the property was on a massive scale. On the other hand, the riots prompted a process of emigration that was to lead to the virtual extinction of the Greek minority in Turkey" (Clogg 1992: 153).

The deadlock over Cyprus was temporarily solved with the foundation of the RoC after the Zurich and London Conferences between Britain, Greece, Turkey and representatives of both communities from the island.<sup>53</sup> The logic behind the foundation of the RoC was based on bi-national independence and political equality as well as the administrative partnership of the two communities (Müftüler-Baç and Güney 2005: 282). Although Cyprus became an independent state in 1960, no one believed that the independence would last long. As Camp (1980: 46) points out, “the Zurich-London Accords in July 1960 ended the first phase of EOKA’s struggle by Greek Cypriot nationalist to establish an independent Cyprus”, but it was a step in their “maximum demand of union with Greece” that is called *Enosis*. Disputes over tax collection, participation in public services and many others immediately following the establishment of the RoC ushered a new phase in the Cyprus issue.<sup>54</sup> The thirteen constitutional amendments proposal by President of the RoC Archbishop Makarios on 30 November 1963 triggered tension between the two communities in Cyprus as well as between Turkey and Greece.<sup>55</sup> All of the amendments were immediately rejected by Turkey, which caused a break out of violence on the island. The following announcement by Archbishop Makarios on 1 January 1964 regarding his intention to abrogate the accords paved the way for Turkey’s strong reaction, which almost led to a Turkish intervention (Camp 1980: 50).

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<sup>53</sup> For further information about the foundation of RoC, see Bahçeli, T. (1992) *Cyprus in the Politics of Turkey since 1955*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan; Bölükbaşı, S. (1998) “The Cyprus Dispute and the United Nations: Peaceful Non-Settlement Between 1954 and 1996”. *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30 (3), 411-434; Sözen, A. (2011) “A Model of Power-Sharing in Cyprus: From the 1959 London-Zurich Agreements to the Annan Plan”. *Turkish Studies* 5 (1), 61-77.

<sup>54</sup> For further information regarding events of 1964 and 1967, see Bölükbaşı, S. (1993) “The Johnson’s Letter Revisited”. *Middle Eastern Studies* 29 (3), 505-525; Göktepe, C. (2005) “The Cyprus Crisis of 1967 and its Effects on Turkey’s Foreign Relations”. *Middle Eastern Studies* 41 (3), 431-444.

<sup>55</sup> The thirteen amendments proposed by President of the RoC Archbishop Makarios including abolition of majorities in the legislation process, elimination of separate city governments in the five major towns as well as elimination of veto power of vice president, who is Turkish Cypriot, were intended to end the current system and to establish the Greek Cypriot dominance in the island (Fırat 1997: 123-124; Camp 1980: 49-50; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 17).



The reflection of the tension in Cyprus to the Turkish-Greek relations was exacerbated with the election of George Papandreou, who wholeheartedly supported *Enosis*, as the prime minister of Greece in February 1964 (Firat 1997: 139-140; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 17). When newly-elected Prime Minister of Greece George Papandreou sent a letter to Archbishop Makarios on 25 February, on his ninth day in office, to show the Greek government's full support behind him, it had negative repercussions on the relationship between Turkey and Greece (Firat 1997: 140). In response to Prime Minister Papandreou's support for Archbishop Makarios, Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü announced on 13 March 1964, the abrogation of the Treaty of Neutrality, Conciliation and Arbitration, which was signed in the 1930s during a time of friendly relations between the two countries, and immediately started the expulsion of Greek minorities living in İstanbul (Firat 1997: 152-153).<sup>56</sup> As the abovementioned events of 6-7 September, the forcing out of Greek minorities after the abrogation of the Treaty of Friendship of 1930 caused another dent in Turkish-Greek relations.

When intercommunal violence had reached an all-time high in Cyprus and the Turkish government on 2 June 1964 “decided to land forces in Cyprus to establish a political and military beachhead” (Bölükbaşı 1993: 516), the US took initiative and US President Johnson wrote a letter to the President of Republic of Turkey İsmet İnönü on 5 June 1964.<sup>57</sup> The letter had serious impact on Turkey's position in Cyprus, which forced Turkey not to intervene in Cyprus, in addition to changes in Turkey's overall

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<sup>56</sup> The number of people that forced to migrate or voluntarily left Turkey with their families were estimated around 30,000-40,000 (Firat 1997: 153; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 17). Despite the violence during the events of 6-7 September, there were few from the Greek community living in Turkey left the country, however, the abrogation of Treaty of Friendship paved the way for massive migration among the Greek community (Oran 1991: 298-299). According to Oran (1991: 298-299), the migration of Greeks caused an unbalanced situation between Turkey and Greece in terms of minorities living in both countries as well.

<sup>57</sup> For the full text of the letter, see Johnson, L. B. and İnönü, İ. (1966), “President Johnson and Prime Minister İsmet İnönü: Correspondence between President Johnson and Prime Minister İnönü, June 1964”. *The Middle East Journal* 20 (3), 386-393.

foreign policy.<sup>58</sup> Notwithstanding the US pressure on Turkey, the Turkish armed forces were ill-prepared to undertake a naval or aerial intervention in Cyprus at that time. The US mediation restored the *status quo ante* but did not resolve the underlying conflict on the island as well as the tensions between Turkey and Greece.

After a military *coup d'état* on 21 April 1967, a new government, whose Cyprus policy was based on *Enosis*, came to power in Greece. Turkish Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel and new Greek Prime Minister Constantine Kollias met in Keşan and Alexandroupolis (*Dedeğaç*), towns on the Turkish and Greek border, on 9-10 September 1967 (Fırat 1997: 220; Göktepe 2005: 435). In response to the Greek government's proposal for an unconditional *Enosis*, Prime Minister of Turkey Süleyman Demirel presented four conditions as follows:

First, Cyprus should not be annexed unilaterally by either Greece or Turkey; secondly, neither Cypriot community should dominate the other; thirdly, the 1959 Cyprus Treaties should not be revised unilaterally, and finally, the balance of power established by the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) in the Mediterranean between Turkey and Greece should be preserved. (Göktepe 2005: 435)

The meetings between the two Prime Ministers ended up in failure. Turkey's feelings regarding the meeting between the two were clearly reflected in the words of Turkish President Cevdet Sunay during his visit with British Prime Minister Harold Wilson on 6 November 1967, with Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil, as he said:

The meeting in September between the Turkish and Greek Prime Ministers had been helpful in enabling each government to learn the views of the other at a high level. The Turkish Government sincerely desired a peaceful solution to the

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<sup>58</sup> The impact of the Johnson's letter in Turkish foreign policy, see Aydın, M. (2000) "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns and Conjunctures During the Cold War". *Middle Eastern Studies* 36 (1), 103-139; Uslu, N. (2000) *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs [Cyprus in the Turkish-US Relations]*. Ankara: 21. Yüzyıl Yayınları; Türkmen, F. (2009) "Turkish-American Relations: A Challenging Transition". *Turkish Studies* 10 (1), 109-129; Müftü, M. (2009) *Daring and Caution in Turkish Strategic Culture*. US: Palgrave MacMillan.

Cyprus problem, in accordance with the principles, which they had stated previously. But the Greek Government seemed uncompromising in their insistence on *Enosis*. In fact, the agreements still in force precluded both the proposals for *Enosis*, which the Greek Government had previously advanced, and those for partition, which the Turkish Government had advanced. ... Turkey's interest in a peaceful solution and her willingness to talk did not mean that her patience would be endless. Provocation, efforts to create a *fait accompli* and inhuman pressures all created difficulties for Turkey (Göktepe 2005: 437).

Two months after the negotiations between Turkish and Greek Prime Ministers, the infiltration of some 10,000 fighters from the Greek mainland and a fresh outbreak of fighting provoked another crisis in November 1967 (Müfti 2009: 44). Even though the Turkish Parliament had authorized the government to intervene in Cyprus, the Turkish army's inability to deploy its forces for a successful operation postponed Turkey's operation. Instead of this, on 17 November 1967, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil sent a note to Greece's ambassador to Turkey which reflected Turkey's demands from Greece ranging from the expulsion of General Grivas, to the withdrawal of Greek troops stationed in Cyprus in defiance of the agreements, to compensation of damages caused by the latest developments, and the reinforcement of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFIYCP) (Firat 1997: 224).<sup>59</sup>

In the midst of the crisis, the UN Secretary General U Thant, on 22 November 1967, urged the prime ministers of Turkey and Greece along with the President of the RoC Makarios to do all that they can to avoid the danger of war over Cyprus (Firat 1997: 225). Moreover, US played role as mediator by appointing Cyrus Vance as the Special Envoy of US President Johnson, which prevented any escalation of the crisis. On 30 November, both sides reached an agreement, in which Athens withdrew its

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<sup>59</sup> Following the crisis of 1964 between the two communities of the Cyprus island, the UN Security Council adopted on March 4 its resolution 186 (1964), which recommended the establishment of UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. In line with the resolution 186 (1964), the UNFICYP's mandate is to prevent a recurrence of fighting, to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order as well as to contribute to a return to normal conditions. For further details about the UNFICYP, see the official website at <https://unficyp.unmissions.org>.

fighters from the island and accepted most of Turkey's demands due to the pressure from the US and thus avoiding any trouble with Turkey like the previous dispute in 1964 (Müfti 2009: 44). In the aftermath of the crisis, the Turkish Cypriots took advantage of the circumstances and established the Provisional Turkish Administration of Cyprus on 28 December 1967. It was an attempt to transform the *de facto* separate existence since 1964 into *de jure*.

Though Cyprus is a small island in the Eastern Mediterranean, the crises of the island had serious repercussions not only on islanders, but also Turkish-Greek relations as well as regional and international politics. Yet, another dispute erupted in the island when the Greek junta administration conducted a *coup d'état* against Greek Cypriot President Archbishop Makarios on 15 July 1974, and showed its intention to implement its long-lasting desire of *Enosis* by replacing Makarios with an anti-Turkish supporter of *Enosis* Nicos Sampson. In response, the NSC of Turkey declared that:

This is a Greek intervention. The constitutional order in the island has been overturned and an illegal military administration established. Turkey considers this to be a violation of the treaties and guarantees (Sarıca, Teziç and Eskiuyurt 1975: 180).

As the resolution of the TGNA that authorized the government to intervene in Cyprus was valid, Prime Minister of Turkey Bülent Ecevit ordered Turkish Armed Forces to prepare for a military intervention in Cyprus (Fırat 2010: 447-448).<sup>60</sup> Soon afterwards, on 20 July 1974, Turkey started the so-called "Peace Operation" in order to prevent a *fait accompli* by Greece, and Turkish troops landed in Cyprus (Bölükbaşı 1993: 505).

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<sup>60</sup> At the time, Turkish armed forces that took the necessary lessons from the previous failures of both 1964 and 1967 crises, and made military preparations in order to carry out any operation to Cyprus.

The declaration by the NSC evaluated the Greek *coup d'état* in Cyprus as an intervention, which reversed the constitutional order through establishing a military administration in the island. It was assessed as a violation of the treaties and guarantees that required an emergency action in the form of an intervention in Cyprus in order to prevent *fait accompli* by Greece with the intention of *Enosis*. From the viewpoint of traditional Cyprus policy, which is considered a heavily securitized issue in Turkey by emphasizing “the inseparability of the security of Turkey and TRNC”, Greek actions on the island was an existential threat to the referent object (Kaliber 2003: 183).<sup>61</sup> Thus, the NSC’s declaration together with the statement by the Prime Minister of Turkey Bülent Ecevit, as follows, can be evaluated as one of successful securitization in Turkish foreign policy:

They [Turkish troops] are in Cyprus for peace not war. They [Turkish troops] are there not to invade Cyprus but to put an end to invasion. This latest Greek action on the island is not simply a *coup*, it is intended to destroy the independence of the Cyprus state and to undermine the international agreements on which the Cyprus Republic was founded.

Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit’s statements to justify the Turkish operation also clearly emphasized the external threat by Greece against the independence of the state of Cyprus and the international agreements that Turkey was also among the contracting parties. Thus, Prime Minister of Turkey Ecevit considered Greek action on the island as an invasion to destroy an independent state, which is

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<sup>61</sup> In his dissertation, Alper Kaliber (2003: 16) explores “the ways in which the Cyprus issue has been heavily securitized by the Turkish bureaucratic and political elite.” His research clearly presents the main motives of the official Cyprus discourse such as “the identification of the security of Turkish Cypriots with that of the ‘mainland’ Turks through the metaphor of ‘motherland’ and ‘babyland’ and the inseparability of the security of Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC); representation of the island of Cyprus as ‘natural extension and/or continuation of Anatolia’ from the geological/geographical, economic and cultural perspectives; the vitally important status of the island for Turkey’s national defense and security due to its centrality and pre-dominance within Eastern Mediterranean region; the overriding position of Cyprus on the crossing of the trade and water ways and oil routes; representation of the island as a geopolitical asset or a ‘floating military base’; the persistent articulation of the fear of encirclement and so forth. It should be noted that throughout different historical epochs some of these motives were picked up and highlighted within the official discourse depending on the changes in the global conjuncture and Turkish political landscape” (Kaliber 2003: 187).

geographically located in close vicinity for Turkey's security, by replacing its administration. The emergency action raised by the NSC declaration was also conducted by the Turkish armed forces before the statement. Therefore, in response to Greek attempts to change the regime on the island, Turkish securitizing actors took the issue outside of the normal political procedure and implemented the emergency measures after a successful securitization.

When the Turkish government decided to intervene in Cyprus in 1974 with reference to the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, which gave rights to Turkey, Greece and Britain to ensure maintenance of its independence, territorial integrity and security along with respect for its constitution, the international atmosphere was in favor of Turkey as well. As Hale (2002: 159) stressed, Turkey had enjoyed broad international support at the time of the first landings as the independence of Cyprus was threatened by the Greek junta administration. The Greek junta administration had an unpopular view among international actors.

On the same day, the UNSC adopted resolution 353 (1974), which was calling all parties to a cease fire and to exercise the utmost restraint, and an immediate end to foreign military intervention in Cyprus (UNSC 1974: 7). Following the UNSC's call for a cease fire, the foreign ministries of Turkey, Greece and Britain, along with representatives from the US, the UN and the Soviet Union, gathered in Geneva between 25 and 30 July 1974 (the conference resumed from August 8 to 14). Following the collapse of the tripartite talks in Geneva concerning the future of Cyprus, Turkey launched its second military operation in Cyprus on 14 August 1974. Even though Turkey's first operation was considered legitimate and justified as a reaction to the junta *coup* to overthrow Makarios, the second one was considered in the international arena

as an illegitimate occupation as it began during the negotiation process (Firat 2010: 451).

This was also reflected in the UN General Assembly's Resolution 3212, decided at its 2275<sup>th</sup> meeting on 1 November 1974, as it called "all states to respect sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of the RoC, and to refrain from all acts and interventions directed against it" whereas it also "urged speedy of withdrawal of all foreign armed forces and foreign military presence ..." (UN General Assembly Resolution 3212, 1 November 1974).

In such an atmosphere, the Turkish Cypriots unilaterally proclaimed the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus on 13 February 1975 that is regretted by the UNSC in the Resolution 367 (1975) adopted on 12 March. The UNSC Resolution 367 (1975) called on parties to resume talks under the auspices of the UN Secretary General. The two communities of the island started and resumed intercommunal talks until it ended up in failure due to the political turmoil on the island as well as serious divergence between the communities.

Turkish intervention in the island had serious repercussions for Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and beyond. One of the impacts of the 1974 Cyprus crisis on Greece was replacement of the Greek junta with a civilian government. In other words, Turkish intervention in Cyprus had triggered Greek domestic politics and Greece returned to democracy. On 24 July 1974, Constantine Karamanlis returned to Greece and headed a new civilian government (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 18). Subsequently, Glafkos Clerides replaced the Sampson regime in Cyprus on 25 July 1974. Another positive impact of Turkey's intervention in Cyprus was to push Greece towards closer union with the EU as a source of security in the face of the Turkish threat (Öniş 2001: 34). As Öniş points

out, political -in order to consolidate democracy- and security considerations rather than purely economic concerns had played decisive roles in Greece's decision (Öniş 2001: 34). Though initial evaluation for the Greek application was negative, it became an EU member, in a very short period of time, by the beginning of 1981.

Since the outbreak of the Cyprus issue in the mid-1950s, it became one of the central issues in Turkish-Greek relations. While there has been intensifying animosity between two countries this also stretched both Turkish-US and Greek-US relations (Aydın 2000: 128). After the US failure in preventing Turkish intervention in Cyprus, Greece withdrew from the military wing of NATO under the overwhelming domestic pressure on Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis (Larrabee 2012: 472).<sup>62</sup> In similar vein, the relations between Turkey and the US deteriorated in the aftermath of the US arms embargo imposed on Turkey by the US Congress in 1975 under the intense pressure of the Greek lobby in the US (Larrabee 2012: 472).<sup>63</sup>

Starting from the mid-1970s, the Cyprus issue was replaced by the issues in the Aegean Sea between Turkey and Greece as well as the other developments in both countries' domestic and foreign policies. While Greece was dealing with the consolidation of its democracy and preparations for the full membership to the EU; Turkey was confronted with internal political disputes and other crises in its foreign policy such as the US arms embargo. The failure of intercommunal talks on the island

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<sup>62</sup> Greece pulled out the NATO's military wing in August 1974 to protest the US failure to prevent Turkish operation to Cyprus. After six years of absence, Greece returned back in October 1980 when Turkey lift its veto in Greece's re-entering to the military wing. The Rogers plan that brought the Greece back into the NATO was prepared by, and named after the Supreme Allied Commander General Bernard Rogers on 18 October 1980.

<sup>63</sup> The relationship between Turkey and the US further deteriorated due to the "opium crisis". The US administration had serious pressure on Turkish government about discontinuation of opium cultivation during 1970s. This issue had also played significant role in the US arm embargo. For further details, see: Aydın, M. and Erhan, Ç. (2003) *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present and Future*. London and New York: Routledge; Uslu, N. (2003) *The Turkish-American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance*. New York: Nova Publishers; Türkmen, F. (2012) *Türkiye-ABD İlişkileri [The Turkey-US Relationship]*. İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları.



paved the way for the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) on 15 November 1983, which was recognized by Turkey on the same day. Both Greek Cypriots and Greece rejected the unilateral action as “illegal” and “unacceptable” (Firat 2010: 585). In similar vein, the UNSC considered the declaration by the Turkish Cypriots incompatible with the 1960 Treaties, declared it as legally invalid, and called for its withdrawal (UNSC Resolution 541, 18 November 1983). Even though the negotiations between the two communities of the island maintained throughout the 1980s, the difficulties did not remain confined to the island and had repercussions on Turkey-Greek relations as well. The crises that appeared in the 1990s, particularly the S-300 missile crisis, continued to serve as serious obstacles to the progression of bilateral relations between Turkey and Greece. The following section will focus on one of these serious crises, which is considered another case study in this thesis in order to show how and to what extent the issue was securitized by Turkish elites through speech act, between Turkey and Greece due to Cyprus again.

### **2.2.2. The Case of S-300 Crisis**

As mentioned in the previous section, Turkey and Greece has been at odds for almost half of a century, since the emergence of the Cyprus issue in the mid-1950s. Nineteen years after the Turkish operation to the island, a Joint Defence Doctrine, which once more strained the relationship between Turkey and Greece, was signed in November 1993 between the Greek government and the Greek Cypriot administration. According to the doctrine, “Cyprus would be included in Greece’s defense area; Greece would consider a Turkish attack on Southern Cyprus to be an attack on itself and a *casus belli*; Greece and the Greek Cypriot government would jointly formulate and implement their defense plans; the two governments would coordinate their decision-making and actions

in international forums” (Firat 2010: 802; Liaropoulos 2008: 27). In addition, the then Greek Cypriot leader Glafkos Cleridis, in one of his statements in September 1995, unveiled Greece’s intentions to set up an air base in Paphos, southern Cyprus (Elekdağ 1996: 38). Greece’s intention was evaluated as a direct threat to the national security of Turkey, and consequently triggered the Turkish side to create the same level of support to the Turkish Cypriots.

Additional tensions were added to bilateral relations when Greek Cypriot Minister of Foreign Affairs Alekos Michaelides confirmed on 5 January 1997 that the Greek Cypriot administration decided to acquire a Russian medium-range S-300 surface-to-air missile defense system. Despite the Resolution of the UN Security Council on 23 December 1996 (UNSC 1092, 1996) regarding the concerns about the excessive levels of military forces and armaments in the RoC as well as introduction of its sophisticated weaponry; the Greek Cypriot administration decided to go ahead with the purchase of the Russian missile defense system. Turkey strongly objected to the deployment of the new system, which is well beyond the needs of the RoC with its capability of intercepting and destroying aircrafts at ranges up to 150 km.

While the Greek Cypriot administration claimed that this was a defensive system, Turkey considered the system as offensive rather than defensive as it has capability to reach the Turkish mainland (Nachmani, 2001: 77). Therefore, Turkey argued that the new system would pose an existential threat to its security, which also reflected in the statements of the securitizing actors as well. Turkish officials quickly warned Greece and the RoC that it would take any necessary measures, including military strike against the missiles, in order to stop such deployment to Cyprus. The

then Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister Tansu Çiller evaluated the RoC's attempt to acquire S-300 missiles as follows,

... the pursuit, by Greece, which is a NATO member, of a hostile policy towards Turkey by manipulating the Greek Cypriots, and its endeavor to threaten Turkey's southern region through the Greek Cypriot sector, are the product of an extremely dangerous and irresponsible policy ...

Turkey cannot become a spectator to Greece to encircle her also from the south and to alter the balance between the two countries or to turn Cyprus into a festering wound in the Eastern Mediterranean (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 January 1997).

