IS A EUROPEANISED TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY POSSIBLE?*

The Role of the Contested EU Perspective in Bringing About A Transformation in Turkish Foreign Policy

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Abstract:
This paper focuses on the role of the EU on foreign policy making in Turkey since 1999, when Turkey was declared as a candidate country to the EU. Traditional Turkish foreign policy is seriously challenged in the path towards EU membership, firstly due to the existing problems between Turkey and some EU countries, Greece and Cyprus. Secondly, the EU requirement of establishment of good relations with neighbours makes it essential that Turkey develops its relations with Armenia, with whom it shares a closed border on top of historical problems. Thirdly, Turkish foreign policy rhetoric is expected to adopt a tone, which is absed on a more Kantian perception of world politics rather than one based on a much more Hobbessian view, which would reflect in the upholding of international law, distancing from the current US policies of military intervention and converging with the ‘European’ preference for diplomacy.

This paper focuses on the question whether it is possible to discern such changes in Turkish foreign policy since 1999. It is based on an analysis of rhetoric and actual behaviour of Turkish policy makers on the contested issues above. The wider democratisation process strengthened by the pre-accession process to the EU is actually transforming the balance of power between policy makers in Turkey and adding some new influential actors like civil society organisations and the private sector into the foreign policy making process. For this reason, the paper not only focuses on the change of rhetoric/substance in Turkish foreign policy, but also analyses, whether a transformation of foreign policy making is taking place in Turkey, through the empowerment of new actors, change of self/other perception, and acceptance of new norms and rules resulting in the development of ‘appropriate behaviour’, as suggested by the Europeanisation literature.

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I. Introduction:

EU membership provides member states with a new perception of their place in the world. Domestic and foreign policies of member countries are also very much influenced by decisions taken in Brussels. This influence actually starts when countries embark on a pre-accession process, i.e. way before membership becomes a reality. This paper discusses the influence of the EU on the candidate countries’ foreign policies, focusing specifically on the Turkish case. This paper discusses what to expect from a Europeanised Turkish foreign policy, searching for the main traces of change that Turkish foreign policy can be expected to undergo as a result of its pre-accession process to the EU. The expected change refers to not only a change of policy content, but also of the perceptions, thinking and behaviours of policy makers. Presenting what kind of a change is necessary for a Europeanised Turkish foreign policy, the paper lastly questions whether such a transformation in the self-perceptions of Turkish policy makers, i.e. politicians and bureaucrats, and whether the policy making process with respect to foreign policy issues actually expands to include new actors civil society, thus democratising the way foreign policy is made.

The paper is firstly going to present the outcomes of similar research on current EU member countries on the Europeanisation of their foreign policies and display what changes should be expected in the foreign policy of a country aiming to join the Union. Such a perspective would enable comparative conclusions to be drawn and enable us to differentiate between the similar and unique aspects of transformation that Turkish foreign policy is currently undergoing.

Secondly, the paper is going to focus on the factors that are already influencing Turkey’s foreign policy and its policy making as a candidate country to the EU and aims to display how the process of Europeanisation of Turkish foreign is starting to take place. This section is going to focus on the policy making process and discuss the change of balance of power between different actors in the policy making process.

Thirdly, the paper is going to discuss the main challenges to Turkish foreign policy in its pre-accession process to the EU. These challenges stem not only from historical conflicts that now form the traditional contours of Turkish foreign policy, but also from the different
perception of world politics from Brussels. Lastly, the paper will conclude its analysis of the current Europeanisation of Turkish foreign policy by presenting questions for further research.

II: Europeanised Foreign Policies:

Europeansisation of public policy has long been a topic of interest for academics working on the influence of the EU on its member states. Its influence on aspiring countries, however, is a recent area of research and has mostly been an issue of research for the Central and Eastern European countries’ pre-accession process to the Union, although some research on a comparison with Turkey has also been done.¹ This section will briefly explain what is referred to as a process of Europeanisation and then apply it to the foreign policy field.

II.1 “Europeanisation”: the magic term to explain transformation of national public policies with

Europeanisation can be broadly defined as the process of downloading EU regulations and institutional structures to the domestic level, which mainly signifies a downloading process but is coupled with a bottom-up process of uploading national policies and preferences to the EU level². Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse analyse how the process of Europeanisation functions. They identify two conditions for expecting domestic changes in response to Europeanisation: First, Europeanisation should be inconvenient for national public policy, that is, there must be some degree of “misfit” or incompatibility between European-level processes, policies and institutions on the one hand, and the domestic level processes, policies and institutions on the other. There is no need for domestic changes, they explain, if Europeanisation fits well with domestic ways of doing things. This degree of misfit, then, leads to adaptational pressures, which constitute a necessary but not adequate condition for expecting domestic change. Accordingly, the second condition is that various facilitating factors- actors or institutions- respond to the adaptational pressures, thus promoting the change. Thus, the lower the compatibility between domestic and European processes, policies and institutions, the higher the adaptational pressure. As policy misfits

produce adaptational costs at the domestic level, the member states strive to “upload” their policies to the European level not only in order to reduce their compliance problems\(^3\), but also in order to address problems that cannot be addressed effectively at the domestic level any more\(^4\).

The misfit between European and domestic processes, policies, and institutions provides the societal and political actors with new opportunities and constraints to pursue their interests. As explained by Börzel and Risse, Europeanisation leads to domestic change through socialisation and a collective learning process, resulting in norm internalisation and the development of new identities. Hence, the domestic effect of Europeanisation can be conceptualised as a process of change at the domestic level in which member states adapt their processes, policies and institutions to new practices, norms, rules, and procedures that emanate from the emerging European system of governance. It draws on the “logic of appropriateness” according to which actors are guided by a collective understanding of what constitutes proper, socially accepted behaviour in a given structure. These collective understandings influence the ways in which actors define their goals and what they perceive as “rational” action.\(^5\) ‘To act appropriately’ is defined by James March and Johan P. Olsen as to proceed according to the institutionalised practices of a collectivity, based on mutual, and often tacit, understandings of what is true, reasonable, natural, right and good and involves a learning process.\(^6\) From this perspective, Europeanisation is understood as the emergence of new rules, norms, practices, and structures of meaning to which member states are exposed and which they have to incorporate into their domestic practices and structures.\(^7\) In an edited study by Brian Hocking and David Spence member state officials stated in interviews that being a part of European diplomacy requires compliance to a common framework for appropriate behaviour.\(^8\) Thus, inclusion in EU processes influence domestic perceptions of interests and the valid way of achieving their ends, resulting in changes in ways of policy definition (due to empowerment of new domestic actors and new perceptions), policy outcome and ways of policy pursuit. National executives especially have a key position in a


\(^4\) Tanja A.Börzel, “Pace-Setting, Foot-Dragging, and Fence-Sitting, Member State Responses to Europeanisation”, Queen’s Papers on Europeanisation, no. 4/2001.

\(^5\) Börzel and Risse, op.cit


\(^7\) Börzel and Risse, op.cit

\(^8\) Brian Hocking and David Spence (eds.) Foreign Ministries in the European Union, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire and New York, 2005
member state’s response to Europeanisation by the role they play in decision-making and implementation of European policies. Additionally, domestic actors pressure their national executives to pursue policies at the European level that are favourable to their interests, and they blame their national governments for the costs that European policies incur on them.

Lee Miles also focuses on the importance of domestic restructuring in underpinning foreign policy change. He mostly touches on the question why countries choose to become members of the EU and analyses the Swedish case. He explains the fusion thesis developed by Wolfgang Wessels: “national governments’ perceptions of European integration in general and EU membership in particular remain largely rational and state-centric in orientation. Elite perception of full membership is based on the perceived benefits that European integration brings.” He takes the case of economic integration here which is based on the problems faced with national governments in the face of economic interdependence and globalisation. Whether this is applicable to foreign policy is an open question. He states that “more and more states join the EU for primarily economic reasons to avoid the cost of non-Europe and as a way of strengthening and complementing national policy objectives and instruments”.

One aspect for the ongoing research on the Europeanisation of Turkish foreign policy will be to search whether Lee Miles’s economic reasoning could also be valid in the foreign policy and whether the cost of non-Europe is a valid concern for the making of Turkish foreign policy. At the micro-level fusion perspective, Lee Miles divides the national actors into strong and weak adapters to the requirements of the Union. “Stronger adapters have tended to be the governmental apparatus and administration, whilst national parliaments have remained largely weak adapters. Internal balance of powers as regards influencing national EU policy has tended to favour governments and administrations and particularly heads of government and foreign and finance ministers across the EU member states. This raises the question for the Turkish case whether the Turkish economic elite is more integration driven than the political elite, especially the opposition parties. If the opposition parties are more sceptical because they are merely in parliaments and not in government or administration, this would make all opposition parties (both in Turkey and other European countries) more sceptical of EU integration.

II.2 Europeanisation of Foreign Policy: Can Integration Occur in High Politics?

9 Börzel, 2001, op.cit
11 Lee Miles, Fusing with Europe? Sweden in the European Union, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2005
12 Ibid
Several studies have applied the concept of Europeanisation to national foreign policies of EU member states. Manners and Whitman ask what the impact of the evolving European political/ economic/ societal environment is on the foreign policies of EU states. They take into consideration the way in which EU member states adapt their foreign policy through membership of the EU, as well as towards the EU itself, and towards the other member states of the EU. They state that although the process of adaptation is more sudden for new member states, even the founding states had to change their policies towards previously third party states, in order to bring it in line with existing EC/EU policies. The main question is thus what has been the effect of membership of EU on these states’ foreign policies. Does the sharing of information and common practices (in the EU) lead to socialisation or engrenage and thus do habits of working together transform the common perceptions of policy makers? (Manners and Whitman 2000) As Adrian Hyde-Price reminds us, perceptions are vital in the policy-making process. Perceptions provide a means of intercepting, classifying and interpreting information in terms of structured systems that set cognitive limits to rational decision-making (Hyde-Price, 2004). One could also ask whether a re-definition of self or of national interest is taking place. As Lisbeth Aggestam explains; definitions of identity and foreign policy interests may be redefined as a consequence of current transformations, be they internal or external to the state. She reminds us of the Deutschian perspective that says different social communicative processes between actors may affect and shape their identities and interests. High levels of interaction between states can encourage the development of a growing ‘we feeling’ and a common ‘role identity’. She argues that identities may be reconstructed through cooperative and positive interaction with other actors.