Analysis of the statement by the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister Tansu Çiller by using the framework of the securitization theory clearly presents another successful securitization. While she was evaluating the Greek Cypriots' acquisition of Russian S-300 missile, she perceived it as Greek manipulation to threaten Turkey's southern region as well as to encircle Turkey from the south rather than the RoC's attempt. She dramatized the existential threat against the security of the referent object by special emphasis on Greece's "extremely dangerous" and "irresponsible policy." In addition to the referent object's survival, she continued to dramatize the issue by focusing on the region in broader context and stressing the consequences of such an attempt that would turn the island to a "festering wound" in the region. Even though she did not explicitly emphasize emergency measures, her expression "Turkey cannot become a spectator to Greece" might be evaluated as an implicit declaration of an action. But, in another statement regarding the issue, Tansu Çiller, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister plainly warned both Greece and the Roc against the acquirement of Russian missiles by raising strong emergency measures as well. In her statement, Tansu Çiller underlined that,

... without a doubt, Greece is the country that encourages Greek Cypriots to take this way, directing and supporting them, and it is the country which carries the greatest responsibility for this aggressive policy ...

These offensive weapons will not be deployed to the southern Cyprus ... If deployed, Turkey will do whatever is necessary. If this includes striking at them, this will be done too (Milliyet, 11 January 1997).

It is obvious from her statement, she continued to blame Greece for the RoC's intention to acquire missiles. She also stressed that "Turkey would do whatever is necessary", including striking the missiles if the missiles are deployed to the RoC. The emergency measures raised by Tansu Çiller was also supported by the Chief of General Staff İsmail Hakkı Karadayı with another statement during his visit to the TRNC as,

A weapon which has a range of 150-160 kilometers and can deeply penetrate the airspaces of neighboring countries cannot be shown as defensive. No one can expect us to be an onlooker to the use of these weapons against Turkey and the TRNC. ... the political authority commands, and we strike. Turkish Armed Forces is ready to neutralize all threats" (*Cumhuriyet*, 11 and 14 January 1997).

Furthermore, Turkey's decisiveness was also reflected in the written statement by the Secretariat-General of the NSC after its monthly meetings on 27 January 1997 as follows,

... emphasis was made on the measures taken and will be taken in order to protect the rights and interests of Turkey and the TRNC particularly against Greece's recent attempts to disrupt the peace in the Aegean, Cyprus and Eastern Mediterranean. In parallel with those measures, [the NSC] was decided such measures will be decisively implemented in the direction of our national policies.<sup>64</sup>

The abovementioned statements by the securitizing actors in Turkey contained the components, an "existential threat", "emergency measures" and "the approval of the relevant audience",<sup>65</sup> of a successful securitization. When the Chief of General Staff İsmail Hakkı gave specific information about the range of missiles, he pointed out the

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<sup>64</sup> For the description of the "national policy", see footnote 30 on page 47.

<sup>65</sup> As mentioned on pages 50 and 51, the thesis considers the approval by the audience as taken for granted.

offensive status of such weaponry that would pose an existential threat not just for neighboring countries but also Turkey and the TRNC. He stressed the emergency measures including strikes to the missile batteries in order to “neutralize the threat” rather than monitoring developments as an “onlooker.” A similar securitized tone was used in the NSC meeting in which all aspects of measures would be considered and would be decisively implemented in order to protect rights and interests of the referent object.

Likewise, other securitizing actors’ discourses about the issue were consistent with the speech acts of the minister of foreign affairs. All representatives of the decision-makers in Turkey interpreted the deployment of S-300 missiles to the island as an existential threat to Turkey’s security. In the words of Ayman (2002: 9-10) the attempt to deploy missiles was considered a “significant step of the grand Greek strategy aimed at enclaving Turkey with a strategic belt from the Ionian Sea to the Gulf of Iskenderun and closing all the naval routes of transportation of Anatolia” (Ayman, 2002: 9-10).

In several other statements by securitizing actors in Turkey, the emphasis to the “existential threat” against the referent object’s security and survival, and the “emergency measures” in order prevent this threat were restated clearly. For instance, Mesut Yılmaz, the Prime Minister of Turkey echoed Turkey’s considerations as well as the policy to prevent against the existential threat by saying that,

Greece has demonstrated aggressive intentions with missiles and by deploying its air force to the South Cyprus. Turkey cannot remain passive in the face of this. What is important to us is the neutralization of the threat toward the TRNC and Turkey. And this will be done (Milliyet, 19 June 1998).

As clearly seen in the statement by Mesut Yılmaz, Greeks activities on the island such as acquiring missiles or deploying its air force were evaluated as an imminent threat toward both Turkey and the TRNC. In the face of such threat, what is important for Turkey was “neutralization of the threat” without any hesitancy, as he pointed out “Turkey cannot remain passive.” Despite the fact that missiles were intended to deploy to the island, securitizing actors considered any existential threat towards the TRNC as a direct target to the referent objects’ –the state of Turkey- survival and security. Such an evaluation can be visibly seen in one of the statements by then Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem as follows,

With its arms and armaments, air assault fields, Russian military experts and S-300s, the Greek Cypriot administration has attempted to threaten not only the TRNC but Turkey as well. The security of the TRNC is directly the same as the security of Turkey. Any threat, provocation or aggression against the existence of the TRNC will be treated as directly targeted against Turkey (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 30 March 1998).

In his statement, the minister of foreign affairs restated the existential threat against the TRNC and Turkey’s security posed by the Greek Cypriot administration through “armaments”, “air assault fields” and so on. In another example, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem shared the risks of acquiring missiles with his Greek counterpart during the UN General Assembly meetings in New York as,

We are against the deployment of S-300 missiles to the Greek side, indeed we do not want another front to be created in the East Mediterranean. Everything would change with the arrival of missiles to the Island. Cyprus can be a new Bosnia (*Milliyet*, 24 July 1997).

In his statement, İsmail Cem emphasized the resemblance between Cyprus and Bosnia in the case of acquiring S-300 missiles to the Greek side. His dramatization of the issue with special reference to Bosnia mainly stemmed from the humanitarian crisis -i.e. the massacre of thousands of Bosnian Muslim in Srebrenica in July 1995- during

the Bosnian War (1992-1995) among the Serbian, Croatian and Muslim ethnic groups, in the country.<sup>66</sup> The change in the military balance of power on the ground as well as the imbalance between the communities in the island would pave the way for further conflicts in the islands. Thus, İsmail Cem stressed the importance of the continuation of the *status quo* in the Eastern Mediterranean in order to sustain stability in the region.

The securitized discourse of the decision makers in Turkey on the very same issue continued on every occasion in the same pattern. Then Turkish President Süleyman Demirel assessed the situation in his opening speech of the TGNA in October 1998, by saying that,

The armament campaign of the Greek and Cypriot Greek side, and their attempts at increasing the tension is threatening peace and security in the Island and the East Mediterranean. We will continue to take the necessary measures to ensure the security of our soil and the TRNC (*Milliyet*, 2 October 1998).

After evaluation of an imminent threat posed by the Greek and Greek Cypriot administrations against the referent object's survival and security, the president of the Republic of Turkey pointed out the necessary emergency measures in order to handle it. As the representatives of a democratically elected government and appointed members of the decision-making process, all the statements of these actors have natural approval from the public as well. Therefore, as already noted, all related statements by the securitizing actors in Turkey included components of a successful securitization.

It is also important to highlight the reasons behind the RoC's decision to deploy such a sophisticated weapon system to the island in order to understand the securitized

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<sup>66</sup> For further details about the Bosnian War, see Bose, S. (2005) "The Bosnian State a decade after Dayton". *International Peacekeeping* 12 (3), 322-335; Kerr, R. (2005) "The Road from Dayton to Brussels? The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Politics of War Crimes in Bosnia". *European Security* 14 (3), 319-337, Rüma, Ş. İ. (2007) "*Uluslararası Toplum ve Egemenlik: Bosna-Hersek Örneği* [The International Community and Sovereignty: The Example of Bosnia-Herzegovina]". *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 63 (1), 237-272.

discourse of Turkish officials. As Ayman (2002: 8) and Ker-Lindsay (2007: 30-31) assess, there might be two interrelated goals of the Greek Cypriot administration, one is military and the other is political with the latter weighted more heavily. However, in either case, reactions of Turkish officials through a securitized discourse were quite understandable as pointed out by Ayman “the state that employs brinkmanship policy is forcing his adversary to make a difficult choice between backing away from his commitment and/or to fight or start a war” (Ayman 2002: 5). In face of this, Turkish securitizing actors openly warned that it would not allow Greece or the RoC’s quest to counter balance Turkey’s power and “would respond all attempts by adopting a response either matching or exceeding the Greek provocations” to ensure that missiles would not be deployed to the island (Ayman 2002: 16). In other words, Turkey was hesitant about any change in its superiority on the island.

This crisis worsened relations between Turkey and Greece, and triggered third party intervention to find a solution to the tension. During that time, apart from US President Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, the EU also warned the Greek Cypriot government about its decision. Following internal debates regarding the cost of such a deployment to the island given the difficulties of defending the island in the event of an attack from Turkey and its repercussion to Greece and the RoC’s relations with the EU, Prime Minister of Greece Kostas Simitis offered to put the missiles on the Greek island of Crete instead of Cyprus (Ker-Lindsay, 2000: 218).

Even though the tension settled the decision to put missiles on the Greek island of Crete, the discourse used by the securitizing actors during the crisis revealed the doubts and threat perception of the decision-makers towards Greece. The statements by securitizing actors clearly reflected how Greek Cypriot’s policies -encouraged by



Greece- posed existential threat to the referent objects' security and interests by changing the military balance in the region. Turkey's determination to prevent deployment of missiles to the island and protect the current *status quo* in the region, even by using military force, was a good instance for the securitization process. An emergency action against an existential threat caused successful prioritization of the issue by the securitizing actors.

The question of deployment of Russian missiles to Cyprus coincided with one of the turning points between Turkey and the EU, named the Luxembourg Summit of 12 December 1997, in which Turkey was not listed among the prospective candidate countries. This issue is another case study for this thesis in order to understand whether, how and to what extent the decision-makers in Turkey securitized the issue.

### **2.3. The Turkey-Greece-EU Triangle: The Case of Luxembourg**

Since the foundation of the European Economic Community (EEC) with the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, both Turkey and Greece were interested in joining the EEC in order to diversify their economic and security ties as well as to reduce their overdependence on the US (Öniş 2001: 32-33). Thus, both countries competed with each other to join the EEC, and successively applied for associate membership in 1959.<sup>67</sup>

The major motive behind Turkey's application was its fear that a possible membership in the EEC might strengthen Greece's economic and political structure *vis-à-vis* Turkey. Then Minister of Foreign Affairs Fatin Rüştü Zorlu tried to persuade other

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<sup>67</sup> While Greece applied for association to the EEC on 8 June 1959, this application stimulated Turkey and it applied to the EEC on 31 July 1959.

government members to “not to be left out of a group that could bring great economic benefits to Greece” (Baykal 2010: 495). In the words of Fatin Rüştü Zorlu,

This is a political matter for us. Should Turkey let Greece enter into such an arrangement alone, Turkey will be out in the cold. That is, Turkey’s chance to be accepted by such a Western organization is to a great extent dependent on Greece, the golden child of Europe, the cradle of Western civilization. When Greeks begin to move, you should run alongside them, without considering anything else. If they dive into a pool, you do the same thing, even though there is no water in the pool (Çalış 2004: 80).

Thus, Turkey wanted to prevent Greece from deriving an unfair advantage through a privileged association with the EEC and thus submitted its application shortly after the Greek application (Öniş 2001: 33; Baykal 2010: 494). The EEC policy-makers warmly welcomed Turkey’s application to the emerging EEC and the Turkish application was treated equally with the Greek application (Eralp 2009: 3).

However, Turkey and Greece’s association processes, which started in 1959 simultaneously, were not favoring of Turkey compared to the Greek process. Greece became an associate member of the EEC in 1961, whereas Turkey’s associate membership status completed with the signing of the Ankara Agreement on 12 September 1963. Furthermore, Greece was able to converge with the European communities and had been accepted into the EU as full member along with Spain and Portugal in 1981. Turkey is still trying to gain full membership status in the EEC, even at the time of the writing of this thesis.<sup>68</sup> As Güvenç (1998-99: 103) stresses, Turkey, for its part, was believed to have almost automatically deserved and earned the membership once Greece were admitted.

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<sup>68</sup> For more comprehensive analysis of Turkey-EU relationship, see Tekeli, İ. and İlkin, S. (1993) *Türkiye ve Avrupa Topluluğu [Turkey and the European Community]*. Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık; Müftüler-Baç, M. (1997) *Turkey’s Relations in a Changing Europe*. Manchester: Manchester University Press; Birand, M. A. (2001) *Türkiye’nin Avrupa Macerası: 1989-1993 [Turkey’s Adventure of the Europe]*. İstanbul: Milliyet; Redmond J. (2007) “Turkey and the European Union: Troubled European or European trouble?”. *International Affairs* 83 (2), 305-317; Öniş, Z. (2001) “An Awkward Partnership: Turkey’s Relations with the EU in Comparative Historical Perspective”. *Journal of European Integration History* 7 (1), 105-119.

During the 1960s and early 1970s, the EEC's approach toward Turkey and Greece, and to the problems between the two, was quite equal.<sup>69</sup> The EEC even gave equal treatment to both countries at the beginning of their EEC adventures. As Baykal (2010: 495) pointed out the application of Turkey and Greece to the EEC left the members states in a quandary because accepting just one of them might raise doubts about the objectivity of the EEC, whereas accepting both of them would impose a serious economic burden on member states due to both countries' weak economy.

However, tranquil relations ended with the political difficulties in Turkish domestic and foreign policy such as Turkey's intervention on the island in the summer of 1974, the problems between Turkey and the US in the mid-1970s, and the military *coup d'état* on 12 September 1980 all of which created frictions between Turkey and the EEC. Furthermore, with the Greek acquisition of full membership into the EEC in 1981, issues between the two came to the agenda of the EEC as Greece utilized this platform against Turkey. The Community's approach toward Greek-Turkish bilateral conflicts underwent a dramatic transformation as well (Öniş 2001: 36). It is possible to say that Turkey's membership process to the EEC became highly politicized by Greece since Turkey submitted its formal application for full membership to the EEC in 1987 (Güvenç 1998-99: 113-118). Finally, the Turkey-Greece-EEC triangle became more complicated when the Greek Cypriot government applied for membership to the EEC on 3 July 1990 on behalf of the whole island. Since then, the ups and down in Turkey's accession process has been closely associated with the Cyprus issue as well. As Suvarieral (2003: 54) points out, the Greek presence in the EU prevented the improvement of relations between Turkey and the EU, a possible membership of the

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<sup>69</sup> Even at the time when Greece made a formal application for full membership to the EEC in 1975, the signals from Brussels towards Turkish membership was positive. As Güvenç (1998-99: 106) points out, "Turkey had passed up a golden opportunity to secure a seat in the EU in 1975" as there were some encouraging signals from the EEC.

RoC to the EU would bring Greeks a second veto against Turkey, in addition to their own.

In addition, according to the Turkish official view, Cyprus cannot be a member of any international institution or political and economic unions in which Turkey and Greece are not members.<sup>70</sup> Although Turkey and the TRNC objected the Greek Cypriot application to the EEC, the EEC did not take those objections into account.<sup>71</sup> In contrast, the issue became an internal matter for EEC members. Greece has pushed for Cyprus's inclusion in the EU as a full member and used its veto power to persuade other member states into accepting its position (Müftüler-Baç and Güney 2005: 286). As Öniş (2001: 37) pointed out, Greece effectively exploited its bargaining position within the Union by threatening to block the eastern enlargement process.

During the Customs Union negotiations between the EEC and Turkey, Greece used its veto card until the EEC accepted to start negotiations for the accession of Cyprus. The Greek government continued to pressure EEC members until 1995, and prevented financial aid from being distributed to Turkey despite its commitment not to interfere in Turkey-EEC relations (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 4-28). Greece lifted its veto on Turkey's Customs Union with the EEC on 6 March 1995 as *quid pro quo* for starting negotiations with Cyprus, which was due to start in July 1996 (Athanasopoulou 1997: 87; Öniş 2001: 37). Thus, it is possible to say that apart from the bilateral conflicts

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<sup>70</sup> This issue clearly stated in the London and Zurich Agreements of 1959 and the Treaty of Guarantee of 1960. According to the article 8 of the London and Zurich Agreements, "the President and the Vice-President, separately and conjointly, shall have the right of final veto on any law or decision concerning foreign affairs, except the participation of the RoC in international organizations and pacts of alliance in which Greece and Turkey both participate, or concerning defense and security." Moreover, article 1 of the Treaty of Guarantee, "The RoC undertakes not to participate, in whole or in part, in any political or economic union with any State whatsoever."

<sup>71</sup> At that time Turkey also requested the advice of International Law professors such as the British Professor of International Law H. Mendelson on the legal aspects of the application of the RoC to the EU in order to convince international community. See the comprehensive opinion by Prof. H. Mendelson at [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/british-professor-of-international-law-prof\\_-h\\_-mendelson-q\\_c\\_\\_s-opinion-on-the-legal-aspects-of-the-one-sided-membership.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/british-professor-of-international-law-prof_-h_-mendelson-q_c__s-opinion-on-the-legal-aspects-of-the-one-sided-membership.en.mfa).

between Turkey and Greece like the differences over the Aegean, the EEC also internalized the Cyprus problem after the establishment of the Customs Union between Turkey and the EEC. Since then, the Cyprus issue was linked to Turkey's long-lasting relationship with the EU as a factor which not only slows down Turkey-EU ties, but also poisons relations by feeding loss of confidence on all sides (Eralp 2009: 1).<sup>72</sup>

During the negotiations for the Customs Union, Turkish decision-makers heavily criticized Greece's attitude toward Turkey. For instance, in his statement Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Murat Karayalçın warned Greece's use of its veto card against the amelioration of Turkey and the EU relations by saying that,

One cannot expect Turkey to remain silent and unresponsive in case Greece continues exercising its veto. If Greece takes the same stance on 6 March, it will cause the beginning of a very negative era in Turkish-Greek relations (*Milliyet*, 06 January 1995).

Likewise, Turkish President Süleyman Demirel also evaluated the Greek stance as follows:

It is a pointless and hostile stance for Greece to veto the Customs Union between Turkey and the EU. Let us be friends, do not be that afraid of us (*Milliyet*, 6 January 1995).

The statements by the abovementioned securitizing actors were of criticism rather than a security speech act. Different from the other cases in the previous chapters, the Greek veto against the improvement of relations between Turkey and the EU was not considered as an imminent or existential threat to the security of Turkey. In contrast, the securitizing actors evaluated it as a "hostile" stance, which targeted Turkey's interests in international politics. Rather than securitization of the issue, they preferred to handle it within the normal political processes such as diplomatic dialogue and so on.

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<sup>72</sup> The influence of the deadlock in the Cyprus issue will be further evaluated in the last chapter of the thesis.

In response to Greek attempts, President of the Republic of Turkey Süleyman Demirel decided to take action and issued a joint declaration with the TRNC on 28 December 1995.<sup>73</sup>

A major breakthrough in the Turkey-Greece-EU triangle emerged when Greece had once more blocked Turkey's accession process to the EU at the Luxembourg Summit of the European Council in December 1997. At the Luxembourg Summit, the European Council declared 12 applicants as candidate countries and decided to start the negotiations with some of the applicant countries from Central and Eastern Europe, except Turkey. The European Council's decision is shaped by the Copenhagen criteria of the European Council and Agenda 2000 proposal of the European Commission (Müftüler-Baç 1998: 241).<sup>74</sup> In the Agenda 2000 report, unlike the other applicant countries, the European Commission formulated a special "European Strategy" for Turkey that would prepare Turkey for accession in a long time by bringing it closer to the EU (Eralp 2000: 1-2). This strategy also reflected the Luxembourg Summit's Presidency Conclusion as well. Some of the conditions put forward at the Luxembourg Summit were directly related to Greece and Cyprus, as the Summit's Presidency Conclusion emphasized that:

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<sup>73</sup> According to the Joint Declaration of 2 December 1995, Turkey and TRNC decided that the ultimate aim in the island is bi-zonal and bi-communal federal settlement based on the sovereign equality of the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot sides, the EU membership of Cyprus can be evaluated after a final political solution, and until the final settlement in the island Turkey will continue to ensure the security of TRNC, to promote trade and economic relations between Turkey and TRNC, to help lifting of all restrictions imposed on TRNC in the international arena, and to intensify cooperation between the two in order to reach these objectives (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 28 December 1995).

<sup>74</sup> The European Council set several conditions at the Copenhagen Summit in 1993 for the candidate countries that have to be fully adopted before becoming a member state. These conditions, known as Copenhagen Criteria, are composed of political, economic and legal criteria. Political criteria require stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities while economic criteria require functioning economy that has capacity to cope with the competition in the international markets. Last but not the least, the administrative and institutional capacity to effectively implement the EU *acquis* are defined as the obligations of membership. See the webpage of European Commission at [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/accession-criteria\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/accession-criteria_en.htm).