Henrik Larsen explains that Europeanisation transforms the domestic structures of the nation states and the meanings attached to them, which when applied to foreign policy, does

14 Manners and Whitman, op.cit
not only entail an approximation of procedures or general national rhetoric about European belonging, but also an approximation with respect to policy substance with the Union.\textsuperscript{17} Studying on this subject, Ben Tonra draws attention to the process of socialisation, in which officials acquire a habit of thinking in terms of consensus building. He also states that the creation of European Foreign and Security policy has limited the extent to which national foreign policies react independently. Consensus and consultation have become important features of the domestic foreign policy process. However, member states have gained greater effectiveness through the collective voice and common action.\textsuperscript{18}

These findings indicate a process whereby new habits become practices, which shape the participants and may lead to a re-orientation of their beliefs and behaviour. As Ohrgard mentions, implicit in the processes of socialisation and upgrading of common interests is the idea that eventually the participants might come to conceive their interests differently than as a direct result of their participation in the enterprise.\textsuperscript{19} Another question Manners and Whitman ask is whether participation in CFSP and external relations of the Union provides a constriction on foreign policy choice or an opportunity for foreign policy action.\textsuperscript{20} The case studies done on the impact of EU membership on member countries’ foreign policy practitioners have revealed that some countries have acquired new areas of interest in their foreign policies. Their relations with third countries have also gained an additional level as an EU member country-third country relationship after their accession to the Union. Their foreign policies are increasingly shaped by discussions within the EU and if they can gain the support of other members, their national foreign policies become more effective as EU policies. The members also acquire a feeling of common destiny as a result of coordination and flow of information among them. Additionally, the discussion of foreign policy subjects within the Union had a limiting effect on the populist acclamation by governments toward their domestic environments. The CFSP is also stated to bring in an increasing number of national diplomats into its coordination framework, which symbolises a Europeanisation process.\textsuperscript{21} While looking at such a general framework of foreign policy

\textsuperscript{17} Henrik Larsen, \textit{Analysing the Foreign Policy of Small States in the EU: The Case of Denmark}, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, NewYork, 2005
\textsuperscript{18} Tonra, 2001, op.cit.
\textsuperscript{20} Manners, Whitman, op.cit, p.1-11
\textsuperscript{21} Brian Hocking and David Spence (eds.) \textit{Foreign Ministries in the European Union}, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire and New York, 2005
definition, they also take into consideration the notion of special relationships or the concept of special issues due to national sensitivities. Another important result of research on the transformation of foreign policy of member states due to EU membership is that member states may behave in different ways than their traditional national policy rhetoric on certain issues. Sweden’s participation in ESDP despite its “neutrality” rhetoric, which is increasingly downplayed, can be seen in this respect.

II.3 Europeisation and EU candidates: A Relationship Between Unequals

Although the concept of Europeisation is generally considered an experience unique to EU member states, recent research by Heather Grabbe shows that the term could successfully be applied to the then EU candidates in Central and Eastern Europe. Grabbe explains that the Central and Eastern European Countries have been taking on all the obligations of EU membership, so the domestic effects of transferring policies and institutions to them are likely to be comparable to the effects of the EU on its current member states. She argues that the Europeisation literature was relevant to the Central and Eastern European (hereafter CEE) applicant states because these countries were already subject to the same pressures of adaptation to EU policies as current member states. However, the way Europeisation occurred in these states was different than in the member states. One reason for this was that they were candidates rather than members of the Union, thus they were positioned in an asymmetrical relationship which gave the EU more coercive routes of influence in domestic policy making processes. The EU negotiators could make demands, which were unattractive to the candidates, but which the CEE negotiators accepted because the overall attraction of joining the Union outweighed the disadvantages of parts of the deal. She quotes one candidate country official saying “ultimately accession on any terms is better than no accession.” Additionally, the applicants could not influence EU policy-making from the inside, that is, the candidates could not “upload” their own preferences into the European level policies, which actually is an alternative way of Europeanisation. The candidate countries had less room for manoeuvre in their implementation of EU policies, because they

22 Manners, Whitman, op.cit, p.1-11
24 Grabbe, “Europeisation Goes...”op.cit
25 Grabbe, The EU’s Transformative..., , p.2
had to prove themselves to be worthy potential member states. Besides, they had a stronger motivation than existing members to implement EU policies because they were trying to gain admission.\textsuperscript{26} Under these circumstances, “Europe” has been acclaimed and used by these countries’ elites as a constraint to bypass national political and administrative systems and to enforce decisions and policies that would not otherwise have been agreed upon or accepted.\textsuperscript{27}

Secondly, the creation of formal accession conditions gave the EU much wider leverage to make the applicants comply with its demands than the previous ones. It also reduced the ability of the applicants to negotiate concessions such as transitional periods and derogations in comparison with previous enlargements. Thirdly, accession partnership and regular reports provided a direct route into domestic policy making in the Central and Eastern European countries, because the EU set out a list of policy priorities that had to be implemented within the year or in the medium term. Criticisms made in the EU reports had a powerful impact on domestic debates about public policy and a candidate government’s political prospects. Gaining international approval was an important way of legitimising political choices in the post-communist context of the Central and Eastern European candidates. EU actors could use the threat of exclusion or the slowing of progress to encourage particular changes in policies or institutional structures.\textsuperscript{28}