The European Council recalls that strengthening Turkey's links with the European Union also depends on that country's pursuit of the political and economic reforms on which it has embarked, including the alignment of human rights standards and practices on those in force in the European Union; respect for and protection of minorities; the establishment of satisfactory and stable relations between Greece and Turkey; the settlement of disputes, in particular by legal process, including the International Court of Justice; and support for negotiations under the aegis of the UN on a political settlement in Cyprus on the basis of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

The Turkish government strongly criticized the unfair treatment of the European Council towards Turkey, which did not characterize Turkey as "candidate" like other countries, including Cyprus. Particularly, with the inclusion of Cyprus in the first rank of candidate, Turkish officials thought that this decision was a clear sign that the EU was taking sides with Greece on the Cyprus issue and acting under its influence (Eralp 2000: 2). The exclusion of Turkey from the enlargement process as well as the double standard towards Cyprus created a deep resentment, which also reflected in the statements of Turkish officials. For instance, the then Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz criticized the EU decision as follows,

The EU acted discriminative towards Turkey comparing with other applicant candidates. It would be naïve to expect any progress in Turkey-EU relations within constructive and multiple dialogue until the EU change its present mentality and approach. Turkey suspends its political dialogue with the EU particularly in the matters of Turkish-Greek relations, Cyprus issue and human rights (*Yeni Şafak*, December 1997).

Some other government officials also noted that Turkey had other foreign policy alternatives and membership to the EU was not an obsession for Turkey (Eralp 2000: 4).

As a result, the Turkish government suspended its political dialogue with the EU and did not participate in the European Conference to which Turkey was invited together with the other applicant countries (Eralp 2000: 3). Following the Luxembourg Summit, the EU tried to overcome the stalemate in the relationship in its successive

summits. The steps to appease Turkey continued until the Helsinki Summit, held on 11-12 December 1999, in which Turkey was declared as a candidate for accession to the EU.

Unlike the previous cases of Kardak and S-300 missile, which necessitated emergency actions by the securitizing actors in face of an imminent and existential threat towards the survival and security of Turkey, the Greek veto on Turkey's accession process to the EU, in general, cannot be evaluated as a securitization. Even though Turkish elites stressed the Greek attempts against Turkey's interests in international politics, this did not require any emergency action or dramatization like the previous cases. The political decision such as suspension of political dialogue with the EU following the Luxembourg Summit was taken in the normal decision-making process and it was an attempt to show Turkey's sensitiveness to the issue.

#### **2.4. The Capture of Öcalan**

Since the 1980s, terrorism has been one of the contentious issues between Turkey and Greece. Turkish military has been fighting against the PKK (*The Kurdish Workers' Party - Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê in Kurdish*) terrorist organization mainly in the southeastern provinces of the country for almost 35 years. In this battle against the terrorist organization, which first appeared in Turkey in 1984 under the terrorist leadership of Abdullah Öcalan, more than 40,000 people have lost their lives. The main goal of the PKK is the foundation of an "Independent, United and Democratic Kurdistan" and the PKK has been maintaining its armed struggle against the Turkish state in order to reach its goal (Özcan 1999: 64).

The conflict has serious repercussions in both Turkish domestic and foreign



policies. In domestic politics, the conflict has transformed the demographic structure of the country with large-scale population movements such as millions of Kurds willingly, or by force, moving away from their homes in southeastern Turkey to major cities in western Anatolia (Yavuz and Özcan 2006: 103). Turkish governments also used almost all means to prevent the communalization of the conflict between Turks and Kurds and separated the PKK from the larger Kurdish issue (Yavuz and Özcan 2006: 103).

In foreign policy, the financial, logistical and military support of third countries to the terrorist organization also led to serious crises between Turkey and various countries including neighboring Iraq, Iran, Syria, Bulgaria, Greece as well as many Middle Eastern and European countries. This foreign support enabled safe-havens for PKK guerillas, which enabled them to sustain their armed struggle against Turkey. Apart from that, the activities of PKK guerrillas, particularly, in touristic resorts not only damaged Turkey's foreign exchange earnings, but also damaged its reputation internationally (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 34). Thus, terrorism has always been a sensitive issue in Turkish foreign policy especially in its relations with neighboring countries.

The question of terrorism became a serious challenge in Turkish-Greek relations in the mid-1990s as well. The Turkish authorities had continuously argued that the Greek government supported the PKK which engages in brutal attacks against Turkey, while Greek authorities responded by stressing Turkey's human rights violations against the Kurdish community (Ker-Lindsay 2000: 218). The allegations of Greek support for the PKK were highly reflected in the statements of Turkish securitizing actors. In his well known article '*2 ½ War Strategy*', Ambassador Şükrü Elekdağ, former Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs argues that

The Athens government is providing heavy financial support to the PKK's

campaign of terror in Turkey. The fact that Athens has sent to Turkey PKK terrorists whom she has allowed to settle on her territory to conduct acts of sabotage against the Turkish tourism industry demonstrates the magnitude of the “national paranoia” and hysterical hostility Greece has submerged herself in against Turkey (Elekdağ 1996: 34-35).

Likewise, Turkish Chief of General Staff in one of his statements following the military’s concern over foreign threats emanating from Greece and Syria in particular raised the issue as,

During 1980s, Greece allowed separatist terrorist elements to take refuge in the Lavrion camp by granting them status of political refugees. It is remarkable that PKK and its front organizations have concentrated their efforts in Greece after Andreas Papandreu took office as the Prime Minister (*Milliyet*, 1 July 1995).

The emphasis on the threat emanating from Greece against the survival/unity of the referent object was clear in the abovementioned statements. Ambassador Şükrü Elekdağ defines the Greek administration’s support for the terrorist organization the results of a “hysterical hostility” and a “national paranoia” against Turkey. Thus, by using the terrorist organization, which directly posed a threat to the unity of the referent object, Greece also targeted the security of Turkey. Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Hikmet Çetin pointed to the link between a terrorist organization and a country by implying Greece’s “assistance of a terrorist organization that aims to separate a country, that is unacceptable by no means” (*Cumhuriyet*, 5 July 1995). Thus, Greece’s support for the PKK in terms of financial support and host of terrorist camps in its territory were evaluated as an existential threat against Turkey.

Turkish securitizing actors’ reactions as well as securitized discourse related to the issue was quite understandable as some instances by Greek politicians revealed the link between Greece and the terrorist organization. For instance, a public meeting between the second speaker of the Greek Parliament Panayottis Sgurides and Abdullah Öcalan along with five other Greek members of Parliament in June 1995 inflamed

Turkish decision-makers' suspicions about the intentions of Greece (Sabah, 22 June 1995). The attitude of the Greek politicians triggered a new series of confrontations between the two. Right after that meeting, the then Prime Minister Tansu Çiller's strong language was exceptional compared with the previous statements. As Müfti (1998: 34) argues, she described the Greeks as "dishonorable" and reminded them of their expulsion from Anatolia in 1922 in her statement:

History has shown the fate of those who attempt to prepare a grave for the Turks. Dishonor is not good for a human. But, dishonor for an entire nation is the worst of its kind.

I call out to the Greek public. You should also warn your administrators that have blinders on. I call out to the friends in the East and the West, believe in our friendship but, fear from our enmity (*Cumhuriyet*, 5 July 1995).

Despite all the concrete evidences, the Greek government denied the allegations regarding providing any support to the PKK. However, the relations between Turkey and Greece witnessed the worst of all crises in bilateral relations when the fugitive PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was captured in the Greek Embassy in Kenya.

Turkey's determined counterinsurgency campaign against the PKK both inside the country and across the Iraqi border in the mid-1990s weakened the terrorist organization as well as ceased its foreign support considerably. According to the NSC of Turkey, by 1997, the PKK's terrorist acts were reduced to a controllable degree (Kayhan Pusane 2015: 729). As part of its counterinsurgency policy, Turkey increased its pressure on Syria, where Öcalan lived until he was expelled in 1998, by threatening to use of force in order to convince the Syrian government to cut its support to the PKK and to expel him from Damascus (Benli Altunışık 2010: 152; Kayhan Pusane 2015: 729). Following the signing of the Adana Agreement on 20 October 1998, the Syrian government agreed to end its support of the PKK and expel terrorist leader Abdullah

Öcalan from Damascus.

After Öcalan was driven from Syria under Turkey's pressure, he sought refuge in several countries –none of which were willing to take him- including Italy, Russia and Greece , which became his and two female aides' final destination on 29 January 1999 (Bonner 2005: 60; Varouhakis 2009: 2). Athens, which sought to avoid the regional and international repercussions of harboring Turkey's most wanted fugitive if it became public, decided to fly Öcalan and his aides to Kenya, where they were holed up in the Greek Ambassador Georgios Costoula's residence and hoped to negotiate asylum (Bonner 2005: 60; Varouhakis 2009: 2). On 15 February 1999, Abdullah Öcalan was arrested and was placed on a plane where Turkish agents from the intelligence unit were waiting for him.

With the revelation of Greece's support for the PKK and its role in Abdullah Öcalan's escape and hiding, the Turkish-Greek relations reached its "lowest ebb" (Alpogan 2005: 165; Evin 2005: 396). Öcalan's confessions, during his interrogation, regarding the role of Athens in procuring most of the group's heavy weaponry -with Iran and Cyprus- and providing training facilities at a refugee camp in Lavrion confirmed Turkey's widespread concerns about its security (Bonner 2005: 61; Ker-Lindsay 2007: 38). In addition, Öcalan claimed that the PKK had received funds from the Greek Orthodox Church as well (Ker-Lindsay, 2007: 38). In response, Turkey's securitizing actors harshly criticized Greece's support of the PKK terrorist organization.

Hüseyin Kıvrıkoğlu, Chief of General Staff, restated the Greek involvement by saying that;

It was already known that Greece has been supporting PKK. They [Greeks] have nothing so say, no place to escape to. Whole world has seen what they [Greeks]

have done. They [Greeks] were caught red-handed (*Sabah*, 23 February 1999; *BBC* 22 February 1999, emphasis added).

Likewise, Süleyman Demirel, the President of the Republic of Turkey, labeled Greece as an “outlaw state, which sponsored terrorism”, and said,

Turkey reserved its right to take necessary precautions for self-defence arising from the international law, if Greece continues its irresponsible behavior (*Milliyet*, 27 February 1999).

In a similar tone, Bülent Ecevit, the Prime Minister of Turkey also emphasized that,

Greece was caught red-handed on the issue of terror, now Greece had paid the price for helping the PKK. It should be a lesson to any country which supports terrorism (*BBC*, 19 February 1999; *Milliyet*, 19 February 1999).

The above mentioned statements are other testimonies to the cases of Greece as a security threat from the lens of the securitization theory. The support towards a terrorist organization, which aimed for the foundation of an “independent, united and democratic” state within Turkey’s territory through its struggle against the Turkish state, was nothing more than an imminent and existential threat against the referent object. Emphasis on self-defence in face of such a threat by the president of the Republic of Turkey mainly stemmed from a direct attack against its territorial integrity by a terrorist organization that was “sponsored” by neighboring Greece. Despite all denials by Greek officials, the latest crisis revealed Greece’s involvement in the issue and Turkish officials said that Greece “was caught red-handed” during its “irresponsible behavior.” Besides highlighting the existential threat, the President of the Republic of Turkey Süleyman Demirel also underscored emergency measures by stressing, “Turkey reserved its right to take necessary precautions.” Therefore, it is possible to make an evaluation that Turkish securitizing actors securitized the link between the PKK and Greece by using security grammar in their statements.

The popular belief following the capture of Abdullah Öcalan and the revelation of Greek officials' involvement in the escape of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, was in favor of retaliation by Turkey with the increasing distrust toward Greece. As Ker-Lindsay (2007: 36-37) underlines, "the incident had become Greece's most humiliating postwar diplomatic fiasco" and it would lead to a crisis between the two. However, the atmosphere in bilateral relations changed dramatically and the capture of the PKK leader served as a springboard for dialogue rather than retaliation (Nachmani 2001: 87).

## **2.5. Turkey's Securitizations of Greece: An Overall Evaluation**

Since the end of the 1990s, the two countries had several crises such as the extension of territorial waters, the Kardak incident, the S-300 missile crisis, the Greek veto on Turkey's potential membership into the EU, and finally the revelation of Greek officials' involvement in the escape of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan. Following all the crises of this period, the statements of the political elites during all those crises showed how Greece was a security threat against the Turkish state as the referent object in the speech-acts of decision-makers. All the securitizing actors, in their statements, pointed out the "sovereignty of Turkey", the "sovereignty of the TRNC", which is considered inseparable to the security of Turkey, the "peace and security in Cyprus" as well as in general the "peace in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean." In face of imminent and existential threats posed by Greece through its "fortification of islands", "claims on the sovereignty of islands", "attempts to extend the breadth of its territorial waters, airspace", and finally its "support to terrorist organizations" securitizing actors commonly raised the issue of survival and sovereignty of Turkey. As a response to the existential threat against the security of Turkey, all securitizing actors warned Greece by "taking the necessary measures" including military ones, including "striking the

missiles”, and even “beating it.” While securitizing actors warned Greece, they also utilized past memories like the Turkish War of Independence [1922] and Turkish intervention on the island [1974] in order to remind Greece what is at stake and its costs. For instance, then Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan said during his speech at the Parliament in January 1997, “... Greeks know our people all too well. They have experience on this matter. They have seen the results of their attempts in 1922 and 1974” (*Milliyet*, 15 January 1997, emphasis added).

This securitized pattern in the discourses of securitizing actors is obvious in Greece’s ratification of the UNCLOS in its Parliament, in the Kardak incident, the S-300 missile crises and the revelation of the Greek politicians’ support of the terrorist organization as all those cases contained the components of a successful securitization such as “emergency action”, “existential threats” and the “approval of the relevant audience”. In contrast, the response by the securitizing actor to Greece’s veto on Turkey’s candidate status to the EU was within the normal decision-making process. The thesis argues that the tone in Turkish elite’s discourses related to Greece was “threatening” and “hostile”, and notwithstanding the fact that the two countries have never attacked or waged a war against each other since the foundation of Republic of Turkey, the security speech-acts of securitizing actors can be evaluated as Turkey’s almost readiness to get into an armed conflict with Greece.

Although there were several attempts to ease the tension between the two, as seen with the most recent Madrid Joint Statement of July 1997, there was little move towards change. Thus, it is important to investigate the reasons behind the current rapprochement process between Turkey and Greece, and how it was possible for Turkey to change the course of relations with Greece after years of enmity and hostility. To that

point, the thesis will try to explain the root causes of the rapprochement process between Turkey and Greece in order to understand the dynamics behind the transformation of bilateral relations, and to ask whether rapprochement has led to desecuritization. In this context, the thesis will employ Hansen's forms of desecuritization in order to understand whether it is possible to explain the rapprochement process with the methodology of desecuritization.





### 3. DESECURITIZATION OF TURKISH-GREEK RELATIONS SINCE 1999

Since 1999, Turkish-Greek relations have entered into a promising process of rapprochement that is also referred to as *détente*.<sup>75</sup> Although all early attempts to ease the tension between Turkey and Greece had failed; subsequent earthquakes both in Turkey and Greece, in August and September 1999 respectively, have created empathy and solidarity among the Turks and Greeks as well as provided a fertile ground for the decision-makers to implement their already launched initiatives towards dialogue with each other. It is possible to classify explanations regarding the root causes of the current rapprochement process ranging from being a product of “*disaster/earthquake diplomacy*”, to the impact of the Europeanization process in both countries’ foreign policies with a special focus on the Helsinki Summit of the EU, to the role of civil society actors in both countries, to the role of the ministers of foreign affairs in both Turkey and Greece, and finally to the role of the third parties such as the US. This thesis argues that it is possible to explain the latest rapprochement process through the forms methodology of desecuritization, on the other hand, it acknowledges that this explanation will be closely interrelated with the above-mentioned explanations rather than being contradictory. Within this context, the thesis uses the forms of desecuritization, borrowed from Hansen, in order to understand the relation between rapprochement and desecuritization. By doing so, the thesis reaches the conclusion that the rapprochement process, which is an outcome of several factors, can also be read from the viewpoints of “change through stability” and to a certain extent

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<sup>75</sup> The words of “*détente*” and “*rapprochement*” can be used interchangeable as their definitions are quite similar. While “*détente*” defines as an improvement in the relationship between two countries that in the past were not friendly and did not trust each other, “*rapprochement*” refers the development and friendlier relations between countries or groups of people who have been enemies (Oxford Dictionary 2006).

“rearticulation”, while other forms such as “replacement” and “silencing” do not fit into the analysis of the rapprochement process in the Turkish-Greek relations.

Before the analysis of the transformation from the viewpoint of desecuritization, this chapter will focus on all root causes behind the rapprochement process, which will also provide a fruitful ground for the desecuritization process. As discussed in more depth in the following section, this thesis argues that there is significant evidence showing that actors preferred to desecuritize issues by employing various strategies for taking the issues out of the military/security sphere.

### **3.1. The Root Causes of Rapprochement**

The rapprochement process between Turkey and Greece, like many other aspects of the relations, has been an attractive topic for scholars. There is a large amount of work investigating the latest process from different perspectives. Analyzing all those works in detail is beyond the scope of this thesis however, it is possible to classify them within four main categories such as: the impact of earthquakes and the empowerment of civil society; the Europeanization process both in Turkey and Greece; the role of two solution-oriented Ministers of Foreign Affairs; and finally the role of third parties.

#### **3.1.1. The Earthquakes and the Empowerment of Civil Society**

Turkey and Greece experienced the same destiny in August and September of 1999 when earthquakes hit two countries respectively. İzmit, an industrialized town in western Turkey, was hit by a powerful earthquake with a magnitude of 7.6 on the Richter scale for forty-five seconds on 17 August 1999. The earthquake and aftershocks left around 20.000 people dead and more than 50.000 wounded. Right after the earthquake, like many other countries, Greece assembled a team to depart to Turkey

with a transport plane of the Greek Air Force which included two medical aid teams of eleven nurses, twenty five fully equipped rescue team with sniffer dogs and emergency materials (*Hürriyet*, 18 August 1999).<sup>76</sup> Apart from the efforts of the rescue teams, the Greek public also tried to help victims of the earthquake in Turkey by raising money and donating food, medicines and other items (Ker-Lindsay 2000: 221). As Ker-Lindsay (2000: 221) points out in his article, the amount of the donations, even the representative of anti-Turkish sentiment in Greece the Orthodox Church started a fundraiser, reached 24 million Drachmas (66 billion Turkish Lira, or approximately GBP 50,000) within 24 hours.

Just twenty-two days after the İzmit earthquake, Athens was hit by an earthquake, which killed hundreds of people and wounded hundreds more, with a magnitude of 5.9 on the Richter scale on 7 September 1999. Despite the fact that Turkey was trying to recover from a disaster, it quickly sent a 20-member Turkish search and rescue team to Greece to assist the rescue efforts in cooperation with the Greek teams (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 10 September 1999). These mutual efforts by the Turkish and Greek rescue teams paved the way for their nomination for the 2000 Nobel Peace Prize (*Turkish Daily News*, 15 September 1999).<sup>77</sup>

During the natural disasters that shook both countries within several weeks, the media, which had been triggering nationalist sentiments on both sides by using patriotic language, had also acted prudent for the breakthrough in relations. As seen in the media coverage, the press said “the two Aegean neighbors, Turkey and Greece, have

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<sup>76</sup> It is important to highlight the fact that prior to the 1999 earthquakes, Greece also sent relief aid and non-governmental relief teams to conduct search-and-rescue operations and provide medical care in Turkey right after the Erzincan and Dinar earthquakes in 1992 and 1995 respectively (Ganapati *et al* 2010: 165).

<sup>77</sup> The Turkish Daily News-Hürriyet took the initiative in proposing Turkey’s Rescue and Research Association (AKUT) and Greece’s Special Disaster Unit (EMAK) for the Nobel Peace Prize in the year 2000. This initiative was supported by the Turkish and Greek governments as well.

discovered through the recent earthquakes they have experienced that they are not rivals, that each country is comprised of individual lives” (*Turkish Daily News*, 10 September 1999). One of the most striking indicators, as Gündoğdu (2001: 112) shares in her article, reflected the mutual empathy/solidarity between Turkey and Greece as Greek daily *Ta Nea* wrote “We are all Turks” in its issue following the earthquake in Turkey, whereas the Turkish daily *Hürriyet* responded in Greek: “*Efharisto Poli, File*” (Thank You, Neighbor). The wide broadcast of the suffering of people in both countries after the earthquakes triggered an empathetic feeling among Turkish citizens and vice versa. Another positive indicator, which is presented in the co-authored article by Ganapati, Kelman and Koukis (2010: 169), during that time was the placing of flowers by Turkish people at Greek Consulates in order to express their gratitude to Greece.

While there was no causal relationship between Turks and Greeks before the natural catastrophes, both communities were more willing to accept the improvement of relations than had been previously thought (Grigoriadis 2011: 121). However, the solidarity spirit and those interrelated positive developments had played a catalytic role in growing mutual sympathy in both communities, improving the interaction among Turkish and Greek civil societies as well as allowing the leaders to change their discourses towards each other. As seen during and after the earthquake, the statements of decision-makers from both countries were very sensitive, friendly and in harmony with the demands of the various civil societies.

Following the Athens earthquake, Süleyman Demirel the President of the Republic of Turkey sent a message to his Greek counterpart to share his feelings. In his message, he said that,

We are in solidarity with the people of Greece. Please be certain that Turkey will not withhold any support or help for your country and people in the face of this calamity (*Milliyet*, 8 September 1999).

Likewise, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit emphasized the friendship between two countries and their citizens as follows,

Through these two earthquakes, which have shaken these two neighboring countries, nature has once again reminded us the shared fate of the two countries. We [Turkey] share Greece's grief from the earthquake just as Greece shared ours [Turks]. We are determined to exert every possible effort to ease this pain. (*Milliyet*, 9 September 1999, emphasis added).