Fourthly, the EU had a direct influence into policy-making structures in CEE through its twinning program. Twinning made possible the secondment of civil servants from EU member states to work in Central and Eastern European ministries and other parts of public administration as EU civil servants work alongside their Central and Eastern European counterparts.\textsuperscript{29} However, it was also realised that the parts of a ministry that were in contact with the EU could talk the language of Brussels and aim at full compliance in implementing policies, but that did not necessarily mean that their colleagues in other parts of the ministry paid much attention to EU demands in formulating policy.\textsuperscript{30} One aspect worth mentioning for Central and Eastern European candidates is that the Communist legacy and post-Communist transformation meant that EU policies generally met with less institutional resistance than in

\textsuperscript{26} Grabbe, “Europeanisation ....op.cit
\textsuperscript{27} Grabbe, The EU’s Transformative...,op.cit, p.51
\textsuperscript{28} Grabbe, “Europeanisation.;Ibid., p.98
\textsuperscript{29} Grabbe, “Europeanisation ...
\textsuperscript{30} Grabbe, The EU’s ...op.cit, p.61
the old member states. However, this aspect of these countries Europeanisation experience cannot be valid for Turkey.

A problem of Europeanisation worth mentioning in the candidate status was that the applicants faced uncertainty about whom to satisfy: Commission or the Council, if the Council then which member states (Grabbe, 2003). Some member states paid more attention to some policy areas than others and only some countries were likely to veto a candidate’s progress in particular area. The candidates had to work out whom to satisfy in a given policy area, but they also faced longer-term uncertainty about who might emerge as a veto-player over another issue later in the accession process. One influencing variable to constrain EU’s influence on CEE countries was uncertainty: There was an uncertain linkage between fulfilling particular tasks and receiving particular benefits. Applicants faced several problems of uncertainty concerned with timing. First there was the timing of costs and benefits. The ultimate reward of accession was far removed from the moment at which adaptation costs were incurred. Since accession reward came in one big step- and at the end of a very long and highly politicised process, the CEE policy makers could believe there was time to make up deficiencies closer to the accession date.

The whole process of Europeanisation of candidate countries depended on one major factor: credibility. For the dynamic to work, membership had to be a realistic goal: It had to look probable that the EU would expand and the candidates would be able to fulfil the requirements. Hence the external influence of the EU depended on a certain tension between confidence that membership would be secured and fear of rejection owing to inadequate reforms. As can be seen in the Turkish case, if the EU accession prospect loses its credibility the will to comply with conditionality will also decline.

Another study done on the compliance of candidate countries with EU policies is by Frank Schimmelfennig. In a study comprising candidate countries prior to the 2004 enlargement, he searched for the conditions of compliance for applicant countries with the accession criteria. He states that credible EU membership incentives and low domestic power costs are individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions of compliance. He explains

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31 Ibid, p.43
32 Grabbe, “Europeanisation ...”op.cit
33 Grabbe, The EU’s...,op.cit., p.94
34 Ibid., pp.91-93
35 Ibid., p.53
the first model of explanation as ‘external incentives model’, in which a state complies with the norms of the organisation if the benefits of the rewards exceed the domestic adaptation costs. He also states that the pre-accession process also becomes a sunk cost in time. Since enlargement involves costly, long-term negotiations and preparations, the more the pre-accession process advances, the higher the cost of withholding the reward. Investments would be lost if the process was broken off or postponed to sanction a candidate state. As an alternative to the ‘external incentives model’ to explain candidate country compliance, he also focuses on the social learning model which assumes a logic of appropriateness. In this model, actors are motivated by internalised identities, values and norms. He states that a state adopts EU rules if it is persuaded of the appropriateness of EU rules. The likelihood of compliance increases with the identification of the target government with the Western or European international community.36 Thus this second model shows that the ‘logic of appropriateness’ model discussed in classical Europeanisation literature is also valid for the Europeanisation process of candidate countries.

The EU also had an impact on the applicants’ foreign policies, especially towards their eastern neighbours owing to the requirement that candidate countries solve the border and minority problems with their neighbours. The EU explicitly made clear that it did not want to import territorial conflicts through enlargement. Compliance with Schengen acquis and other external policy related regulations also had an effect on the candidate countries relations with their neighbours to the East. Europeanisation in the sense we are using in this paper was presented as a part of modernisation and post-communist transition.37 Thus adoption of EU rules and processes influenced the self perception of these countries and their place in the world.

III. Turkish Foreign Policy in the Pre-accession Process: Is It Possible to Speak of Europeanisation?

The adaptation process foreseen by the prospective EU accession necessitates several issues to gain importance and come to the fore, that require a major transformation of policy content in Turkey’s foreign relations. Such a change of policy substance can only be achieved by a synchronised transformation of perceptions, values, norms, ways of thinking and finally

36 Frank Schimmelfennig, “The Impact of EU democratic Conditionality in Central and Eastern Europe: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis, Second Pan-European Conference Standing Group on EU Politics, Bologna, 24-26 June 2004
37 Grabbe, The EU’s ..., op.ct., p. 23
behaviour of policy makers. This section will firstly deal with this transformation of values and perceptions of the actors in foreign policy-making in Turkey and then with issues of major concern that require a basic change of substance.