Apart from the positive messages by the decision-makers, there were also other initiatives that provided a fertile ground for the improvement of relations between the two countries. Right after the disasters Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem offered “the idea of the establishment of a joint Greek and Turkish disaster relief force” between the two countries (Ker-Lindsay 2000: 226; Ganapati *et al* 2010: 166). This was a result of the positive atmosphere that emerged after the 1999 earthquakes as the two governments actively pursued bilateral disaster-related collaboration. This joint initiative proposal, referred to as the “Joint Hellenic-Turkish Standby Disaster Relief Unit” (JHET-SDRU), by the governments of Turkey and Greece was adopted in the 54<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly held on 6 December 1999 (UN A/RES/54/30). After several meetings in Ankara (17 May 2001), Athens (11-13 September 2001) and Geneva (30-31 October 2001), Turkey and Greece signed a protocol on the formation of JHET-SDRU on 8 November 2001, which came into force in Turkey in 2004, and in Greece in 2006 (Turkish Official Newspaper, 24 May 2004). According to the Protocol between Turkey and Greece, the JHET-SDRU consisted of 40 people from governmental and non-governmental institutions from both countries with the “aim to increase their collective capacity to provide timely and effective humanitarian assistance to populations affected by sudden onset natural disasters” (Turkish Official

Newspaper, 24 May 2004). In line with the Protocol, both countries continued to work with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in order to ensure complementarity of efforts of the JHET-SDRU with international and regional activities.<sup>78</sup> Thus, it is possible to say that, decision-makers followed the publics' preference for solidarity and peace, and the diplomatic process which started months before the earthquakes automatically gained pace.

One of the positive developments of the natural disasters in both countries, along with their transformative power on media and decision-makers, was the empowerment of civil society contacts and initiatives between the two. Civil society had serious impact on starting a reverse process of antagonism that had caused the long-lasting prejudices on both sides. As Öniş stressed, "creating multiple networks of communication and cooperation by means of mobilizing voluntary organizations, educational institutions, the scientific community and intellectuals significantly reinforces reconciliation" (Evin 2005: 402). One of the instances that showed the positive atmosphere and mutual trust between Turks and Greeks was the Greek cross-border shopper's admission into a Turkish retail business practice: credit lines for regular customers (Güvenç 2004: 1). The increase of civil society activities brought institutionalism as well. As Rumelili (2005: 8) pointed out, the activities of civil societies are "no longer just meetings of "Greeks" and "Turks" for dialogue and friendship, but joint efforts around common causes and interests, be they promoting the status of women, or exploiting the tourism and trade potential."

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<sup>78</sup> Accordingly, the UN, Greece and Turkey signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Humanitarian Emergency Response on 16 September 2002. Under this agreement, both Turkey and Greece "will participate in UN Disaster Assistance and Coordination missions and will jointly develop seminars and field exercises for increasing the Joint Hellenic-Turkish Standby Disaster Response Unit's preparedness to take part in international humanitarian operations" (UN News Center, 17 September 2002).

Nevertheless, the impact of civil society already started to increase within the EU context that provided legitimacy and funding for joint civil society initiatives related to Turkish-Greek cooperation and dialogue (Öniş and Yılmaz 2001: 13; Rumelili 2004: 10). As Özel (2004: 269) pointed out, “many concerned Greeks and Turks from different walk of life looked for a workable ‘second track’ diplomatic route” even in the atmosphere of insecurity and mistrust of the 1990s, however most of these efforts failed due to several reasons. The EU, as already mentioned, played a significant role in eliminating one of the barriers in front of cooperative activities specifically at the civil society level. The generous contribution of the EU can clearly be seen through its funding of two programs. One was the Civil Society Development Program introduced in 2002 with its budget of 8 million Euro to promote civic dialogue and to enhance the capacity of NGOs in Turkey; and the other was a 35 million Euro package that was approved in 2004 to support cross-border cooperation between the two (Rumelili 2004: 10).<sup>79</sup> With the empowerment of unofficial organizations, think tanks and others such as private individuals, businessmen, and journalists they acted as the agents of change through message carriers and intermediators (Özel 2004: 270-271). The Greek-Turkish Business Council from 1988, which was founded under the spirit of the Davos Meetings between Turgut Özal and Andreas Papandreou but remained dormant since then, was reactivated for the continuation of the cooperation process between Turkey and Greece (Liargovas 2003: 133; Oğuzlu 2004: 95; Heraclides 2010: 151). The Turkish-Greek Forum, which is the one of the most promising initiatives of that time and consists of promising citizens from different backgrounds in Turkey and Greece, still continues to

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<sup>79</sup> For the details of funding opportunities and the use of these funds, see Rumelili, B. (2004) “The Talkers and the Silent Ones: The EU and Change in Greek-Turkish Relations”. in *Working Paper Series in EU Border Conflicts Studies* 10, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

be an engine for enhancing dialogue and improving relations between Turkey and Greece.<sup>80</sup>

It is obvious that the subsequent earthquakes both in Turkey and Greece played a fundamental role, even if not a primary one, in increasing dialogue between two communities, breaking rooted stereotypes, enabling joint civil society initiative as well as providing decision-makers some scope to be committed to the rapprochement process. In words of Ker-Lindsay (2000: 216), this fundamental role was “in the creation of a positive environment in which to implement such policies” rather than evaluating it as the main reason behind the rapprochement process. As mentioned, the dialogue between Turkish and Greek ministers of foreign affairs had already started with İsmail Cem’s letter to his Greek counterpart on 24 May 1999 one and half month before the İzmit earthquake. Thus, in the words of İsmail Cem (2009: 138),

The subsequent earthquakes increased the pace of rapprochement process between Turkey and Greece, however, this process was neither a product of earthquakes, nor started through earthquakes.

However, both sides never underestimated the importance of a shift in public opinion with the influence of natural disasters. As Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem pointed out “people of both countries have superseded politicians” in showing new progressive direction (Siegl 2002: 44). Likewise, George Papandreou (2001: 6) also pointed out that

“The earthquakes that shook Greece and Turkey in summer 1999 create a new climate in our recent diplomatic history. Tragedy generated a genuine feeling of human warmth between two peoples involved in historical strife. Spontaneous and dramatic acts of fraternity and solidarity were expressed between the citizens of Greece and Turkey. These acts short-circuited elaborate diplomatic

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<sup>80</sup> For the story of the Turkish-Greek Forum and the importance of second track diplomacy, see Özel, S. (2004) ‘Rapprochement on Non-Governmental Level: The Story of the Turkish-Greek Forum’ in *Turkish-Greek Relations: The Security Dilemma in the Aegean* ed. by Aydın M. and Ifantis, K. London and New York: Routledge, 269-290.



strategies and exerted powerful pressure on our governments to move ahead boldly. Our mandate became clear. Our people desire to live in peace together.”

In another statement by Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem, in his speech delivered at the ceremony for the “Statesman of the Year” award on 2 May 2000, said that:

... As representatives of Turkey and Greece, George and I are standing before you today for one simple reason: We have faithfully translated the feelings of the Turkish and Greek peoples into policies and acts.

Back in June 1999, we had already initiated, as two Ministers, a process of consultation and joint work on our bilateral issues, which was later expedited by the immense solidarity between our two peoples during the tragic earthquakes of last summer. In the both sides of the Aegean, Greeks and Turks, have rediscovered that they are thinking each other more than thought in general (Cem 2009: 169).

In spite of the new relationship between Turkey and Greece being based on mutual trust and cooperation due to the initiative of civil societies, its reflection on public opinion was quite different because of the prolonged disputes between the two. As Birand (1991: 30) points out, public opinion had sometimes acted as an impediment to the improvement of relations. In one of such public opinion survey conducted by Ali Çarkoğlu and Kemal Kirişci in 2004, 36.1 percent of the respondents answered an open-ended question of “which country is Turkey’s worst enemy in the international arena” as Greece (Çarkoğlu and Kirişci 2004: 126-127). Undoubtedly, such a result is quite normal considering the burden of their shared history as both Turkey and Greece continued to perceive each other as a source of threat. Accordingly, the stance of the media was a serious determinant for the course of relations as the prevailing sentiments in both communities are open to rekindle by an ignition.

When senior officials from the Turkish and Greek Ministries of Foreign Affairs gathered in early September, the impact of a new positive atmosphere and the

encouraging stance of media were unfolded as well. Both sides found themselves under the pressure of the media to achieve results in their meetings (Ker-Lindsay 2000: 225). At that time, prominent columnists such as Sami Kohen, Mehmet Ali Birand and Cengiz Çandar began to criticize Turkey's traditional nationalistic stance or securitized discourse on taboo issues such as Cyprus or the Kurdish question, and the lack of bold steps in Turkey's integration process with the EU (Heraclides 2010: 150-151). The impact of the prevailing positive atmosphere maintained over the following months paved the way for Greece's support of Turkey's candidacy status for the EU, which was confirmed by the European Council's Helsinki Summit on 10-11 December 1999.

### **3.1.2. The Europeanization Process in Turkey and Greece**

Since the foundation of the EU, both Turkey and Greece have been interested in being members of this community. While the EU accepted Greece as one of its member states in 1981, Turkey's long-lasting accession process to the EU has been maintained at a snail's pace. Therefore, it would not be overstating to say that Turkey's long-lasting desire to become a member state is still a distant dream. However, the process of "Europeanization", one of the meanings of which is the adaptation of EU rules and regulations by not only member states but also candidate or other associated countries, has seriously impacted both Turkey and Greece's domestic and security policies.

The meaning and the usage of the concept of "Europeanization" range over different disciplines, and there is a considerable amount of literature about the issue.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> For a detail account of "Europeanization" see selectively Cowles, M. G., Caporaso, J., Risse, T. (2001) *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and Domestic Change*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press; Featherstone, K. and Claudio, M. R. (2003) *The Politics of Europeanization*. New York: Oxford University Press; Börzel, T. A. and Risse, T. (2007) 'Europeanization: The Domestic Impact of European Union Politics'. in *The SAGE Handbook of European Union Politics*. ed. by Jorgensen, K. E., Pollack, M. and Rosamond, B. London: Sage Publications, 483-504; Ladrech, R. (2010) *Europeanization and National Politics*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Since the 1990s, the usage of the concept of Europeanization has increased rapidly with its explanatory power in European studies at a time when the EU was preoccupied with deepening (Featherstone 2003: 5; Aydın and Akgül Açıkmeşe 2007: 264; Nas and Özer 2012: 1). In the simplest term, as Featherstone argued (2003: 3), Europeanization is a “process of structural change, variously affects actors and institutions, ideas and interests.” For the purpose of this thesis, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, the concept is understood as a process which European integration impacts domestic and foreign policies of both countries.

For Greece, this process led to a shift in its foreign policy behavior from a nationalistic stance towards an approach based on diplomacy, negotiation and compromise, which is more compatible with the European model (Öniş and Yılmaz 2001: 14; Liaropoulos 2008: 29).<sup>82</sup> In the 1990s, Greece was marginalized within the EU due to its economic problems along with multi-faceted problems both in domestic and foreign policies. Despite the fact that Greece was struggling with its problems, the headlines in the post-election period such as the one featured by *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* “Greece, Welcome to the European Club” reflected the prevailing optimism in Europe towards the new prime minister Kostas Simitis (Verney 1997: 193). The Simitis government declared, in its “Government’s Programme” on 29 January 1996, that “Greece’s power lies in its ability to compete successfully inside an interdependent world. This requires a national strategy, whereby a set of policies with the aim of generating and maximizing the inner components of power, which are: economic stability, self-sustainable development, effective public administration, social cohesion and high standards in education” (Kazamias 1997: 74). Although Kostas Simitis was in

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<sup>82</sup> On the Europeanization of Greek foreign policy, see Ioakimidis, P. (2000) ‘The Europeanization of Greece’s Foreign Policy: Progress and Problems’. in *Contemporary Greece and Europe*. ed. by Mitsos, A. and Mossialos, E. Aldershot: Ashgate, 359-372; Stavridis, S. (2004) “The Europeanization of Greek Foreign Policy: A Literature Review”. *Hellenic Centre for European Studies (EKEM) Policy Paper*.

favor of Europe-centered foreign policy and wanted to change the course of foreign policy, including restoring relations with Turkey, he was faced with several difficulties immediately after he took office. The outbreak of the Kardak crisis and subsequent crises of that period, which might be evaluated as the most-tense phase in Turkish-Greek relations, revealed how difficult it would be to reach his goals and to change entrenched perceptions against Turkey. In any case, his term was closely associated with the Europeanization process in several areas such as economics, domestic and foreign policies.

Moreover, the existence of hardliners in Greek politics and the resistance for change was among the barriers in front of a transformation in foreign policy. As Verney pointed out (1997: 200), Simitis' major weakness in this period stemmed from "his limited power base within his own party." As a twist of fate, maybe one of the most unfortunate foreign policy issues for Greece -the involvement of some Greek politicians in PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan's escape- caused a foregone conclusion to the hardliners in the government. The forced resignation of three members of the Greek cabinet including Theodoros Pangalos (Minister of Foreign Affairs), Alekos Papadopoulos (Interior Minister) and Philipos Petsalnikos (Public Order Minister) over their ties with harboring Öcalan changed the balance of power in favor of moderates. Particularly the elimination of the hardliner minister of foreign affairs, who was replaced by his moderate deputy George Papandreou whose foreign policy priorities as well as attitude towards Turkey was completely different than his predecessor (Öniş 2001: 38; Evin 2005: 397). This fundamental change within the ruling PASOK party paved the way for the adjustment of Greek foreign policy with a special focus on relations with Turkey and the EU.

Last but not the least, the traditional foreign policy approach of Greece based on balance of power thinking, which was designed to counter potential military threats such as Turkey or Soviet Union -at least before it collapsed- and used its membership in the international organizations as leverage against such threats (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 120; Liaropoulos 2008: 27). This traditional security perception required allocation of substantial amount of resources that constituted a serious economic burden for the Greek economy for years. As Kollias, Manolas and Paleologou pointed out (2004: 190), in comparative terms, Greece is the most militarized country in NATO and the EU with its human and material resources invested defence. For the period between 1990 and 1999, Greece's military expenditure as part of its GDP was 3.5 percent on average, which was the biggest after the US and Turkey's 3.8 percent shares on average for the same period (see Table 2). As the detailed empirical study by Kollias *et al* showed (2004: 196) that, the military expenditure of Greece had adverse effects on the central government debt and in particular on the external debt.

Thus, Kostas Simitis wanted to reduce the funds for armaments, which constituted a serious burden to the Greek economy and a barrier for Greece to join the European Monetary Union (EMU) to reach his goals to increase Greece's integration/reputation with(in) the EU (Heraclides 2010: 138).<sup>83</sup> In the mind of Simitis, becoming a member of the EMU was a political issue rather than an economic one. To this point, the Turkish bid to become member of the EU inevitably provided the Greek government leverage over the differences between Turkey and Greece through moving

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<sup>83</sup> Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) refers to the coordination among member states on the economic and fiscal policies as well as a common currency known as "euro". The Treaty on European Union, also referred as the Maastricht Treaty, agreed at the European Council in December 1991 was contained some provisions regarding the implementation of EMU. Accordingly, the common currency was launched on 1 January 1999 and three years later, on 1 January 2002, national currencies of twelve member states, including Greece, replaced with the euro. For further details, see the official webpage of the European Union at [http://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/euro/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/index_en.htm).

the bilateral disputes to the EU level. This would be much easier to discuss/solve the Turkish-Greek disputes, as well as the Cyprus issue in a broader context of the European integration rather than the bilateral framework (Eralp 2009: 4). In other words, alignment with the EU would bring in an “external balancing” factor vis-à-vis Turkey that was also in accordance with Greece’s new strategic needs and priorities, mainly its ability to integrate to the EU (Tsakonas 2001: 154). Moreover, Greece would have a strong hand in lobbying for its interests if it would have a strong integration with the EU. Dimitrios Triantaphyllou (2005: 332) evaluated the Europeanization process of Greece’s foreign policy as the “panacea for eventually resolving or impacting on all of Greece’s key foreign policy concerns.” This approach brought Greece’s withdrawal of its longstanding veto strategy against Turkey’s EU bid, which means a “U turn in Greek politics”, that is a long-term strategy of binding, or even, integrating it into Europe (Siegl 2002: 45; Liaropoulos 2008: 28).

The signals of Greece’s dramatic shift from the mistake of the Luxembourg Summit, which decreased the bargaining power of Greece following Turkey’s decision of suspension of its political relations with the EU, appeared in Papandreou’s speech at the 54<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly on 22 September 1999. Then Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs George Papandreou (UN/A/54/PV.9, 22 September 1999) emphasized the willingness of his country to play a leading role in Turkey’s accession process, when he declared:

... In this democratic spirit, we believe that our security is bound by the stability in the region; that our neighbors’ strength is our own strength. From the outset, therefore, Greece shared with Turkey the vision that one-day Turkey would become a worthy member of a united Europe. But we recognize today that our role needs to be to lead the process.”

**Table 2: Military Expenditure of NATO Countries as of GDP (1990-1999)<sup>84</sup>**

<b>Country (NATO accession year)</b>	<b>USA (1949)</b>	<b>France (1949)</b>	<b>Greece (1952)</b>	<b>The Nether. (1949)</b>	<b>Norway (1949)</b>	<b>Poland (1999)</b>	<b>Portugal (1949)</b>	<b>Turkey (1952)</b>	<b>UK (1949)</b>
<b>1990</b>	5.3%	3.4%	3.8%	2.5%	2.9%	2.6%	2.4%	3.5%	3.6%
<b>1991</b>	4.6%	3.4%	3.5%	2.4%	2.7%	2.3%	2.4%	3.8%	3.7%
<b>1992</b>	4.7%	3.3%	3.6%	2.4%	3.0%	2.2%	2.4%	3.9%	3.5%
<b>1993</b>	4.3%	3.3%	3.6%	2.2%	2.7%	2.5%	2.4%	3.9%	3.2%
<b>1994</b>	3.9%	3.3%	3.6%	2.0%	2.7%	2.3%	2.2%	4.1%	3.0%
<b>1995</b>	3.6%	3.0%	3.2%	1.9%	2.4%	2.0%	2.3%	3.9%	2.8%
<b>1996</b>	3.4%	2.9%	3.3%	1.9%	2.2%	2.0%	2.1%	4.1%	2.6%
<b>1997</b>	3.2%	2.9%	3.4%	1.8%	2.1%	2.0%	2.1%	4.1%	2.5%
<b>1998</b>	3.0%	2.7%	3.5%	1.7%	2.2%	2.0%	1.9%	3.3%	2.4%
<b>1999</b>	2.9%	2.6%	3.6%	1.6%	2.1%	1.9%	1.9%	4.0%	2.3%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>

**Source:** Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) Military Expenditure Database - <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>.

<sup>84</sup> The table only covers the NATO member countries whose military expenditures were higher than 2.0 percent in average as of GDP between 1990 and 1999. The other allies spent less than 2.0 percent as of GDP were Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg and Spain. Iceland has an exceptional status regarding the military expenditure because it does not have its own army. For the defence expenditure trends of the member countries, see NATO's official webpage at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_127537.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_127537.htm).

The main rationale behind Greece's concession was the transformation of Turkish elite's "aggressive behavior" toward Greece by strengthening its European integration, which would require adoption of policies based on international law and agreements rather than instruments of statecrafts (Tsakonas 2001: 1). Greece seems to have achieved its strategy at the Helsinki Summit on 10-11 December 1999 through combining several issues to the EU that would provide some space for its security concerns by avoiding further crises.

For Turkey, a similar process of Europeanization became much more evident right after the formal recognition of its candidate status at the EU's Helsinki Summit, which reversed the negative effects of the 1997 Luxembourg Summit, of 1999 with the support of Greece (Tsakonas 2001: 3). As Akgül Açıkmeşe (2013: 303) underlines that "Turkey, as an EU candidate since 1999 and a negotiating country since 2005, has been in a process of substantive, if contradictory, transformation in every aspect of politics, economics and foreign policy." In return to granting Turkey's candidacy status, the breakthrough Helsinki Summit set certain political conditions about Turkish-Greek relations and the Cyprus issue for Turkey's ultimate accession to the EU. According to the Helsinki Summit Presidency Conclusion, the paragraph related to Turkey emphasized the political conditions such as,

... Turkey, like other candidate States, will benefit from a pre-accession strategy to stimulate and support its reforms. This will include enhanced political dialogue, with emphasis on progressing towards fulfilling the political criteria for accession with particular reference to the issue of human rights, as well as on the issues referred to in paragraphs 4 and 9(a) (Helsinki Summit Presidency Conclusion, 10-11 December 1999).

While paragraph 4 referred to the resolution of outstanding disputes, particularly with Greece, paragraph 9 related to the political settlement in Cyprus. The resolution of these preconditions was combined with Turkey's accession negotiations. Accordingly,



4. ... In this respect the European Council stresses the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter and urges candidate States to make every effort to resolve any outstanding border disputes and other related issues. Failing this they should within a reasonable time bring the dispute to the International Court of Justice. The European Council will review the situation relating to any outstanding disputes, in particular concerning the repercussions on the accession process and in order to promote their settlement through the International Court of Justice, at the latest by the end of 2004. Moreover, the European Council recalls that compliance with the political criteria laid down at the Copenhagen European Council is a prerequisite for the opening of accession negotiations and that compliance with all the Copenhagen criteria is the basis for accession to the Union.

9. (a) The European Council welcomes the launch of the talks aiming at a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem on 3 December in New York and expresses its strong support for the UN Secretary-General's efforts to bring the process to a successful conclusion.

9. (b) The European Council underlines that a political settlement will facilitate the accession of Cyprus to the European Union. If no settlement has been reached by the completion of accession negotiations, the Council's decision on accession will be made without the above being a precondition. In this the Council will take account of all relevant factors (Helsinki Summit Presidency Conclusion, 10-11 December 1999).