### III.1 Transformation of foreign policy making in Turkey

The change in Turkish foreign policy can partially be attributed to the process of domestic political change stimulated by the EU accession process. Compliance with the Copenhagen political criteria has made it possible that foreign policy issues and their domestic implications can be debated more publicly. The reform packages undertaken to comply with the Copenhagen political criteria have changed the composition and function of the National Security Council, despite the remaining influence of the military in Turkish politics. With the process of harmonization of Turkish laws according to EU political criteria, the National Security Council changed its composition and weight in the governmental decision-making.38 Prior to the changes made in the Turkish constitution within the candidacy process, the National Security Council (NSC) was the key institution determining Turkish Security Policy, as well as foreign policy issues with security dimensions like Cyprus, relations with Greece, Northern Iraq, Syria and Israel. It gave the armed forces the opportunity to express their position on many issues as well as direct the government’s policies from time to time, especially during the Çiller-Erbakan government in mid-1990s. Thus, the 1990s reveal a period in Turkish foreign and security policy as a period where many issues of Turkish foreign policy were directed under military concerns as being of security nature and many issues in Turkish security were accepted without debate.39

Although Turkey was finally declared as a candidate country at Helsinki, the coalition government in Turkey between 1999 and 2002 lacked the cohesion and determination to see through political reforms needed to meet the EU's Copenhagen criteria. Powerful opponents to EU membership remained in spite of the wide popular support and strengthened the hand of those who resisted political reforms on the grounds that Turkey's strategic importance


should mean an abandonment of political conditions for membership, which was of course not adhered to by the EU.

After 2002 Turkey has improved its record in adopting reforms in order to meet the Copenhagen criteria, firstly due to the early elections and the need to accomplish at least some part of the reform agenda before the elections and later thanks to a single party government which made it easier to secure parliamentary majority to pass the harmonisation packages. The Copenhagen European Council in December 2002 acknowledged the determination of the new government to bring Turkey closer to the EU and adopted a decision to consider opening accession negotiations with Turkey in December 2004. On the other hand, the new government relied heavily on the EU accession prospect to secure its domestic legitimacy in the eyes of a considerable number of circles that was sceptical of the AKP’s Western and secular orientation.

Subsequently, EU started accession negotiations with Turkey in October 2005, despite its internal disagreements about the final result of these negotiations. However, the long lasting disagreements between member states in the preparation of the EU’s negotiation framework with Turkey, and certain paragraphs of this Framework that state that the negotiations may not succeed in bringing Turkey into the EU have diminished the credibility of the EU’s accession promise to Turkey. This strengthened the euro-sceptics in Turkish politics, whereas weakening the stance and arguments of pro-Europeans, who were the real driving force behind the Europeanisation process in Turkey.

Within the period from 1999 until today there have been some developments in Turkish foreign policy that demonstrate that Turkish foreign policy rhetoric has become more European. The Turkish Parliament's decision in 2003 to refuse to support the U.S.-led coalition intervention against Iraq was viewed as a manifestation of greater democracy in Turkey and a weakening of the pro-U.S. military's power as well as signalling a choice for a more dialogue and diplomacy oriented foreign policy rather than the established Hobbesian view of world politics. Turkey's position on the Iraqi crisis and its adoption of political reforms has helped to strengthen its relations with the EU. The new government also came forward with a powerful commitment to reforms as well as a desire to resolve the conflict

40 Kemal Kirişç, “Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy”, MERIA, 8 (1), 2004
over Cyprus with its acceptance of the Annan Plan and further deepen the rapprochement between Greece and Turkey.

Turkish political parties’ position with regard to EU membership, showed an agreement that ultimate membership to the EU was the declared goal of the Republic. Thus, the issue has gone uncontested until 1999, when dreams came true and Turkey was finally a candidate country. The requirement to comply with the Copenhagen political criteria divided the coalition parties in government between 1999-2002, with the MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) adopted a “national interest” rhetoric and argued that Turkey should accede on its own terms, while not questioning the aim of acceding itself. Nationalist tones came from all parties of the political spectrum from time to time, the Cyprus issue was labelled as a “national priority” by all parties, and flexibility with respect to the finding of a solution was not adopted even as a rhetoric by the government parties. The major turn in the policy was accomplished with the incoming government of AKP in late 2002. However, it was too late to change the course of the accession of Greek part of Cyprus.

AKP was a surprising party due to the fact that it had pro-Islamic roots, but claimed to fulfil a Muslim Democrat function in Turkish political arena, the same way as Christian Democratic parties of Western Europe. It was suspected by the social democratic CHP and the bureaucratic and military elite to have a hidden Islamist agenda. In order to gain wider public support and calm the fears of the established elites in Turkish policy making system, AKP sought the support of EU by adhering to a democratisation agenda and aiming to get a date for the start of accession negotiations. As a single party government, they succeed well in adopting the necessary legislation with respect to fulfilment of political criteria. However, the actual decision on the opening of accession negotiations was followed by a decrease in the attention of government into further compliance with EU requirements. One important factor therein has been the accession of Greek Cypriots into the EU and the influence they succeeded in uploading to the EU level policy about the more urgent need for Turkey to normalise relations with a member state of the Union and the major change of government in France and Germany to centre-rights politicians, who oppose Turkey’s accession publicly. This has given a perfect excuse for Turkish decision makers- be they politicians and

bureaucrats- over the actual possibility of ever acceding to the Union and resulted in their decisions to keep a low-profile with respect to the EU issue in domestic politics.