The abovementioned paragraphs once more showed that the resolution of its border disputes with Greece and the Cyprus issue, in which the EU decided to evaluate the RoC's -as the representative of the entire island- full membership independent of a resolution of the conflict, constructed another requirement for Turkey's accession to the EU (Gündoğdu 2001: 112; Müftüler-Baç and Güney 2005: 289; Grigoriadis 2011: 121). As Aydın and Akgül Açıkmеше (2007: 268) underline, the EU had already applied such requirements under the Common Foreign and Security Policy chapter in the previous enlargements; however "for Turkey and all current candidates, this criterion has been elevated onto an equal footing with the political criteria." Accordingly, the EU began to review the situation under the political criteria in the Accession Partnership Documents and the progress reports for the candidate countries (Aydın and Akgül Açıkmеше 2007: 268-271). For instance, the Accession Partnership Document of Turkey dated 8 March 2001 urged the candidate countries "to make every effort to resolve any outstanding

border disputes and related issues” by referring to the Helsinki Conclusion as follows,

The European Council emphasised that Turkey will benefit from a pre-accession strategy to stimulate and support its reforms including an enhanced political dialogue, with emphasis on progressing towards fulfilling the political criteria for accession with particular reference to human rights, as well as the issues referred to in paragraphs 4 and 9(a) of the Helsinki conclusions; in this spirit, the European Union encourages Turkey, together with all parties, to continue to support the UN Secretary General’s efforts to bring the process, aiming at a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem, to a successful conclusion (The Accession Partnership Document, 8 March 2001).

Likewise, the EU has continued to make the same emphasis on the border disputes in the following Accession Partnership Documents as well as the Negotiation Framework Document of 3 October 2005 with a similar tone:

Turkey’s unequivocal commitment to good neighbourly relations and its undertaking to resolve any outstanding border disputes in conformity with the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, including if necessary jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice;

Turkey’s continued support for efforts to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem within the UN framework and in line with the principles on which the Union is founded, including steps to contribute to a favourable climate for a comprehensive settlement, and progress in the normalization of bilateral relations between Turkey and all EU Member States, including the Republic of Cyprus (Negotiation Framework, 3 October 2005).

In addition to the Accession Partnership and Negotiation Framework Documents, as Aydın and Akgül Açıkmeşe (2007: 271) underline, the progress reports have been regularly stressing the same issue under the political criteria since 2001. In the most recent progress report of the European Commission on 9 November 2016, it stated that:

Turkey continued to express support for the talks on the Cyprus settlement between the leaders of the two communities, and for the efforts of the UN Secretary-General’s Special Adviser. Turkey’s commitment and contribution in concrete terms to this comprehensive settlement remains crucial. However, Turkey has still not fulfilled its obligation to ensure full and non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement and has not removed all obstacles to the free movement of goods, including restrictions

on direct transport links with Cyprus. There was no progress on normalizing bilateral relations with the Republic of Cyprus. The conclusions on Turkey that were adopted by the Council (General Affairs and External Relations) on 11 December 2006 and endorsed by the European Council in December 2006 remain in force. They stipulate that negotiations will not be opened on eight chapters relating to Turkey's restrictions regarding the Republic of Cyprus and no chapter will be provisionally closed until the Commission confirms that Turkey has fully implemented the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement.<sup>85</sup>

Turkey needs to commit itself unequivocally to good neighborly relations, international agreements, and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, having recourse, if necessary, to the International Court of Justice. In this context, the EU has expressed once again serious concern and urged Turkey to avoid any kind of threat or action directed against a Member State, or source of friction or actions that damages good neighborly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Apart from these preconditions, Turkey had to continue its reform process in compliance with the Copenhagen Criteria as well.<sup>86</sup> Since then, Turkey has entered into an intense reform process through harmonization packages and constitutional amendments in order to fulfill the Copenhagen Criteria.<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, the most striking impact of Europeanization showed itself in the civilization of the decision-making mechanism of Turkish foreign and security policy.<sup>88</sup> Even with these fundamental changes it did not fully successfully prevent statements from military authorities on some important foreign policy issues, which had serious repercussions on Turkish foreign policy.

The process of Europeanization coincided with the new foreign policy line of

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<sup>85</sup> The blockage on eight chapters related to Cyprus issue will be elaborated in detailed in the footnote 90 on the following pages.

<sup>86</sup> The Copenhagen Criteria that were established by the Copenhagen European Council in 1993 refer to the conditions for the countries wishing to become an EU member. These criteria identified as follow: "Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union" (Conclusions of the Presidency, European Council in Copenhagen, 21-22 June 1993).

<sup>87</sup> Notwithstanding the importance of the domestic reforms, the main focus will be the impact of Europeanization on Turkish foreign policy in this thesis.

<sup>88</sup> The impact of the Europeanization on civil-military relations in the decision-making process was mentioned in the methodology section.

Turkey, which necessitates moving beyond the long-lasting problems and establishing good economic relations as well. The liberalization of Turkey's economy/development strategy -from import-substitution to export-led growth in the 1980s- reflected on the traditional security oriented foreign policy considerations. The modification in foreign policy was defined by Kemal Kirişci (2009: 39) as a "trading state" in which "foreign policy has increasingly been shaped by economic considerations." The Customs Union between Turkey and the EU provided a fruitful environment to the eventual emergence of a trading state (Kirişci 2009: 39). The coalition governments' period of the 1990s as well as crises in foreign policy interrupted the successful implementation of the new trend in foreign policy. The new trend in foreign policy, which began with İsmail Cem, was based on expanding political and economic relations into new regions/countries and this trend continued after the JDP came to power in 2002. The JDP also emphasized the importance of economic prosperity and stability in the region but shifted Turkey's perspective in several aspects. Rather than focusing on long-standing problems, like the Aegean or Cyprus issues, the JDP used new policy tools to improve its relations with regional countries. The policy of "zero problems with neighbors" associated with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu was the driving-force behind this new vision. New tools such as visa-liberalization, mediation, trade-zones and High-Level Strategic Councils have been used successfully for the institutionalization of the new process. Nevertheless, the European transformative process through "conditionality" played an "effective anchor" in Turkey's new foreign policy trend (Aydın and Açıkmeşe 2007: 272; Keyman 2009: 15).

The most striking divergence in foreign policy showed itself in Turkey's established policy line in Cyprus. Traditionally, Turkey's Cyprus policy was based upon a nationalistic perspective, which considered the issue through a security lens and

evaluated it as “existential threat” to its security. However, the first JDP government (between 2002-2007) changed the discourse of the Turkish government’s Cyprus policy and acknowledged the link, which had been denied by the previous coalition governments, between Turkey’s accession process and a Cyprus settlement. (Tocci 2003: 202-203). As Çelenk (2007: 351-354) examines in her article, the most obvious desire for change at that time was the JDP government’s effort to restart negotiations between parties under the auspices of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and resolve the dispute before the RoC would join the EU on 1 May 2004. The JDP government’s Cyprus policy was based on supporting the resolution of the issue through a peace plan, known as the Annan Plan, which would also reconstruct the image of Turkey in the international realm vis-à-vis the EU, the US and the UN (Çelenk 2007: 353). As a result, Turkey supported a “yes” vote in the referendum on the Annan Plan held on 24 April 2004. In the breakthrough referendum on the unification of the island, Turkish Cypriots approved the plan by 64.9 percent, whereas Greek Cypriots rejected by 75.8 percent (BBC, 25 April 2004). Even though Greek Cypriots shattered the hopes regarding the fate of the island, the EU accepted the RoC as the representative of two communities on the island and welcomed it among nine other countries.<sup>89</sup> Despite the fact that the Europeanization process paved the way for beginning accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU on 3 October 2005, the settlement of the Cyprus issue still constitutes an important barrier in front of Turkey’s accession to the EU. The decision of Turkey in extending the Ankara Agreement to the RoC, in line with the Brussels Summit of the EU, has caused suspension of eight of thirty-five chapters in Turkey’s accession negotiations since 2005.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> On 1 May 2004, the EU welcomed the Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and RoC as its new members.

<sup>90</sup> The membership of RoC to the EU in 2004, without a settlement in the island, has created a serious

In terms of Turkish-Greek relations, the EU's abovementioned documents such as the Accession Partnership, Regular Progress Reports and the Negotiating Framework set the new framework for relations. The EU welcomed the progress in bilateral relations while it continued to emphasize the jurisdiction of the ICJ -without mentioning a deadline- for the unresolved disputes between the two countries (Aydın and Açıkmeşe 2007: 271). The positive impact of the Europeanization process was reflected in the statements of the Turkish decision-makers as well. As the then Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit stated that "our status as a EU member candidate is helping the development our relationship with Greece as well" (*Milliyet*, 31 January 2001), whereas Prime Minister Erdoğan stressed the role of the EU in his statement as "We [Turks and Greeks] have a common history, cultural values. Our cuisine, culture of music, clothes are nourished from a common pool of Mediterranean and the Aegean. But beyond that we [Turkey and Greece] are two neighboring countries one is EU member and the other as a candidate to the EU ..." (Anadolu Agency, 25 January 2008, emphasis added).

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obstacle in front of Turkey's accession to the EU. According to the Brussel Summit of the EU, in which the decision for opening negotiations with Turkey was taken on 16-17 December 2004, "... Turkish government confirms that it is ready to sign the Protocol on the adaptation of the Ankara Agreement prior to the actual start of the accession negotiations ..." (Presidency Conclusions, Brussels European Council, 16-17 December 2004).

The Additional Protocol extending the Ankara Agreement to the new member states including RoC, which is not recognized by Turkey, signed on 29 July 2005 between Turkey and the EU by an exchange of letters. With a declaration attached to the letter, Turkey stated that "signature, ratification and implementation of this Protocol neither amount to any form of recognition of the RoC referred to in the Protocol; nor prejudice Turkey's rights and obligations emanating from the Treaty of Guarantee, the Treaty of Alliance, and the Treaty of Establishment of 1960" (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 29 June 2005).

Turkey's reservation prompted a response from the EU through a counter-declaration on 21 September 2005, which stated that "The European Community and its Member States make clear that this declaration by Turkey is unilateral, does not form part of the Protocol and has no legal effect on Turkey's obligations under the Protocol." and continued as "the European Community and its Member States expect full, non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol, and the removal of all obstacles to the free movement of goods, including restrictions on means of transport. Turkey must apply the Protocol fully to all EU Member States. The EU will monitor this closely and evaluate full implementation in 2006. The European Community and its Member States stress that the opening of negotiations on the relevant chapters depends on Turkey's implementation of its contractual obligations to all Member States. Failure to implement its obligations in full will affect the overall progress in the negotiations" (Council of the European Union, 12541/05, 21 September 2005).

This caused a "train-crash" in relations and the EU decided to suspension 8 of the 35 chapters of negotiations until Turkey fully implement the conditions of the Additional Protocol.

Although the dynamics of Europeanization existed in different ways both in Turkey and Greece, it constitutes the common denominator for both sides, which in turn contributed to the easing of tensions between the two and consolidated the gains of earthquake diplomacy (Kutlay 2009: 116; Çarkoğlu and Kirişci 2004: 117). Both Turkey and Greece tried to improve relations within the framework of the EU. As Aydın and Akgül Açıkmeşe point out (2007: 272) Turkey would not be able to change the course of relations in such a sensitive foreign policy issue without the encouragement or pressure of/from the EU through “conditionality”. A similar process took place in Greece in a different way as Greece promoted the EU perspective in order to reduce tension and lead to the resolution of outstanding disputes (Triantaphyllou 2005: 332). This positive atmosphere in relations can also be traced in the developments in both countries foreign policies, where both searched for ways to change/modernization their traditional foreign policies as well as increase their positions in the international arena. Last but not least, the fertile domestic environment, where civil society and private sector demand cooperation rather than conflict, helped in deepening relations between Turkey and Greece as well. In the globalized world, decision-makers in foreign policy operate within the context of an aspiring civil society, vibrant media and private economic interests (Keridis 1999: 7). Therefore, instead of maintaining old habits in foreign policy, decision-makers in both countries paid attention to the demands of the public.

As the rapprochement process between Turkey and Greece started on the issues of “low politics”, there has been huge suspicion over the fate of the relations due to the difficulties of core issues such as the Aegean and Cyprus (Lesser 2001: 5; Öniş 2001: 42; Liaropoulos 2008: 28-29). However, both sides believe that it would be much more meaningful to focus on core issues if the current dialogue and confidence building

measure would consolidate and extend. During the seventeen years after the outbreak of the rapprochement process between the two, Turkey and Greece have made serious progress in fields such as energy, economy and minority rights. At this point, it is important to focus on the role of two Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Turkey and Greece, İsmail Cem and George Papandreou respectively, who might be evaluated as the architects of the rapprochement process.

### **3.1.3. The role of İsmail Cem and George Papandreou**

The winds of change in Turkish-Greek relations began to appear in the mid-1990s with the transformation in both countries foreign policy, however, the pop up conflicts at that time prevented tangible changes in relations. The crossing of two solution-oriented Ministers of Foreign Affairs, İsmail Cem in Turkey and George Papandreou in Greece, eased the process of change in relations. As already noted in the section on the earthquakes, İsmail Cem's letter to his Greek counterpart on 24 May 1999 -two months before the earthquakes- constituted a milestone in the relationship between Turkey and Greece. The exchange of letters between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs initiated a dialogue channel in bilateral relations despite turbulent times and hostility between the two countries. This was reflected in Papandreou's letter as follows;

... In this context, we could meet when the opportunity arises in order to have a sincere and constructive exchange of views. I have always been of the view that personal contacts between us can in many ways be productive. ... (Cem 2009, 133).

Apart from their triggering role in bilateral relations, the two ministers of foreign affairs had played significant roles in shaping their countries foreign policy. George Papandreou, who replaced Theodoros Pangalos, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, was initially considered as a risky choice for Greece, as Ker-Lindsay (2007: 37)



stresses, since he was seen to be too soft and too “ineffectual” character for such an important post. However, his moderate stance in terms of Turkey had positive impact on then Prime Minister of Greece Kostas Simitis’ Europe-centered foreign policy. In contrast to the negative stance against him in Greece, he was an asset on the wider international stage in regard to relations with Europe and the US (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 37).

The positive stance of George Papandreou even appeared when he was working as a deputy minister of foreign affairs. In response to a verbal note from İsmail Cem to his Greek counterpart on 12 February 1998, he said, “the proposals are considered by the government and a diplomatic response will be given only after the evaluations of Prime Minister of Greece Kostas Simitis and Minister of Foreign Affairs Theodoros Pangalos” (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 14 February 1998).<sup>91</sup> Actually, this was a reactionary statement as it came right after the statement of the government’s spokesman Dimitris Reppas, who tried to turn down the Turkish initiative (Fırat 2006: 274). Thus, he played an instrumental role in institutionalizing cooperation with Turkey by initiating dialogue with his Turkish counterpart İsmail Cem.

Similarly, the appointment of İsmail Cem as the Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1997 had impact on a certain change in Turkish foreign policy. As mentioned in the

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<sup>91</sup> On 12 February 1998, İsmail Cem the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs issued a verbal note to his Greek counterpart Theodoros Pangalos and called for the settlement of all the Aegean disputes between the two countries. The five-point proposal contains the following:

1) Jointly identifying the Aegean problems between the two countries; 2) Formalizing the “Madrid Declaration” of 8 July 1997, which was agreed upon by Turkey and Greece with the initiative of the US Secretary of State, Mrs. Allbright; 3) Developing and mutually implementing the “Confidence Building Measures in the Aegean” with the collaboration of the NATO Secretary General; 4) Jointly initiating the Personalities Group process, composed of respected Turkish and Greek personalities assigned to come up with proposals concerning the resolution of bilateral problems between the two countries; 5) Upon the positive reply from the Greek Government to the Turkish initiative, convening a high level meeting between the two Foreign Ministries to discuss these proposals, before the end of March 1998, either in Ankara or in Athens (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 12 February 1998).

Turkey’s proposal was rejected by Pangalos, the then Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs with a letter dated 20 February 1998.

previous section, the liberalization process in Turkish foreign policy, which was identified as “trading state” by Kemal Kirişçi (2009: 39), was interrupted during the coalition governments’ period in the 1990s. In this period, Turkey was governed by coalitions consisting of two or three political parties and there was no single-party until the Justice and Development Party (JDP) came to power in 2002. As Tuğtan (2016: 5) underlines İsmail Cem, who acted as Minister of Foreign Affairs for five years (1997-2002), was the only exception of the period between 1991 and 2002. There were frequent changes of ministers of foreign affairs, and the average duration of each minister was eight months (Tuğtan 2016: 5). The appointment of İsmail Cem as the Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1997 brought significant changes in several areas ranging from Turkish-Greek relations, to Turkey’s bid to join the EU, to the negotiations of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline, to the Adana Protocol with Syria in 1998 and etc. (Örmeci 2011: 102; Tuğtan 2016: 7).

Their constructive role in the beginning of dialogue between the two countries and the personal relationship between the two ministers of foreign affairs were worth mentioning. The attendance of both ministers of foreign affairs, with their families, to the Turkish-Greek Economic Forum held in Sisam in June 2001 was important to demonstrate the close ties between Cem and Papandreou. During the dinner in honor of Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem Papandreou performed *Sirtaki*, a traditional Greek folk dance, in honor of the fifth anniversary of his father Andreas Papandreou’s death (NTV, 21 June 2001).<sup>92</sup> When İsmail Cem passed away on 24

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<sup>92</sup> The friendship between foreign ministers of two countries even referred as “*sirtaki diplomacy*” by columnist as well as representatives from the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Senior columnist Yusuf Kanlı (2009), in his piece about the return of Papandreou as Prime Minister, evaluated the sympathy towards the Greek politician among Turkish social democrats and conservatives with a particular emphasis on the so-called “*sirtaki diplomacy*.” Likewise, in an interview to Greek daily *Kathimerini* on 17 March 2014, Kerim Uras, Turkish Ambassador to Athens, said that “diplomats from both Turkey and Greece evaluated the atmosphere between Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs George Papandreou and his Turkish counterpart İsmail Cem as an affirmative process. We called it as “*sirtaki*”

January 2007, George Papandreou as the then Prime Minister of Greece, attended his funeral and left an olive branch at his cemetery. During the funeral George Papandreou shared his feelings as:

Today, when I came here to the cemetery to leave an olive branch from my garden, I wanted to pay my last respects to my friend and remind all, that years ago [in 2001] we were on the island of Samos [*Sisam*], where together we planted an olive tree to symbolize peace. ... I wanted to say to İsmail that this olive tree is strong, and I will work very hard to make it stronger for peace between our countries and our peoples. ... We had many moments together, many difficult, but also many happy moments in making our vision come true (cited from the webpage of the “Cem Papandreou Peace Award”, emphasis added).

In 2015, George Papandreou and İpek Cem Taha, daughter of İsmail Cem, decided to implement the “Cem-Papandreou Peace Award” to honor individuals or institutions that contribute to peace.<sup>93</sup>

#### **3.1.4. The Role of Third Parties: the USA**

The relationship and the long-standing disputes between Turkey and Greece have always been important for the US with its implications to the southern flank of NATO. As strategic partners to the US as well as allies of NATO, both countries have played important roles in regional security and other issues like energy. Thus, a confrontation between Turkey and Greece has never been favorable for the interests of the US and NATO. Especially during the Cold War period, the stability and cohesion in the southern flank was essential for the effective balance of power against the Soviet Union. As Lesser stressed, “the US has a stake in the evolution of Greece and Turkey as ‘pivotal’ states - pivotal because what happens there involves not only the fate of two longstanding allies (with NATO security guarantees) but also influences the future of

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diplomacy”, which reflects the public view after the performance of two foreign ministers.” (Embassy of the Republic of Turkey to Greece, 23 April 2014).

<sup>93</sup> For the details of the Cem-Papandreou Peace Award, see the official webpage at <http://www.cempapandreouaward.org>.

the regions that matter to Washington” (Lesser 2001: 6). The US would continue to have good relations with both Turkey and Greece as long as its security interests and the effectiveness of NATO necessitates (Athanasopoulou 1997: 77). Therefore, it is important to examine the role of the US, along with the EU, which was already mentioned in the previous chapter, in Turkish-Greek relations in order to comprehend its influence in the latest rapprochement process.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, both Turkey and Greece sided with the US-led Western bloc due to fear of Soviet expansionism. At that time, Turkey was under the threat of Soviet Union with its claims over Turkish territory (such as Kars and Ardahan) and naval bases in the Turkish straits of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. In addition, the Soviet Union, which tried to expand its influence and establish “friendly” regimes in the states close to its borders, supported the communist guerrillas in Greece in order to take over control of the country (D.J.K. 1952: 162; Kalaitzaki 2005: 109). If the Soviet Union’s plans were successful, it would have repercussions to Turkey’s security as well. Therefore, the US support for both Turkey and Greece under the “Truman Doctrine”, which was launched with a speech US President Harry S. Truman gave to US Congress on 12 March 1947, marked a turning point in US’ Cold War strategy (Hale 2002: 115).<sup>94</sup> In his speech, President Truman asked for funding for a \$400 million aid program (\$300 million for Greece and \$100 million for Turkey) to Turkey and Greece in order to “support free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” This was a breakthrough as the US provided economic and military aid for both countries, and “took the advantage

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<sup>94</sup> The shift in the US foreign policy towards more active involvement to the international politics appeared when Britain decided to pull back due to its postwar economic crisis after the Second World War. As Türkmen (2009: 113) pointed out, in February 1947, Britain informed the US government about its decision that it could no longer provide economic and military assistance to Greece and Turkey, it also expressed its hope that the US take the responsibility of both countries. After that the US emerged as the main provider of security in the regions that the Britain withdraw.

of a favorable opportunity to enhance the strategic interests of the US in the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean” (Leffler 1985: 808). The relationship between the US, Greece and Turkey consolidated with the accession of both countries to NATO in 1952.

Previously, there was harmony in the US-Greece-Turkey triangle as both countries were willing to subordinate their national interests to focus on external threat named as Soviet Union (Kalaitzaki 2005: 106; Larrabee 2012: 472). However, this cordial relationship began to strain with the outbreak of the Cyprus issue in mid-1950s, as one of the contentious issues between Turkey and Greece. Both sides expected the involvement of the US, but Washington had no reason to become involved in a bilateral dispute over Cyprus, where it had no interest per se (Athanasopoulou 1997: 77; Kalaitzaki 2005: 106; Larrabee 2012: 472). As Secretary of State John Foster Dulles’ letter to the Prime Ministers of both countries on September 1955 showed that the US kept itself at an equal distance to each country, while he was calling parties for restraint (Stearns 1992: 25-30). However, in the early 1960s, the intercommunal disputes in the island forced the US to intervene the problem through a letter by the US President Lyndon Johnson to Prime Minister İsmet İnönü in order to prevent Turkey’s intervention to the island. As a result, a tense period, which lasted until 1980s, between Turkey and the US began as Turkey realized that it could not trust the US commitments for its security.

In the subsequent crisis of 1967, US mediation between Turkey, Greece and Cyprus paved the way for a quick solution without any escalation. Cyrus Vance, President Johnson’s special envoy, convinced the Greek side to withdraw its fighters from the island, which satisfied Turkey’s demands (Müfti 2009: 44; Göktepe 2005:

441). In contrast, during the Turkish intervention to the island in the wake of *coup d'état* by the Greek junta administration in 1974, the US did not play a decisive role in preventing Turkey's intervention. Moustakis (2003: 33) explains the US general attitude towards Cyprus as "the US concern was not the rights or wrongs of either side or the fate of the two communities on the island, but rather a way to limit the potential damage to NATO and to the US strategic position in the Mediterranean." The US ineffectiveness or passive stance caused Greece's withdrawal from the military wing of NATO until 1980 (Kalaitzaki 2005: 116).<sup>95</sup> In response to the Turkish operation, the US Congress secured the passage of a resolution on an arms embargo on Turkey, which also included banning military sales and aid to Turkey, under the pressure of the pro-Greek lobby in Congress (Hale 2002: 160). The arms embargo which came into effect on 5 February 1975 (it was completely lifted in August 1978) had serious impact on Turkish foreign policy as the Turkish government decided to suspend all US operations at all military installations within Turkey (Uslu 1997: 14; Hale 2002: 161; Kalaitzaki 2005: 116).<sup>96</sup>

The US role in one of the core disputes –the Cyprus issue- between Turkey and Greece proved that US policies were shaped around its own strategic interests rather than considering the interests of Turkey and Greece. According to Güvenç (1998-99: 105) "as long as [Greece and Turkey] did not tend to destabilize the region or pose a

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<sup>95</sup> For further readings about the US policy towards Cyprus, see Nicolet, C. (2001) *United States Policy towards Cyprus, 1954-1974: Removing the Greek-Turkish Bone of Contention*. Germany: Bibliopolis Mannheim und Mohnesee; Bölükbaşı, S. (1988) *The Superpowers and the Third World: Turkish-American Relations and Cyprus*. New York: University Press of America; Stearns, M. (1992) *Entangled Allies: US Policy Toward Greece and Turkey, and Cyprus*. New York: Council of Foreign Relations.

<sup>96</sup> Eventually, the efforts of the US administration paved the way for the lift of the embargo on 26 July 1978. In return, the Turkish government terminated the suspension in the US bases and facilities (Uslu 1997: 14). With the signing of Defence and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA) between Turkey and the US on 29 March 1980, the relations between the two returned its cordial atmosphere. The most striking point of the DECA was the well-known 7:10 ratio in aid to Turkey and Greece, which means that to allow \$10 in aid to Turkey for every \$7 in aid to Greece (Uslu 1997: 15; Hale 2002: 165). For further details about the 7:10 ratio, see Liapson, E.B. (1989) *Greece and Turkey: The Seven-Ten Ratio in Military Aid*, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress.

threat to the superpower balance in the Mediterranean basin, leaving these problems unresolved was a manageable solution for Washington.” As a result of the US hesitancy, both Turkey and Greece realized that they need alternative policies to improve their national securities. Within this scope, Turkey started to develop new relations with Muslim countries from the Middle East and to improve its relations with the Soviet Union starting from the 1970s (Ifantis 2004: 24). Greece also tried to decrease its dependency on the US, and shifted its focus towards the EU which altered the nature of its relations with the US (Ifantis 2004: 24; Kalaitzaki 2005: 116). It is also important to highlight that US policy was to encourage the UN to the lead in the settlement of the conflict rather than the US’ active and direct involvement (Larrabee 2012: 475).

The US continued its hesitancy and stayed out of bilateral disputes in the Aegean Sea that existed since the mid-1960s, and encouraged both parties to settle their problems via dialogue. As Kalaitzaki stressed (2005: 119) that “the US attempted neither to take a more active role as a mediator nor to take public positions on the bilateral dispute.” However, Greece continued its efforts to get the US’ guarantee in terms of maintaining the status quo in the Aegean Sea, whereas Turkey sought to gain an upper hand in the bilateral relations via blocking Greece’s return to NATO (Kalaitzaki 2005: 118). In contrast to the Cyprus issue, neither Turkey nor Greece attempted to involve the US in its disputes over the Aegean Sea.

The Cold War caused profound changes in US priorities in international politics, however its quest of preserving stability within NATO boundaries continued. The successive US administrations pursued a strategy of enhancing the US’ superpower capabilities and primacy as well. As Ifantis pointed out (2004: 26) “the 1991 Gulf War,

the 1995 and 1999 Balkan campaigns, as well as the 2001 Afghanistan intervention and the 2003 war against Iraq have been impressive American exhibitions of its ‘capacity’ to go to war and have demonstrated that military power is not obsolete.” Considering all those developments in US foreign and security policies, the disputes between Turkey and Greece did not constitute a priority in the US’ agenda. However, the stability in the southern flank continued to be paramount for the US strategic interest as the instability could imperil the Balkan stability that the US administration sought for (Athanasopoulou 1997: 85). In any case, the US policy toward the Turkish-Greek disputes might be evaluated as more active considering its role during the Kardak and S-300 missile crises. As Kalaitzaki (2005: 120) stressed, compared to the period between 1974 and 1989, the US has been more active since the end of the Cold War.

During the Kardak crisis in late 1995, the worsened situation between Turkey and Greece stimulated the third-party intervention to defuse the crisis. Alongside with US President Bill Clinton, senior members of the US Administration initiated intense telephone diplomacy with Ankara and Athens to ease tensions and secure an agreement (Ker-Lindsay 2007: 30). Intense mediation by US officials, particularly the US special envoy Richard Holbrooke, paved the way for the return to the *status quo ante* in the Aegean Sea. Richard Holbrooke’s warning as “the first party to fire would be responsible for the consequences and get into serious trouble with the US” doused the flame in the Aegean and both countries withdrew their flags and troops, under the US supervision, on 1 February 1996 without any incident. Likewise, when the relations between Turkey and Greece were once more strained over the Greek Cypriot Administration’s decision to acquire Russian medium range S-300 surface-to-air missile defense system in January 1999, the US put pressure on both sides to stop the deployment of missiles as well as the Turkish threat of military action. Another crisis



was prevented when Simitis Administration's suggested putting missiles on the Greek island of Crete instead of Cyprus, under the pressure of the US and the EU.

In both cases, the US role as the mediator served to decrease tensions between two allies and preserve the status quo in southeast Europe. However, the US involvement in the crises did not help to find a comprehensive solution to the long-lasting disputes between the two. To that point, Kalaitzaki's appraisal (2005: 124) about the role of the US during the disputes is quite correct, as he argues, "whatever the American purpose, it is the two governments that should have the political courage and will to decide and commit." Moreover, the increasing role of the EU in the 1990s, with the quests of both Turkey and the RoC's membership status to the EU, became a dominant factor in the future of bilateral disputes.

The EU's involvement in the disputes was strongly welcomed by the US as it provided an opportunity for the US to disengage itself from bilateral Greek-Turkish disputes (Kalaitzaki 2005: 124). The US administrations believed that there in the strong correlation between Turkey's integration to the EU and its cooperation with the West. The EU integration process would "anchor" Turkey ever more closely to the West and provide stability in Turkish-Greek relations (Siegl 2002: 47; Ifantis 2004: 34). A friction between Turkey and the EU would wane Turkey's cooperation with the West and might encourage a more nationalist stance in foreign policy (Lesser 2001: 6). This is the reason why from the late 1990s onwards, the US started to play an active role in promoting Turkey's accession process to the EU. As Öniş pointed out (2001: 39) "the US pressure was a vital if not the only influence upon the EU's decision to include Turkey as a candidate country at the Helsinki summit, thus reversing the decision reached at the earlier Luxembourg summit of December 1997."

In terms of the rapprochement between Turkey and Greece, the US government has been in favor of reinforcement of that process. It was quite reasonable to think that the rapprochement process and Turkey's integration with the EU would transform Turkey into a more predictable partner for both the US and the EU. As long as the rapprochement process continues, the US will make sure that Greek-Turkish brinkmanship no longer threatens the broader interests of regional détente and integration (Ifantis 2004: 35). As historical contexts show, the US "equidistance" policy toward Turkish-Greek relations is based on its pragmatic calculations. The US primary objective has been to keep Turkish-Greek relations in a constant manner to allow NATO's effective function (Ifantis 2004: 41). The interaction of Turkey and Greece with all related actors/international organizations such as the US, the EU, NATO and so on make the bilateral relations much more critical for all parties.

### **3.2. Instances of Rapprochement**

As mentioned earlier, the rapprochement process between the two started with a letter that broke orthodoxy on the securitized discourse on Greece. Hence, the letter of İsmail Cem, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs to his Greek counterpart George Papandreou on 24 May 1999 constituted a milestone in the relationship between Turkey and Greece. Just few months after the capture of Abdullah Öcalan and the revelation of Greek politicians' involvement in sheltering him in the Greek Embassy in Kenya İsmail Cem proposed that the two countries discuss the terrorism problem and that the two ministers examine ways to initiate a plan of reconciliation between their countries (Ker-Lindsay 2000: 220; Evin 2004: 397; Alpogon 2005: 166-167). Even though there was sensitivity regarding the connection between the Greek politicians and the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan which was securitized by decision-makers in Turkey, İsmail Cem's

letter triggered a change in discourse which was followed by political engagement between the two countries. In his letter, Cem (2009: 129) proposed cooperation against international terrorism and amelioration of relations as follows:

Our initial step should be to address the problem of what is perceived in Turkey as links that exist in Greece with terrorist organizations and their systematic encouragement. This is a matter of crucial importance for us and recent events have made it imperative that this issue be handled in an explicit manner and at the bilateral level between our two countries.

I, therefore, suggest that Turkey and Greece conclude an agreement to combat terrorism. Resolution of this issue would permit us to approach our known differences with greater confidence. The substance of this agreement may be inspired by accords we have already signed with some of our other neighbours, but it should also be specific to the nature of the problem as it affects our relations. ... I further suggest that parallel to the signing and implementation of such an agreement, we could also initiate a plan for reconciliation.

In his late response on 25 June 1999, George Papandreou sent his congratulations to Cem's reappointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs and suggested to extend the cooperation in a number of areas, in the words of Papandreou:

... In parallel, we could also envisage resuming dialogue on issues, many of which we have attempted to deal with in the past. Cooperation in several fields of mutual interest such as culture, tourism, environment, crime, economic cooperation and ecological problems should be amongst the topics of our talks (Cem 2009: 131).

The reason behind the late response as well as the suggestion of extending the areas of cooperation by the Greek minister of foreign affairs was related to the concerns regarding the implications of ties between Greece and terrorist activities. As Heraclides points out (2010: 145), Cem's "letter was loaded with dynamite, for it implied that Greece had to admit, however indirectly, that it had condoned the activities of the PKK." In his own account, İsmail Cem (2009: 129) also admitted his precondition of the acknowledgement of the abovementioned fact by the Greek government in order for an amelioration of relations with Greece. Even though İsmail Cem (2009: 131-134)

evaluated Papandreou's response as a political maneuver to reflect the terrorism issue as an ordinary cooperation area between the two countries in order to prevent any criticism in domestic politics, he welcomed the approach by the Greek minister of foreign affairs which would advance bilateral relations. Thus, it would not be wrong to argue that two solution-oriented foreign ministers planted the seeds of a slow but sure rapprochement process at a time that the relations had been passing through the peak point of securitization due to the subsequent crises.

Several days later, on 3 July 1999, two foreign ministers met at the Kosovo's Friends meeting in New York under the auspices of the UN Secretary General. They agreed on an action plan, which paved the way for establishing five working groups in the areas of "organized crime, drug trafficking, illegal migration and terrorism", "tourism", "environment", "culture" and "trade". In his return from the meetings in New York, İsmail Cem evaluated the negotiations with his Greek counterpart as "Turkey has agreements with various countries on the fight against terrorism. Therefore, dealing on an agreement with Turkey on the very same issue would be the first step for Greece to get over the shadow of terrorism" (The Directorate General of Press and Information, 1 July 1999). Moreover, he pointed out the importance of the effort action plan by saying an effort was being made "without raising high expectations, without being too assertive" (*Turkish Daily News*, July 4 1999).

Following the two foreign ministers' consensus on the establishment of working groups in their meeting in New York on July 3, 1999, the first working group met in Athens on 5-6 July 1999, to initiate cooperation in the proposed fields (Evin 2005: 397). As a result of these efforts, both countries through the initiative of foreign ministries cemented an intense diplomatic traffic including paying high-level reciprocal diplomatic

visits,<sup>97</sup> signing of agreements/protocols and staging joint military exercises.<sup>98</sup> One of the indicators of the transformation in bilateral relations was the sheer number of documents signed between the two countries. After three decades of dormancy, with the last major agreement being signed the “Agreement on International Land Transportation” in 1970, the signing of 25 new agreements and protocols in the 2000-2004 period relating to economic, social and cultural relations, which provided the legal framework for enhanced interaction, has been a very significant development (Öniş and Yılmaz 2008: 130).

In parallel with these efforts, there have been considerable changes in the discourses of decision-makers that led to the securitization of Greece. First and foremost, decision-makers began to stress the importance of a “friendship atmosphere between the peoples of two countries” by ignoring the existence of issues of contention. Even though the desired result is the possibility of the disappearance of issues from the security realm, the form of change through stabilization where the larger conflict still looms in the background is what fits the Turkish-Greek case.<sup>99</sup> There are various instances regarding the change of security discourse in the statements of decision-makers despite the fact that problems between the two still exist. For instance, during George Papandreou’s visit to Turkey on 20 January 2000, Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem said “recent developments have shown that the peoples in these two countries are much closer to each other than we thought they were” (*Milliyet*, 20 January 2000). Likewise, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit stressed in an interview “I wish

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<sup>97</sup> Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs George Papandreou came to Turkey for an official visit, first time in 25 years, in January 2000; while Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem made a return visit after 30 years, in February 2000.

<sup>98</sup> Between May and June 2000, the two countries staged joint military exercises in Greece, under the aegis of NATO, which saw Turkish military aircraft arriving at a Greek airbase and Turkish soldiers landing on a Greek beach (Ker-Lindsay 2000: 226).

<sup>99</sup> Along with the major contentious issues over the Aegean and Cyprus, the occasional dogfights, which have been occasionally occurring over the Aegean airspace, might be a good example to present the existence of disputes even for today.

the Aegean Sea to be a perpetual link of friendship between Greece and Turkey, which will be based on a just foundation” or President Ahmet Necdet Sezer in a dinner which hosted nineteen Chiefs of General Staff -including the Greek one- who stated “Turkey wants to be in good relationships and cooperation with Greece, just like with all of its neighbors” (*Milliyet*, 9 June 2000; *Sabah*, 16 September 2000). Two foreign ministers even began to address each other as “my friend” (*Hürriyet*, 9 November 2001).

The transformation in discourse naturally reflected in practices in foreign policy in several forms. The high level reciprocal visits after long years, creation of dialogue channels such as the Turkey-Greece EU Committee or “exploratory talks” between foreign ministry officials, start of joint military exercises, expansion in economic ties, increases in tourism are all results of such a transformation.

Apart from the working groups between the two countries, Turkey and Greece also initiated a cooperation in order to accelerate Turkey’s accession process to the EU after Turkey’s official candidacy status was recognized at the Helsinki Summit in 1999 (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 6 April 2001). Within this framework, the two parties established a Turkey-Greece EU Committee that held its first meeting in Ankara on 28 February 2000 with the participation of the officials from both Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Under the committee meetings, Greek officials have shared Greece’s experience on customs and financial issues, judicial issues and agricultural matters with their Turkish counterparts (Oğuzlu 2004: 97). These meetings facilitated deeper cooperation/dialogue between two countries.

During the same period, attempts to resolve the many disputes between Turkey and Greece in the Aegean Sea took place behind closed doors. Teams led by the respective undersecretaries of the Turkish and Greek Ministries of Foreign Affairs

began exploratory talks on 12 March 2002 in Ankara (Turan 2010: 2). The outcome of these talks was a willingness to discuss -at least- disputes between Turkey and Greece over the Aegean Sea. Before the beginning of the exploratory talks, İsmail Cem said in an interview on CNN Türk television that “there can be development concerning the Aegean. Be it dialogue, mediation, arbitration or even the international tribunal, we’re open to all” (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 30 January 2002). The nature of the talks evaluated by the Undersecretary of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Uğur Ziyal just after the first exploratory talks in Ankara are as follows,

“We had a wide and constructive discussion with my Greek colleagues. We looked into a number of issues and we decided to continue ... The exploratory dialogue had no deadline and that its aim was to promote Greek-Turkish relations. The talks dealt with the procedures, framework and substance of the problem” (*Ekathimerini*, 13 March 2002).

Due to the conditions of the Helsinki Summit, the talks started and maintained a high gear, and so far, sixty rounds of Turkish-Greek exploratory talks have been held between the representatives of the two countries.<sup>100</sup> Yet, there haven’t been any substantive changes in either side’s position, so far, in the talks based on the principle that “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.” In any case, with the idea of the exploratory talks, an essential high-level dialogue mechanism was established between Turkey and Greece.

In the military field, Turkey and Greece staged joint military exercises in Greece in mid-2000, under the aegis of NATO, which saw Turkish military aircraft arriving at a Greek airbase and Turkish soldiers landing on a Greek beach (Ker-Lindsay 2000: 226). During the three-weeks military exercise, codenamed Dynamic Mix 2000, in the Eastern Mediterranean, 150 Turkish marines landed on a Greek beach located 200

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<sup>100</sup> According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the sixtieth, round of exploratory talks held in Athens on 1 March 2016.

km. southwest of Athens (BBC, 2 June 2000). Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit stressed the importance of dialogue, which paved the way for joint exercises, between the two countries, as,

The separations and disagreements between Turkish and Greek peoples are artificial while friendship is natural ... warming friendship and public support to our relationship have made the handling of problems via dialogue easier. ...

Friendly relations between the militaries of two countries was developed ... soldiers are able to participate jointly on each other's soil in exercises that are organized for the common security of two countries (*Milliyet*, 9 October 2000).

Likewise, after a meeting with his Greek counterpart in Skopje, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem pointed out the continuation of the dialogue process and military exercises while he said that,

Sudden ups and downs may occur between two countries. We may face even bigger problems in the future. However, we have to continue the dialogue [including joint military exercises] because it is to the interest of both peoples (*Hürriyet*, 1 November 2000 *emphasis in original*).

Considering the statements of the same actors in the not too distant past, there was substantial change in the securitized discourse of decision-makers. While Turkey and Greece came to the brink of war due to an incident in the Kardak rocks five years ago, the two countries began to conduct joint military exercises even by deploying troops to each other's soil. The emphasis on "friendship" or "interests of both peoples" rather than focusing on "existential threat to the referent object" is the reflection of the political dialogue between the two countries.

Furthermore, Turkey cancelled one of its scheduled exercises in the Aegean in 2002, called Efes-2002, in accordance with the confidence and security building measures (*Sabah*, 4 June 2002). The positive atmosphere also reflected on the national security perception as well. As Oğuzlu pointed out, Turkey's new National Security



Policy Document did not mention Greece as the top external threat to Turkey's national security in August 2002 (Oğuzlu 2004: 98).

Within the positive atmosphere of relationship, in April 2001, Turkey and Greece agreed on an essential decision about the elimination of the anti-personnel landmines on their common borders over the ten years. It was a significant example of the confidence building measures between the two. During the one-day working meeting between the two foreign ministries, they decided to start the necessary process in order to become the signatories of the 1997 Ottawa Convention<sup>101</sup> which required the destruction of their existing landmines and prohibiting future landmine use and production (Oğuzlu 2004: 97). Both Turkey and Greece formally agreed to be bound by the Ottawa Convention on 23 November 2003 and it was entered into force in 1 March 2004 after their official ratification in their parliaments. İsmail Cem evaluated the common decision with Greece as “we agreed upon every issue and took concrete decisions. We are progressing slowly but surely in our relations” (*Sabah*, 7 April 2001).