The support of the AKP government to the EU comes as a surprise, when its pro-Islamic roots are taken into consideration. Pro-Islamist parties, including the AKP leadership were strongly anti-EU formerly. This one reason why the AKP’s EU commitment is not perceived as genuine by a considerable part of the Turkish society. However, a learning process is claimed by AKP leaders to take place with the previously banning of Islamist parties and AKP does not call itself an Islamist, but a Muslim Democrat party. Besides, it is widely accepted that human rights regulations in Western European countries allow for more religious freedom than in Turkey. Thus according to pro-Islamist politicians and intellectuals, Turkey, when aspiring for membership, would have to acknowledge more freedom for religious ways of life. This is another reason for the scepticism about AKP’s real intentions since EU necessitated reforms diminish the power of the military establishment in politics, which was widely accepted by the Turkish public as a guarantor of Secularism. Accordingly, the Islamisation of the society would take place under a democratisation label. AKP’s achievements after the July 2007 unfortunately remain weak to negate these acclamations.

Political opposition to AKP is represented in the new parliament elected in July 2007, by the social democratic CHP (Republican People’s Party), the MHP and the DTP, which a pro-Kurdish party. CHP and MHP rivalled each other with respect to nationalist propaganda in the elections. Relying on its roots as the founder party of Turkish Republic, the CHP does no more than to present itself as the representative of the modern and secular Turkey. It makes a reference in its 2002 election campaign to the aim of opening of accession negotiations with the EU. However, its party programme does not speak of a European perspective and does not adopt an action plan with respect to EU membership. In its 2007 election campaign the CHP criticises the AKP with respect to its policy on the Cyprus issue and blames AKP for the stalemate in Turkey-EU relations with respect to the Cyprus problem. This is the only aspect that relations with the EU are mentioned in the foreign policy section of the campaign pamphlet. It enjoys a privilege together with DTP to be a member

of the Party of European Socialists, which could enable a successful Europeanisation process. The centre-right political parties of Turkey are denied membership of the European People’s Party, which has several times declared that Turkey does not belong in the European project.

Nationalist Movement Party is another opposition party represented in parliament since 2007 elections. Its party programme accepts EU membership goal as a state policy. However, its real foreign policy interest lies in Central Asia and the enhancement of ties with the “Turkic” republics. Its 2007 election campaign describes the AKP government’s EU policy as one based on concessions and “selling out” the national causes. MHP is a party that studies the EU and its requirements with much more effort than any of the other parties. It has publications on the pre-accession process to the EU. However, these are mainly on how much against Turkish interests the EU process is. According to the perception of MHP, the EU wants to divide Turkey by creating minorities on an ethnic and religious basis. It wants to take over the economic and political sovereignty of Turkey under the name of integration. Apparently, the MHP does not represent a case of Europeanisation, quite the contrary it is very euro-sceptical and does not share in the logic of appropriateness or inherent norms of a society of states belonging in a political project.

Kirişçi states that one of the most distinguishing aspects of current Turkish foreign policy is how different it is from Turkish foreign policy a decade ago. The transformation of Turkish foreign policy, best observable on its stance towards the Cyprus issue, which has become much more cooperative, open to dialogue and searching for win-win outcomes. He states that one important result of transformation of Turkish foreign policy is “the role that civil society acquired in policy making”. The EU has contributed to this process both directly by providing funds to civil society organisations and indirectly by encouraging democratisation in Turkey.

The position of civil society organisations in Turkey towards EU membership has become more and more supportive since 1999, not only since it gave them an opportunity to

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45 MHP Party programme, 5 November 2000, accessed on 9th January 2008;
influence policy makers with their newly gained status as an actor in the formulation of public policies, but also their increased stance in the international arena through membership of international non-governmental organisations. The key examples are TOBB (Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey) and TUSIAD (Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association), two big businessmen associations in Turkey, which are members of Eurochambers and UNICE, respectively. Their membership in these EU-wide organisations actually has helped in their Europeanisation process, teaching them not only lobbying to the EU in Brussels, but also lobbying to Turkish decision-makers through Brussels. They have joined forces with the Turkish government on issues such as the granting of a date for the start of accessions. They have also warned the Turkish government at instances, when EU accession negotiations fell behind the agenda of everyday Turkish politics. Due to the fact that TUSIAD actually is an organisation founded by the strongest industrialists and businessmen in Turkey, it is an organisation that bears a heavy influence on the government; whereas TOBB is a union of all chambers of trade and industry in Turkey, whose members are mainly SMEs and tend for a more conservative and more nationalist stance with respect to Turkey’s EU accession. TUSIAD has a permanent office in Brussels since 1995, as well as in Paris, Berlin and Washington. TOBB and TUSIAD sometimes rival each other with respect to influencing government decisions. Whereas TUSIAD is more into lobbying in Brussels and in Ankara, TOBB chooses to provide a technocratic consultancy to the government and ministries in the taking of decisions with influence on national entrepreneurs in Turkey. Serap Atan emphasises “the significance of EU accession process in influencing Turkish peak business organisations’ (PBO) characteristics as well as the conditions defining their role and capacity in their relations with the government.” She says there is a causal relationship “between the Europeanisation of PBOs and their mediating role in Turkey’s transformation towards EU membership.”

TUSIAD actively supports public discussion of problematic issues in Turkey’s accession process and publishes reports prepared by academia and organises conferences to that effect. The declared aim of TUSIAD in its activities is to influence Turkish policy makers to uphold Turkey’s EU bid. This aim is based primarily on the assumption that a strong economic structure can only be established in a politically stable environment, and the EU is seen as the best anchor for stability in Turkish politics. Turkey’s EU accession prospect is

48 Serap Atan, ““Europeanisation of Turkish peak business organisations and Turkey-EU Relations”, in Mehmet Uğur and Nergis Canefe (eds.) Turkey and European Integration: Accession Prospects and Issues, Routledge, London and New York, 2004, pp.100-121
seen as the main priority of TUSIAD’s activities and its internal organisation is centred on the Committee on Harmonisation with the EU. TUSIAD has played a crucial role lobbying in Turkey for the solution of the Cyprus problem and actually promotes the evaluation of Turkey’s all foreign relations from the perspective of a future membership to the EU.49

Another significant businessmen’s association in Turkey is MUSIAD (Association of Independent Industrialists and Businessmen). Its members are mainly export oriented SMEs from Anatolian towns and advocate a different model of economic and social model of development based on a certain interpretation of Islam. Its members support the AKP government and they have gained influence on the government’s policy agenda. They show an increasing interest in the accession process joining the mainstream expectation in the fulfilment of EU membership obligations for achievement of national political and economic stability.50

With the support of businessmen’s organisations, several think-tanks working on Turkey- EU relations have gained influence in the discussion of public and foreign policy issues. Among them, IKV and TESEV are worth mentioning with respect to influence on the making of policies through reports published and conferences held and actively lobbying to Turkish government for the upholding of the EU membership goal. They do research and publish with respect to foreign policy issues, as well and TESEV actively supports the solution of the Cyprus problem. IKV was established long ago as a result of Turkey’s association relationship with the EC.

Other than businessmen’s associations, Human rights NGOs have become another advocate of Turkey’s accession prospect both in Turkey and in Brussels. The EU political conditionality for the advancement of the accession process and led to a certain improvement in human rights implementation in Turkey and these NGOs have also been able to put pressure on Turkey through EU channels, while also lobbying for the upholding of the accession prospect for Turkey into the EU.51

50 Serap Atan, “‘Europeanisation of Turkish peak business organisations and Turkey-EU Relations”, in mehmet Uğur and Nergis Canefe (eds.) Turkey and European Integration: Accession Prospects and Issues, Routledge, London and New York, 2004, pp.100-121
III.2 Change of Substance in Turkish Foreign Policy

The Helsinki European Council Conclusion stating that all candidate countries should resolve their border disputes or bring the dispute to the International Court of Justice within a reasonable time before becoming members of the Union, meant for Turkey the resolution of the Aegean dispute with Greece. The Helsinki decision also urged Turkey to support the UN Secretary-General’s efforts for a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. In case no settlement was reached by the time of the conclusion of accession talks of Cyprus, then the resolution of the dispute would not be a precondition for the accession of Cyprus to the Union. The Council would take account of all relevant factors at the time of the decision.\(^52\)

This was followed by the 2000 and 2003 Accession Partnership Documents for Turkey stating these two issues on the agenda of political relations between the EU and Turkey. So, the first and most apparent changes in Turkish foreign policy are a direct outcome of Turkey’s candidacy process to the Union. It is also an outcome of a successful uploading by Greece of its foreign policy issues with respect to Turkey to the EU level.

III.2.1 Turkish-Greek relations

Following the capture of Öcalan in Kenya, the two countries entered an era of rapprochement initiated by the establishment of committees on low politics issues. In a major turnaround, Greece became an advocate of closer relations between Turkey and the EU. In November, the Turkish government's decision to override domestic public opinion and respect the European Court of Human Rights' call for not executing Öcalan was seen in the EU as a sign of the government's commitment to reform and the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 extended candidate status to Turkey.\(^53\)

However, it was evident that problems between Greece and Turkey had to be solved in order for Turkey to accede to the Union. Concerning the disputes in the Aegean, Turkey supported the finding of a solution by bilateral negotiations with Greece. This approach was perceived in Greece as the choice of the powerful side to exert its power in bilateral negotiations. The Greek side perceived itself to be the militarily weaker side, and wished to delegate the solution of the problem to the ICJ. However, Turkey perceived such a delegation

\(^52\) Presidency Conclusions (1999), Helsinki European Council, 10-1 December 1999, paragraphs 4 and 9.

of the problem to the ICJ as delegation of sovereignty.\textsuperscript{54} Taking the views of both sides into consideration, the Helsinki European Council Conclusions gave Turkey the opportunity for advancement of political dialogue with Greece over the issues in the Aegean and advised the delegation of the problem to the ICJ by the end of 2004, if still unresolved. This meant that although Turkey was given a chance on paper to prove its case, the Greece side could block a solution until 2004, knowing that the problem would then be delegated to the ICJ. However, the year 2004 has long past and the matter has not been delegated to the ICJ. Diplomats confirm that bilateral talks on the Aegean disputes are still continuing, although no public statements are done by parties.