Apart from the diplomatic and military initiatives between Turkey and Greece, the thaw in bilateral relations had positive impact on bilateral trade and economic relations as well. The growth in bilateral trade was supported with administrative adjustments and political agreements in the light of agenda that was agreed upon between İsmail Cem and George Papandreou in 1999 (Tsarouhas 2009: 46). Within this context, the ministers of foreign affairs of both countries met in the “Turkish-Greek Economic Forum” held on the island of *Sisam* (Samos) in June 2001, with the participation of a large number of businessmen, journalists, academics, and

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<sup>101</sup> The Ottawa Convention, the informal name of the “Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction”, was adopted on September 1997 and entered into force on 1 March 1999. It was an international effort in order to stop suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines. For further information, see <http://www.apminebanconvention.org>.

representatives from the Chambers of Commerce. While there were negotiations towards boosting trade and economic relations between the two countries at the Forum, the foreign ministers also discussed possibilities to lift or to ease the visa requirement for daily trips to the islands (NTV, 23 June 2001). Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem in his interview emphasized the positive atmosphere in the relationship as follows,

We are not running away from problems or ignoring them. Both countries perceive the problems in the Aegean differently. Rather than trying to gain an upper hand, the best way is to pay attention to the sensitiveness of each other or to find ways by understanding each other. There is possibility to reach that point. Maybe it would not happen today or tomorrow, but considering the situation two years ago, now we are much closer to that point” (NTV, 23 June 2001).

The transformation in the security discourses of the decision-makers as well as in the practices in the relationship between Turkey and Greece that started with Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem (1997-2002) continued after the rise of the JDP to power. The decision-makers of the JDP followed the new policy line in foreign policy, and expanded political and economic relations into new regions/countries with the focus of economic prosperity. Rather than focusing on long-standing problems, like the Aegean or Cyprus issue, the JDP used new policy tools to improve its relations with regional countries.

Greece was among the neighbors, along with Syria and Iran, that Turkey improved its relations within the new context of its foreign policy. The JDP government maintained good relations with Greece. The visit of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, as the head of a political party,<sup>102</sup> to Athens just a few days after the November 2002 parliamentary elections signaled the intentions of the new Turkish government. He also visited Athens

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<sup>102</sup> Recep Tayyip Erdoğan had not become the Prime Minister immediately after the November 2002 elections because of a court ban on his political activities. He was appointed as Prime Minister on 14 March 2003, following the annulment of this ban.

as the prime minister of Turkey, the first such visit after 16 years, on 6 May 2004.<sup>103</sup> During this visit, Prime Minister Erdoğan's positive statements towards Greek people, as well as to the Turkish minority in Greece clearly reflected the constructive discourse. He emphasized that "Turkey and Greece has managed to get over a period of great tension, creating a mutual environment of trust and a positive atmosphere thanks to two people's consistent support, determination and the efforts of governments" (*Hürriyet*, 7 May 2004). He also stressed the importance of a peaceful atmosphere in the Aegean by stating "It is necessary to solve all problems in the Aegean one by one and turn the Aegean Sea into a sea of peace. We should not jeopardize the future of our country with trivial dealings" (*Hürriyet*, 7 May 2004).

As a continuation of the positive atmosphere in the relationship, Turkey and Greece reciprocally cancelled their routine military exercises in the Eastern Mediterranean in 2003. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan evaluated this reciprocal cancellation of military exercises in an interview with Greek television as follows,

Military exercises were mutually cancelled. These are positive developments. Our principle on this area is that a lack of a solution is no solution. I do not mean to say that we will give everything for the interest of one party. Both sides should approach each other honestly and reciprocally, meeting at a common ground. I am saying these to Mr. Kostas Simitis and, George Papandreou as well. If we can find a common ground, I think that there will be no reason for a lack of resolution of the problems (*Milliyet*, 28 November 2003).

Despite several small-scale problems between the two countries in the rapprochement period, political actors insisted on positive language in their statements to ensure stability and friendship between Turkey and Greece.

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<sup>103</sup> Although a return visit by Prime Minister of Greece scheduled in 2004, it had been rescheduled three times afterwards. In January 2008, Prime Minister of Greece Kostas Karamanlis paid an official visit to Turkey after a 49-years of break. It was the first official visit by a Greek Prime Minister after his uncle's visit in May 1959. It was a breakthrough in relations as he crossed a "psychological threshold", as Barçın Yinanç defines, with his trip. (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 23 January 2008).

While no breakthrough was achieved with regard to the main disputes between the two both in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean, détente bore undeniable fruit at the economic level (Grigoriadis 2011: 123). The improvement in economic relations was absolutely in favor of business elites, and gained momentum after the rapprochement process. Although a Customs Union was established between Turkey and the EU in March 1996, which could have led to a significant increase in economic relations, the two business communities could at best keep the dialogue channels open instead of utilizing the prospects of the Customs Union (Tsarouhas 2009: 44). As seen in Table 3 below, the bilateral trade -as one of the economic sectors- was less than \$700.000 throughout the 1990s due to political tensions, and it took time to exceed the one million-dollar barrier, which occurred in 2003. The gradual increase in trade volumes continued until the Euro-crisis hit Greece in 2008 causing a decrease in trade volume in the following two years. However, the establishment of the Turkish Greek High-Level Cooperation Council (HLCC) in May 2010 doubled trade volumes, which reached 5 million dollars between 2011 and 2014.

**Table 3: Trade Volume of Turkey and Greece (1990-2015)**

	<b>EXPORT</b>	<b>IMPORT</b>	<b>TRADE VOLUME</b>
<b>1990</b>	139.386	128.591	<b>267.977</b>
<b>1991</b>	143.681	77.059	<b>220.740</b>
<b>1992</b>	145.704	88.150	<b>233.854</b>
<b>1993</b>	118.124	120.460	<b>238.584</b>
<b>1994</b>	168.854	105.064	<b>273.918</b>
<b>1995</b>	209.952	200.673	<b>410.625</b>
<b>1996</b>	236.473	284.959	<b>521.432</b>
<b>1997</b>	298.237	430.780	<b>729.017</b>
<b>1998</b>	370.039	319.751	<b>689.790</b>
<b>1999</b>	406.794	287.556	<b>694.350</b>
<b>2000</b>	437.725	430.813	<b>868.538</b>
<b>2001</b>	476.095	266.254	<b>742.349</b>
<b>2002</b>	590.382	312.462	<b>902.844</b>
<b>2003</b>	920.401	427.743	<b>1.348.144</b>
<b>2004</b>	1.171.203	594.351	<b>1.765.554</b>
<b>2005</b>	1.126.678	727.830	<b>1.854.508</b>
<b>2006</b>	1.602.590	1.045.328	<b>2.647.917</b>
<b>2007</b>	2.262.655	950.157	<b>3.212.812</b>
<b>2008</b>	2.429.968	1.150.715	<b>3.580.683</b>
<b>2009</b>	1.629.637	1.131.065	<b>2.760.702</b>
<b>2010</b>	1.455.678	1.541.600	<b>2.997.277</b>
<b>2011</b>	1.553.312	3.539.869	<b>5.093.181</b>
<b>2012</b>	1.401.401	3.539.869	<b>4.941.270</b>
<b>2013</b>	1.437.443	4.206.020	<b>5.643.463</b>
<b>2014</b>	1.536.658	4.043.839	<b>5.580.497</b>
<b>2015</b>	1.400.566	1.860.935	<b>3.261.502</b>

Source: Turkish Statistical Institute, [www.tuik.gov.tr](http://www.tuik.gov.tr).

Another striking development worth mentioning was the “*Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with Respect to Taxes on Income*” between Turkey and Greece, which was signed on 2 December 2003 and entered into force as of January 2005, in order to eliminate double taxation on the profits of firms operating in either country. This development was supported by Turkish officials and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said that “recently, dual taxation between Greece and Turkey was rescinded. ... If we can find a common ground, I think that there will be no reason for a lack of resolution of the problems” (*Milliyet*, 28 November 2003). Business elites also supported the improvement of economic relations. Tuncay Özilhan, Chairman of TÜSİAD, said, “he hoped that new ways would be found to develop the Turkish-Greek contacts. Obstacles preventing both Turkey and Greece’s mutual benefits abroad could only be overcome through efficient, collective and consistent policies, and the appropriate practice of these policies” (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 2 December 2003).

The field of foreign direct investments and joint ventures (FDI) might be another indicator of the positive relations between Turkey and Greece. Greeks, members of a nation which had bad memories of past events such as the September 1955 anti-Greek riots in Istanbul, started to make investments in Turkey after the triggering effects of dialogue and the cooperation process between the two countries. The newly established business routine between communities expanded to new fields such as information technology, construction, banking sector and so on. The most striking example of a joint initiative was the Turkish-Greek construction consortium’s bid for a project in Oman (Tsarouhas 2009: 46-47). In the banking sector, the National Bank of Greece’s acquisition of Finansbank, the fifth largest bank in Turkey, was another indicator of the deepening economic relations (Tsarouhas 2009: 46). Even though Turkish companies had several bureaucratic barriers to operating in Greece, the state-owned Ziraat Bank’s

branches in Athens, Xanthi, Komotini and Rhodes might be evaluated as the most remarkable investments of Turkey in Greece. There are a few companies operating in Greece in the textile and information technologies industries. Finally, the increase of visits by tourists to one another's country increased the dialogue channels which would eliminate historical perceptions between two communities as well. The visa-free travel, or at least facilitation, for Turkish citizens to the Greek islands close to Turkish shores, which came into effect in 2012, was another instrumental arrangement between two countries.

Despite all these positive developments in bilateral relations, the course of foreign policy has started to change in both countries. While the political transformation and the emergence of new actors in Turkey,<sup>104</sup> problems in Turkey's accession negotiations with the EU, as well as the economic crisis in the United States and the EU triggered a change in Turkish foreign policy. Greece has experienced the same with the intensification of the economic crisis. Particularly in the second term of the JDP (2007-2011), Turkey began to develop its relations with Middle Eastern countries, which even caused debates regarding a "shift of axis" in Turkish foreign policy.<sup>105</sup> Despite the change in priorities in foreign policies of the two countries, the collegial atmosphere was maintained without any crisis. At the end, the efforts regarding institutionalization of bilateral relations was finalized with the establishment of the Turkish Greek High-

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<sup>104</sup> For the emergence of a new business community in Turkey, which is called Anatolian bourgeoisie, and its influence on Turkey's economic and foreign policy preferences, see Ö. Tür (2011) "Economic Relations with the Middle East Under the AKP-Trade, Business Community and Reintegration with Neighbouring Zones". *Turkish Studies* 12 (4), 589-602.

<sup>105</sup> For further details regarding the debates on the direction of Turkish foreign policy, see Benli Altunışık, M. and Martin, L. G. (2011) "Making Sense of Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East under AKP". *Turkish Studies* 12 (4), 569-587; Z. Öniş (2011) "Multiple Faces of the "New" Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique". *Insight Turkey* 13 (1), 47-65.

Level Cooperation Council on 14 May 2010,<sup>106</sup> during Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's visit to Athens with an entourage of more than 300 people, including bureaucrats and businesspersons. As a result, two countries signed twenty-two bilateral agreements, and the two prime ministers agreed to meet at least annually in Turkey or Greece, while foreign ministers would come together at least twice a year, and other ministers three or four times a year. The positive atmosphere in the relationship between the two reflected on Turkey's security considerations as well. As seen in the press release of the NSC meeting of 19 February 2010, Turkey's official discourse also changed with the stabilization in relations, as follows,

... The interrelated issues between Turkey and Greece such as disputes in the Aegean, and Turkey's vital and legitimate rights and interests in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean were evaluated in detail in the light of current developments. The NSC reiterated its determination on solving all disputes between Turkey and Greece stemmed from the Aegean Sea based on the principles of good neighbourhood, close cooperation and constructive dialogue.

The chain of events, named as the Arab Spring, that were triggered throughout the Middle East and the North Africa at the end of 2010 by the local population's quest for freedom, equality and better life conditions have created unexpected and serious challenges for the entire region and beyond. The influence of upheavals in its immediate neighborhood of Turkey as well as the adverse effects of the economic crisis in Greece have naturally affected domestic and foreign policy agendas of both countries.<sup>107</sup> While there was a decrease in the interaction of two countries, high level Turkish and Greek politicians/diplomats continued to come together during several occasions. The prevailing positive discourse was maintained in statements of the Turkish decision-

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<sup>106</sup> The Council meetings bring the two countries' representatives from different levels time to time. The most recent meeting of the Council took place in İzmir on 8 March 2016 under the co-chairmanship of Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and Prime Minister of Greece Alexis Tsipras.

<sup>107</sup> For the impacts of both Arab Spring and the economic crisis in Turkish foreign policy, see selectively Davutoğlu, A. (2013) "The Three Major Earthquakes in the International System and Turkey". *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs* 48 (2), 1-11; Z. Öniş (2014) "Turkey and the Arab Revolutions: Boundaries of Regional Power Influence in a Turbulent Middle East". *Mediterranean Politics* 19 (2), 203-219.



makers. For instance, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu's visit to Athens on 10 October 2012 and his Greek counterpart Dimitris Avromopoulos's reciprocal visit to Ankara on 15 February 2013 to discuss the preparations of the HLCC<sup>108</sup> between Turkey and Greece, which was held on 4 March 2013, unveiled the continuation of the positive discourse in relations. In the aftermath of those visits, Ahmet Davutoğlu evaluated the prevailing atmosphere between the two in separate press conferences as follows,

...The problems in the Aegean Sea will be solved with Greece in a positive manner and I believe that this would transform the Aegean into a peace and prosperity sea (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 October 2012).

... The ongoing efforts would strengthen the awareness of common destiny among the people of the two countries. The two countries would share a common vision concerning the future of Turkish-Greek relations (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 15 February 2013).

The rapprochement process that started in 1999 is still continuing between Turkey and Greece. Although there are no tangible changes in any core disputes between the two, there have been regular ties between the officials from both sides of the Aegean Sea. The dialogue and cooperation was much more progressive in the first five years of the process with both countries' desire for integration with the EU. Although Turkey's accession negotiation process slowed down due to Turkey's domestic problems as well as the EU's internal debates, the transformative potential of the EU for both countries had played a significant incentive role for today's constructive atmosphere between the two (Kirişçi 2002: 48). The EU's role in the relationship between the two finally appeared with the flow of migrants into Europe. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), just in

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<sup>108</sup> The dates and places of the HLCC meetings between Turkey and Greece listed as follow: 2nd meeting – 4 March 2013 in İstanbul; 3rd meeting – 6 December 2014 in Athens; and 4th meeting – 8 March 2016 in İzmir. According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in line with the HLCC, both countries have signed 54 agreements in total so far.

2015 over 850,000 migrants fleeing from their homes in war-torn countries crossed the Aegean Sea from Turkey into Greece (UNHCR, 10 August 2016). Therefore, the migration issue added a new layer to the bilateral relations between Turkey and Greece.

At a time when the relationship between Turkey and the EU had been moving at a slow pace, the agreement on a Joint Action Plan between Turkey and the EU on 29 November 2015, in order to tackle the migration crisis, activated the stalled relations. The main aim of the Joint Action Plan is to step up cooperation of both sides to prevent the flow of irregular migration from Turkey to Europe.<sup>109</sup> In line with this development, Turkey and Greece signed a readmission agreement for illegal migrants on 8 March 2016 during the 4<sup>th</sup> HLCC meeting in İzmir alongside other agreements focusing on trade, transport and tourism (*Ekathimerini*, 8 March 2016). The following negotiations between Turkey and the EU also reconfirmed the commitments of both sides to implement the Joint Action Plan on 18 March 2016. Accordingly, the two simply agreed on the readmission of irregular migrants to Turkey from 20 March 2016 onwards; to resettle legal refugees from Turkey to the EU, up to a total of 72,000, for every Syrian being returned to Turkey from Greece; to lift the visa requirements for Turkish citizens at the latest by the end of June 2016 if Turkey fulfilled all benchmarks;<sup>110</sup> to provide an additional \$3 billion Euro for health, education, infrastructure and other living costs of migrants in Turkey; and finally to re-energize the

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<sup>109</sup> In return for Turkey's cooperation in the migration crisis, the EU promised to provide \$3 billion Euro to improve living conditions of refugees, to revitalize Turkey's accession negotiations to the EU by opening new chapters -as a result the negotiations opened on Chapter 17 of Economic and Monetary Policy on 14 December 2015-, as well as to advance on visa liberalization for Turkish citizens.

<sup>110</sup> As of 8 December 2016, Turkey still tries to fulfill the required 72 benchmarks for the visa liberalization roadmap for Turkish citizens.

accession process of Turkey (European Council Press Release, 144/16, 18 March 2016).<sup>111</sup>

While these adjustments/agreements between Turkey and the EU have had considerable impact on Greece's responsibilities on migrants as the southeastern gate of the EU,<sup>112</sup> the agreements also paved the way for new cooperation areas between Turkey and Greece. The two countries conducted several high-level meetings to discuss the migration issue along with other bilateral issues,<sup>113</sup> Greek and Turkish Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Nikos Kotzias and Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu respectively, met in Athens on 4 March 2016. In the press conference following the meeting, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Çavuşoğlu evaluated the negotiations with his Greek counterpart by emphasizing the “dialogue”, as he said,

Naturally we know, and we said this again in our one-on-one meeting, that there are differences and problems that need to be resolved in Greek-Turkish relations. ... Both sides believe that we need to avoid any intervention, any statement that will cause the climate that exists between Greece and Turkey to deteriorate.

... There is a joint action plan that was decided on at the end of November. As Nikos said earlier, the refugee issue is not Turkish or Greek. Our issue is how we will resolve it, how this huge influx, this refugee and humanitarian crisis, will be resolved. Of course, we support and will always support the NATO forces operating in the Aegean to assist with this refugee crisis (Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 4 March 2016).

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<sup>111</sup> For the progress about the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, see the European Commission's report on the progress at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20161208-](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20161208-4th_report_on_the_progress_made_in_the_implementation_of_the_eu-turkey_statement_en_0.pdf)

[4th\\_report\\_on\\_the\\_progress\\_made\\_in\\_the\\_implementation\\_of\\_the\\_eu-turkey\\_statement\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20161208-4th_report_on_the_progress_made_in_the_implementation_of_the_eu-turkey_statement_en_0.pdf).

<sup>112</sup> According to the UNHCR, the number of refugees crossing the Aegean to reach Greece by sea decreased to 170,000 in 2016 with the impact of the Joint Action Plan agreed between Turkey and Greece in November 2015 (UNHCR, 2 December 2016).

<sup>113</sup> There were several high-level meetings between the two countries right after the agreement between Turkey and the EU. Some of them are as follows: Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and his Greek counterpart Alexis Tsipras met on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum held in Davos between 21 and 24 January 2016; as already noted above, two foreign ministers got together in Athens between 3 and 5 March 2016; and the two prime ministers met for the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the HLCC in İzmir in March 2016.

We are aware, and we reiterate once again, that Greece is the neighbour of Turkey with which Turkey wants to cooperate, and we must capitalize on every opportunity to deepen the existing cooperation framework.

Similar to the previous statements of the decision-makers in Turkey, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu also restated the existence of disputes, however he pointed out the need for a prudent attitude from the both sides of the Aegean in accordance with the détente process. During this period, Turkish decision-makers continued to stress the importance of the cooperation and stability in relations rather than stick with the disputes, which is also possible to interpret as the desecuritization of the issue of Greece in Turkey.

### **3.3. Understanding Rapprochement through Forms of Desecuritization**

As explained in the above part, the rapprochement process since the late 1990s between Turkey and Greece includes direct attempts at resolving outstanding disputes (i.e. exploratory talks to discuss disputes over the Aegean Sea), and indirect attempts which do not address the resolution of disputes but aim at deepening cooperation at various levels (i.e. military, tourism, environment, culture, trade as well as organized crime, drug trafficking, illegal migration and terrorism). All these direct and indirect attempts were also reflected in the discourses of elites which included a positive and cautious pattern instead of a highly securitized discourse which contained a “threatening” and “hostile” tone. In any case, the period of rapprochement in the 1990s has distinct differences as the emphasis on friendship and elimination of hostilities can be clearly seen in the statements of decision-makers.

In this context, the securitizations of Greece by Turkey that existed before the rapprochement process seem to have ended. Thus, this thesis argues that rapprochement has paved the way for desecuritization of issues related to Greece. But, how? This thesis

suggests that the “how” question could be answered by employing the concept of desecuritization as developed by the Copenhagen School.

As mentioned in the theoretical background, the process of desecuritization is a highly difficult task considering its abstract characteristics, however Hansen’s forms of desecuritization provides a viable framework to analyze desecuritization cases. Thus, an analysis of requirements or suggestions of Hansen’s forms would unveil the correlation between rapprochement and desecuritization and would enable us to see which forms of desecuritization fits/do not fit the Turkish-Greek relations.

The thesis argues that the amelioration of relations between Turkey and Greece quite fits into the “change through stabilization” form of desecuritization suggested by Lene Hansen. This form of desecuritization refers to the “slow move out of an explicit security discourse” that paved the way for the “political form of engagement” (Hansen 2012: 539). Immediately after a highly securitized discourse of Turkish decision-makers in face of several crises such as Greek extension of its territorial waters, the incident in the Kardak rocks, Greek politicians’ involvement in sheltering terrorist leader Abdullah Öcalan and etc. the security grammar of the decision-makers began to substitute a positive and cautious tone. Decision-makers’ efforts towards moving bilateral issues between Turkey and Greece out of an emergence mode and discussing relations within the normal bureaucratic spheres helped the prevailing atmosphere in relations. Thus, the stabilization in the relationship paved the way for the political engagement of two countries and enabled the change in the security discourse in Turkey.

The most significant sign of the change was the addressing of the ministers of foreign affair’s as “my friend” to each other as a result of the rapprochement between

the two countries. The same feelings were also shared by the prime ministers of the two countries during Kostas Karamanlis' official visit to Turkey in 2008. Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan in referring to his Greek counterpart stated, "we expect the support of my dear friend, my counterpart, Kostas" when he was evaluating the Cyprus situation (*New York Times*, 23 January 2008).

Likewise, during the crises of the rapprochement process such as the burning of the Turkish flag at the Greek Military Academy in April 2005, then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gül said that "Such behavior occurs sometimes. I guess these will be overcome" while he was announcing that he was sure of the future of the relations. In a similar way, Prime Minister Erdoğan said in an interview "We should not aggrandize trivial matters. All is in friendship, not in enmity" (*Sabah*, 25 April 2004). Even, in 2005, Bülent Arınç, the speaker of the Turkish Parliament raised the idea of nullifying the *casus belli* decision, whereas Abdullah Gül, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs supported his idea by stating that the *casus belli* decision reflected "old feelings". Although there has been no change regarding the decision, the positive atmosphere has been maintained between the two. In another crisis, when Turkish and Greek jet fighters collided in mid-air during a clash over the disputed region of the Aegean Sea in May 2006, the two sides used a careful tone in order to sustain the prevailing positive atmosphere between the two (*Guardian*, 24 May 2006). Following the incident, Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül, spoke to his Greek counterpart Dora Bakoyannis in which "both sides stressed the need not to let the incident harm relations" (*Guardian*, 24 May 2006).

Besides the change in the discourses of decision-makers, the working groups which were established in 1999, joint initiatives such as the "Joint Hellenic-Turkish

Standby Disaster Relief Unit”, joint military exercises, the friendship between Turkish and Greek communities as well as the sheer number of documents signed between the two countries were obvious signs of political and social engagement. It is important to highlight that without “recognizing each other as legitimate”, as Hansen puts as another requirement of this form, such cooperation between Turkey and Greece would not be possible. Starting from the “soft issues”, the two countries aimed to create a spillover effect in consolidation of relations from one sector to another.

As the form of “change through stabilization” derived from the détente period of the Cold War, which was in the spotlight with the reduction of both the US and the Soviet Union’s armaments in order to enable relaxation in strained relations, the relations between Turkey and Greece had a similar experience in terms of landmines. As mentioned previously, both countries became the signatory of the Ottawa Convention in 2003, and they started the elimination of anti-personnel landmines on their common borders as a confidence building measure. Turkey and Greece even initiated a dialogue mechanism with the working groups and exploratory talks in order to resolve long-lasting problems between the two.<sup>114</sup> As Hansen (2012: 529) underlines the larger conflicts still loom in the background in the form “change through stabilization”, thus, as seen in the Turkish-Greek case, the existence of long-lasting disputes over the Aegean Sea fits into this form. While the two countries have been focusing on cooperation areas in their bilateral relations, both prefer to sweep all their problems under the rug.

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<sup>114</sup> Right after the downing of jet fighters during the dog fight over the Aegean Sea in May 2006, the then Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Gül in Turkey and Dora Bakoyannis in Greece, agreed on a hotline between the operational headquarters of the two countries’ air forces located in Eskişehir and Larissa (Hurriyet Daily News, 12 June 2006).

In the form of “rearticulation” that refers to a political solution to the threats/dangers/grievances, there is no political solution to any of the contentious issues. Even though Hansen points out (2012: 542-543) that rearticulation is a more radical form of political engagement without any conflict looming in the background and “fundamental transformations of the public sphere including a move out of the friend-enemy distinction”, the Turkish-Greek relations is still not at that point due to the burden of their divergences on several issues. Even the expectations reflected in İsmail Cem’s interview where he stated “five years ago, the nation that fit the concept of “the other” best was the Turks for Greeks, and the Greeks for Turks. Thank God that today this perception of “the other” is now losing its features and qualities. And we hope that it will disappear very soon” (*Milliyet*, 14 February 2002), were that the continuation of disputes between the two and the image of “threat” or “enemy” still exists in public view. At this point, the public opinion surveys would enable us to gauge the public’s view on specific issues. A recent survey conducted by Kadir Has University in 2016, showed that 6.5 percent –a decrease from 10.8 percent in 2015- of the people in Turkey still considered Greece as the most serious threat to Turkey, ranking in ninth place, compared to sixth in 2015, following the US, Israel, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Russia, Armenia and Iran (Kadir Has University 2015: 14; Kadir Has University 2016: 41).

Lene Hansen (2012: 543) uses the example of Mikhail Gorbochev’s Murmansk Initiative, by borrowing from Kristian Åtland’s (2008) article titled “*Mikhail Gorbachev, the Murmansk Initiative, and the Desecuritization of Interstate Relations in the Arctic*”, as a fundamental rearticulation. In his article, Åtland (2008: 290) focuses on Gorboachev’s initiation of policy initiatives ranging from security to economic to environmental issues during his visit to the Soviet polar capital of Murmansk in 1987 in order to demonstrate the fundamental change in Soviet policy towards the region. He



argues (2008: 305) that Gorbachev's successful attempt in moving non-military (or "soft") issues to the sphere of normal politics rather than evaluating them under the country's national security agenda was an example of desecuritization. Even though the Turkish-Greek rapprochement process -particularly considering the exploratory talks between the two as well as the desire of decision-makers for solutions- resembles rearticulation, without a complete solution it might be evaluated as a "rearticulation attempt" rather than "rearticulation." As seen in the most recent example of Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Turkish decision makers are still eager for a complete resolution of problems in Turkish-Greek relations. In his statement after his meeting with his Greek counterpart in October 2016, he stated that:

We agreed to intensify talks on the thorny issue of the continental shelf, promote confidence-building measures and back a new round of peace talks on Cyprus. It is our shared desire to resolve the problems in the Aegean ... and to reduce tensions and disputes (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 3 October 2016).

The form of "replacement", as the third form of desecuritization, is a simultaneous process in which one issue is moving out of security while the other is securitized. This form is evaluated as an inevitable process in order to exit by mainly referring Behnke's (2006: 64-65) argument of "certain "threats" might no longer exercise our mind and imaginations sufficiently and are replaced with more powerful and stirring imaginaries" (Hansen 2012: 541). Even if the desecuritization period of Greek threat in Turkish foreign policy resembles the replacement form of desecuritization, considering the other critical issues in foreign policy, none of them completely replaced the significance of Greece in Turkish security policy due to the existence of the contentious issues between the two.

Finally, the fourth form of desecuritization "silencing" refers to the disappearance or failure to register an issue in the security discourse. The demise of military

authorities from the decision-making mechanism, in accordance with the Europeanization process in Turkey, paved the way for the disappearance of military officials' discourses from the political sphere, the issue of Greece and the disputes between the two countries have still been expressed by decision-makers on every occasion with a more prudent and positive discourse. Thus, it is not possible to evaluate the rapprochement process through the form of silencing.

To summarize, this thesis argues that the rapprochement process in Turkish-Greek relations paved the way for desecuritization in Turkish-Greek relations, and the best way to explain the correlation between rapprochement and desecuritization is to use the change through stability form of desecuritization suggested by Hansen. Starting from the change in the discourse of decision-makers, the establishment of dialogue channels and the start of political engagement in a wide range of cooperation areas such as tourism, economy, military, tourism and trade were signs of change through stabilization. While the replacement and silencing forms of desecuritization do not fit into the rapprochement process, at some point the initiatives between the two countries can be evaluated as "rearticulation attempts."

## CONCLUSION

Throughout the modern history of Turkish Greek relations, which dates back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, both countries built up their national identities against each other with the burden of the past. As the two countries gained their independencies by fighting each other, the historical heritage and mutual antipathy between the two nations have played a significant impact both on public perceptions and the mind-set of decision-makers. It is possible to observe the impact of the historical background on the discourses and the practices of both countries' security and foreign policies as well. Despite the thorny beginning of the relationship between Turkey and Greece, both countries succeeded to establish some exceptional periods of cooperation in the course of their relations. Since the outbreak of the Greek revolt against the Ottoman Empire in March 1821, it has been almost two centuries that has been dominated by conflicts and competitions between the two. Besides the two cooperation periods in the 1930s and 1950s, Turkish-Greek relations have been in their golden age without any serious crises since 1999. The consistency of the prudent and affirmative grammar in the discourses of the decision-makers in Turkey, as seen during the early cooperation periods of the 1930s and 1950s as well, has enabled the continuation of the prevailing collegial atmosphere between the two counties. As observed in the thesis, the decision-makers in Turkey refrained from using security grammar or to dramatize issues in order to sustain a positive relationship.

On the eve of the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, during the Lausanne Conference, Turkish decision-makers raised concerns on several issues such as the sovereignty rights over the islands, and the demilitarized status of the islands in the Aegean Sea. Accordingly, İsmet İnönü's, the chief negotiator of the Turkish delegation

for the Treaty of Lausanne, statements about Turkey's stance regarding the issues of the Aegean Sea were the most striking examples of that period. While he was explaining the importance of the islands proximity to the coasts of Turkey, he clearly emphasized the existential threat against the survival and security of the referent object, named Turkey. His dramatization of the issue by stressing "extreme" and "vital" importance of the island for the security of Anatolia constituted the back bones of the official position of Turkey, and continued to reiterate in the statements of the succeeding decision-makers in Turkey. Despite the fact that İsmet İnönü's speech acts during the negotiations of the Treaty of Lausanne did not contain the necessary components of an "existential threat" and "emergency action", his attempts were transformed into successful securitizations with the security discourses of the succeeding decision-makers faced with the crises between Turkey and Greece.

Likewise, the well-known statement of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, regarding the strategic position of Cyprus and its vital importance for Turkey's security might be considered as the early attempts to build a security discourse in Turkish foreign policy. Despite the fact that Turkey did not have a concrete official position on the Cyprus issue until the foundation of the independent RoC in 1960, the existential threat posed by the occupation of the island by a hostile country against Turkey's security was clearly pointed out by Atatürk. The lack of a concrete official position until the 1960s hinders us from making an in-depth analysis of the issue for that time, but the developments in the aftermath of the establishment of the RoC will unveil the securitization of the issue by elites in Turkey.

Within this framework, the emergence of the Cyprus issue in the mid-1950s, and in parallel with the developments in international politics/law in the mid-1960s the

issues related to the Aegean Sea such as delimitation of maritime boundaries and the continental shelf, the breadth of territorial waters and the air space have not only changed the course of the relationship between Turkey and Greece, but also the discourse of the decision-makers. The sleeping source of disputes in those issues became apparent especially with the use of security discourse by decision-makers. The analysis of the statements of securitizing actors during that time by using the framework of the securitization theory, presented by Buzan *et al* enabled us to comprehend whether, how and to what extent the issues between the two were securitized by the so-called actors. It is possible to interpret the statements of the securitizing actors in Turkey regarding the Cyprus issue and the contentious issues in the Aegean Sea, which are analyzed under the two categories of delimitation and sovereignty in the thesis, as successful instances of securitization.

The statements by the Turkish elites on the Cyprus issue and the issues related to the Aegean Sea were consistent with the early Republican Era rhetoric that considered both problems through the security lens. Accordingly, Greek attempts such as the extension of its territorial waters and airspace, the fortification of the islands, the exploration or drilling activities in the disputed continental shelf, and finally the claims of sovereignty were all perceived as existential threats by the securitizing actors against the security of the referent object. With the existence of objective security issues between the two facilitated securitizing actors in terms of dramatization of the issue.<sup>115</sup> Particularly, the threat posed by Greece has always been in line with Turkey's traditional fear of encirclement. Thus, securitizing actors stress the threat of the change in the balance of power, the cut off access to the open seas as well as the transformation of the Aegean into a "Greek Lake" in their statements and in order to prevent this threat

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<sup>115</sup> For the internal and external conditions of a successful securitization, see page 33.

they suggested several emergency measures ranging from declaring *casus belli*, to taking necessary measures, and to using military force.

For the Cyprus issue, there was a similar pattern in the discourses of the securitizing actors. As seen during the crises on the island, Turkish securitizing actors raised the issue of existential threat posed by Greece through destroying the constitutional order on the island or damaging the balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean, which was evaluated as a direct threat to the security of Turkey along with the survival of the TRNC. The inseparable link between the security of Turkey and the TRNC in the statements of the securitizing actors was evaluated by Kaliber (2003: 16) with the metaphor of “motherland” and “baby land”. The securitizing actors also emphasized emergency measures including an intervention to the island in 1974 under the “Peace Operation” in order to handle the threat. Shortly, as seen in the issues pertaining to the Aegean Sea, Turkish securitizing actors took the Cyprus issue outside of the normal political procedure and implemented the emergency measures after a successful securitization. In both cases of the Aegean and Cyprus, the securitizing actors in Turkey were the representatives of the democratically elected governments; therefore it is possible to interpret an inherent approval by the relevant audience in each of those cases.

This historical background of the securitizations indicates the same pattern in the discourses of the securitizing actors. As the focal point of this thesis is the developments of the post-Cold War period, it analyzes the divergences between Turkey and Greece on the issues that brought the two countries to the brink of war. The Cold War had significant impact on both countries’ security and foreign policy considerations, as both of them had to reformulate their priorities in light of the new

security needs. This period was important for the bilateral relations of the two countries since there had been a myriad of crises within very short periods during that time. These crises were included Greece's unilateral extension of its territorial waters in the Aegean Sea to 12-miles, the Kardak incident, the S-300 missiles crisis, and the capture of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK terrorist organization, in the Embassy of Greece in Kenya. The analysis of the period, which is evaluated as the peak point of securitizations in terms of Turkish-Greek relations because of the abovementioned challenges, through the framework of securitization theory shows how and to what extent Greece is securitized by Turkey.

In the first crisis of the period, Greece's attempt to extend the breadth of its territorial waters to 12 miles caused the TGNA's declaration of *casus belli* on 8 June 1995. The declaration by the TGNA was consistent with Turkey's official position about the issue, which was first reflected in the statement of then Minister of Foreign Affairs İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil in April 1976. As mentioned in the related chapter, Çağlayangil urged US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger through a letter of the existential threat against Turkey's rights and interests in the Aegean Sea by dramatizing the issue with a special reference to the hindrance of Turkey's access to high seas and the possibility of a Greek dominance in the Aegean which was referred to as a "Greek Lake". The securitized policy line raised by İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil in 1976 was followed by the TGNA as a response to Greek activities in the Aegean Sea in the 1990s. As Greece's intentions to change the *status quo* in the Aegean Sea became explicit, Turkish elites evaluated these attempts as instances of *casus belli*. After moving the issue out of the normal bargaining process, TGNA granted the Turkish government to take emergency measures "including military ones" in order to protect and defend the vital interests of the referent object. There was a similar standpoint among the decision-

makers who securitized the issue as seen in the analysis of their security speech acts within the framework of the securitization theory. The common emphasis reiterated by Turkish decision-makers was on existential threat mainly posed by the “Greek *fait accompli* attempts” through extending its territorial waters, while emergency measures including military ones were offered by the very same decision-makers to prevent the change of the *status quo*.

The second breaking point appeared with an incident on 25 December 1995 when a Turkish ship ran ground on an islet in the Aegean Sea. Although the two countries tried to solve the issue within the bounds of normal politics by exchanging diplomatic notes between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the involvement of the media triggered a change in the discourses of the decision-makers. The single voice of statements by the decision-makers mainly contained security grammar that included dramatization, emphasis on the existential threat and emergency actions. Then Prime Minister Tansu Çiller dramatized the issue with special reference to the sovereignty and integrity of Turkey. In her statements, she pointed out the “legacy”, the “sacrificing lives” in order to protect any *fait accompli* even if against Turkish “pebbles.” In response, the Turkish elites raised some emergency measures such as deploying troops in order to protect its rights and interests in the Aegean Sea. The similar standpoints of all securitizing actors such as the prime minister, the minister of foreign affairs, and the high-ranking military offices demonstrated how decision-makers in Turkey handled issues out of the normal bargaining process and securitized issues by using the speech act. Thus, the security speech acts of the decision-makers during the Kardak crisis clearly showed a successful securitization of the sovereignty rights in the Aegean Sea by presenting/dramatizing the existential threat posed by neighboring Greece through claiming sovereignty rights over islands, islets and rocks against the territorial integrity,



sovereignty and national security of the referent object.

Similar to the previous two crises between the two countries, the revelation of the linkage between Greek politicians with the PKK terrorist organization, which compromised the unity and sovereignty of Turkey, created another tension between Turkey and Greece. As clearly seen in the statements of Ambassador Şükrü Elekdağ, the then Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, about the Greek government's support for the terrorist organization, there was an emphasis on the threat emanating from Greece against the survival/unity of the referent object. Even though Greek governments denied the allegations of Turkey, the capture of fugitive PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in the Greek Embassy in Kenya revealed the direct link between terrorists and some Greek officials. While Turkish-Greek relations reached its "lowest ebb" (Alpogan 2005: 165; Evin 2005: 396), Turkish elites successfully securitized the link between the PKK and Greece by using the security grammar in their statements.

Following all the crises of this period, the statements by the decision-makers showed how issues related to Greece were securitized in order to prevent threats against its survival. All securitizing actors in Turkey, in their statements, pointed out the "sovereignty of Turkey", the "sovereignty of the TRNC", the "peace and security in Cyprus" and in general the "peace in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean." In face of imminent and existential threats posed by Greece through its "fortification of islands", "claims on the sovereignty of islands", "attempts to extend the breadth of its territorial waters, airspace", and finally "support to terrorist organizations" the survival and sovereignty of Turkey were commonly raised by securitizing actors. As a response to the existential threat against Turkey's security, all securitizing actors warned Greece by "taking the necessary measures", including military ones, by "striking the missiles",

and even “beating it.” This “threatening” and “hostile” discourse of the Turkish elites was obvious in almost all problems such as Greece’s ratification of the UNCLOS in its Parliament, the Kardak incident, the S-300 missile crisis and the revelation of the support of Greek politicians for the terrorist organization. Each of these cases contained the components of a successful securitization, such as “emergency action” and “existential threats”.

Just few months after the revelation of Greek officials’ connections with the PKK terrorist organization, a promising rapprochement or détente between Turkey and Greece was ignited by İsmail Cem, the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, with a letter to his Greek counterpart George Papandreou. While this letter, which planted the seeds of a friendship by paving the way for desecuritization, was a milestone in the relations of the two countries, this was followed by a combination of factors that assisted the rapprochement process. These factors were classified in this thesis under four categories such as the empowerment of the civil societies in both countries after the earthquakes, the Europeanization process within two countries’ foreign and security policies, the role of İsmail Cem and George Papandreou, and the encouragement of third parties such as the US. In line with all these explanations, this thesis unveils the correlation between the rapprochement process and desecuritization through the methodology of desecuritization presented by Lene Hansen. By doing so, the thesis argues that the rapprochement process in Turkish-Greek relations has led to desecuritization and this might be best explained from the viewpoint of the desecuritization form of “change through stabilization.”

Despite the existence of a securitized discourse related to Greece, bilateral relations between Turkey and Greece has ironically transformed into one of cooperation

which was also reflected in the discourses of the decision-makers with the emphasis on “friendship” rather than the “hostility”. During the rapprochement process, there is special emphasis on “friendship”, “interests of both peoples” and transforming “the Aegean Sea into a sea of peace” rather than focusing on the “existential threat to the referent object”. This thesis argues that the characteristic of the rapprochement process in the Turkish-Greek relations quite fits into the “change through stabilization” form of desecuritization pointed by Hansen (2012: 539). There are significant evidences which show that decision-makers in Turkey prefer to desecuritize issues by employing various strategies for taking the issues out of the military/security sphere.

The reciprocal high level visits, the establishment of dialogue and cooperation channels in a wide array of fields including tourism, terrorism, environment, trade, economy, culture and etc., the joint military exercises, the protocols and agreements that were signed between Turkey and Greece and the initiation of exploratory talks which aimed to solved long-lasting problems between the two, were all signs of the political engagement between the two countries, as Hansen (2012: 539) raised it as a requirement in this form of desecuritization. The two countries, which came to the verge of war during a small incident in the Aegean Sea just five years ago, has been focusing on further cooperation starting from “low politics” rather than sticking with the burden of the past. The existing political engagement also reflected the security discourse of Turkish decision-makers who prefer to deal with the issues within the bounds of diplomacy. It is important to remind once more that the long-lasting contentious issues between the two still exists despite all attempts towards their resolution. This is not an obstacle in front of the desecuritization as Hansen (2012: 529) underlines that in this form of desecuritization “the larger conflicts still loom in the background.”

The stabilization of relations and the focus on cooperation among decision-makers have showed its impact on the affirmative dialogue/partnership in the fields of politics, economy and trade. The breakthrough high-level diplomatic visits, increases in interactions in the fields of politics, economy and military are results of the continuation of the prudent and positive discourse of decision-makers. It is worth to stress the establishment of the Turkish Greek High-Level Cooperation Council (HLCC) in May 2010, which gradually boosted the trade volumes between Turkey and Greece, might be evaluated as the institutionalization of bilateral relations. As mentioned previously, in contrast to the security speech-act of decision-makers prior to 1999, the affirmative and prudent stance of the decision-makers in Turkey in accordance with the détente process is closely related with the desecuritization of the issues through stabilization with Greece. It is obvious that the stabilization of the relationship between the two countries have been providing a fruitful ground to sustain the same discourse of Turkish decision-makers.

Finally, the analysis of the Turkish-Greek relations in the post-Cold War period by using the concepts of securitization and desecuritization employed by Copenhagen School enable us to understand whether, how and to what extent the issues related to Greece are securitized and desecuritized by Turkey. The same framework can be applied to understand Greece's securitization of Turkey as well. But such a study necessitates knowledge of advanced level of Greek in order to analyze statements of the related actors. Moreover, the framework of securitization can provide a tool to comprehend the role of functional actors, such as media as seen during the Kardak case, in shaping countries' foreign and security policy. This thesis has shown that there are significant evidences that show decision-makers may choose to securitize or desecuritize issues, and may employ strategies for handling issues in or out of the

military/security sphere. Even at the time of the writing of this thesis, major unresolved contentious issues remain, but the impact of the fruitful ground established with the change through stabilization still ensures the continuation of a constructive dialogue between Turkey and Greece.



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