Commenting in an article on how Turkey’s EU prospect has facilitated Turkish-Greek relations, Bahar Rumelili mentions that events that could have easily erupted as crises in the past are now carefully managed by the elites. She mentions that the EU indirectly provides a discursive structure that allows for the rewriting of the identity and conflict discourses at the societal level in both countries. EU’s declaration of Turkey as a candidate country empowered the moderates in both Turkey and Greece, and opened the way for alternative policies. It broadened Greek-Turkish civil society cooperation by supplying funding for activities. However, she mentions that exclusion of Turkey from the EU would deprive the new Greek policy towards Turkey of its foundations.\textsuperscript{55}

\textit{III.2.2 Cyprus}

Another incident to demonstrate Europeanisation in Turkish foreign policy is the acceptance of the Annan Plan as a solution to the Cyprus dispute by Turkey. This is a case which strongly presents the case of adoption of appropriate behaviour by the Turkish side in the search for a solution to the conflict, whereas the Greek Cypriot side was increasingly moving away from the logic of appropriateness by denouncing the Annan Plan. Turkey has long been under pressure to negotiate a settlement for the reunification of the island. At the Helsinki European Council in December 1999, Turkey was granted candidate status for EU membership with the understanding that Turkey would have to meet the Copenhagen political criteria as well as contribute to the settlement of the Cyprus problem to be able to start membership negotiations. It is worth mentioning that Turkey was perceived in Europe as the

\textsuperscript{54} Şule Kut, “Türk Dış Politikasında Ege Sorunu” (The Aegean Problem in Turkish Foreign Policy), s. 507-535 in Faruk Sönmezoglu, Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi (Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy), Istanbul, Der Yayınları, 2004.

\textsuperscript{55} Bahar Rumelili, “Transforming Conflicts on EU Borders. The Case of Greek-Turkish Relations”, JCMS, vol 45, no 1, pp.105-126
uncompromising side in the Cyprus problem before the Annan Plan referendum result proved the contrary.

The Turkish government originally worked under the assumption that any compromise on Cyprus unaccompanied by dramatic progress on EU membership would be political suicide. While many thought this fear could create a vicious circle in which Turkey's Cyprus policy and the EU's Turkish policy mutually reinforced each other to a standstill, a major change in Turkey's policy on Cyprus came about with the acceptance of the Annan Plan.

National elections in TRNC in December 2003 resulted in a parliament with a slight majority in support of the settlement of the Cyprus problem and membership to the EU. This gave the Turkish government the possibility to bring the supporters of the status quo in Ankara closer to the idea of seeking a solution on the basis of the Annan Plan. This was also accompanied by tremendous pressure from the EU, which suggested that the likelihood of Turkey receiving a date for membership negotiations would be much greater, if the Cyprus problem could be settled before May 2004.\(^\text{56}\)

However, the Greek Cypriots, despite eventual acceptance by the Turkish side, rejected the Annan Plan. Being full members of the EU since May 2004, the Greek Cypriots now have the opportunity to veto Turkey’s start of negotiations on the actual chapters or its eventual accession without a settlement on their terms. However, the Helsinki process linking of the solution of the Cyprus problem with Turkey’s candidacy to the EU has born fruit and brought about a major change in Turkish foreign policy. This change can easily be attributed to the unilateral weight the EU carries in the Europeanisation process of candidates and Turkey has fulfilled the Helsinki requirement about the Cyprus problem. Although the solution of the Cyprus problem could have been found on this recipe before the accession of the Greek Cypriots, the Europeanisation theory would suggest that, now that they are full members, the Greek Cypriots will try to upload their policies to the European level in time. The first signal in this direction was the inclusion in the Conclusions of the December 2004 European Council of the pre-condition that Turkey sign the Adaptation Protocol to Ankara Treaty, extending its current association relationship with the EU to the new members before its accession negotiations commence on October 3\(^{rd}\) 2005. The December 2006 European Council decision not to open 8 chapters of the negotiations which are related to the customs

\(^{56}\) Kirişi, “Between ..., op.cit
union and also not to provisionally close any of the opened chapters present the final uploading of Greek Cypriot policy to the EU level, thanks also to the sceptics in the EU on Turkey’s eventual membership.

### III.2.3 Other Challenges for Turkish Foreign Policy

Apart from issues with EU member countries, Turkish foreign policy seems to be challenged on many other issues in the pre-accession process. Since the end of the Cold War, Turkey’s policy towards the South Caucasus has been determined by the ethnic conflict between the Armenians and the Azeris. Turkish public opinion has supported the Azeri side since the eruption of the conflict and the public have urged the Turkish government not to adopt a neutral stance toward the parties and to become a mediator, which was also a favourable option for Turkish foreign policy at the time. This situation exacerbated the emerging relations between Armenia and Turkey, which were already over-burdened with history. Turkey’s pro-Azerbaijani stance in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has become a determinant of its relations with Armenia and restricted the options of Turkey’s foreign policy in the region. The exacerbation of the ethnic conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh in 1992 resulted in the suspension of all such good neighbourly intentions between Turkey and Armenia and resulted in the non-existence of diplomatic relations between the two countries and the enforcement by Turkey of an embargo against Armenia. Turkey declared the solving of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict a precondition for the establishment of relations with Armenia and Armenia declared the acknowledgement of the ‘Armenian genocide’ by Turkey a precondition for the same purpose.\(^{57}\) The EU has urged Turkey on several occasions to lift its embargo against Armenia, and this issue is becoming of increasing importance in EU-Turkish relations.

One of the main topics in Turkey’s EU accession process will become relations with Armenia and the EU’s stance on the issue. The European Parliament resolution on the opening of negotiations with Turkey, dated 27 September 2005, makes a reference in its introduction to its previous resolutions, including one dated 18 June 1987, about the

Armenian ‘genocide’, reminding that the adoption of the Acquis by a candidate state includes adoption of all acts, legally binding or not, within the Union framework.\footnote{Council of the European Union, \textit{Negotiating Framework for Turkey}, 3.10.2005.} Several other EU documents formulating a policy toward Turkey make references to this resolution and the more general requirement to reach reconciliation with Armenia, normalize relations starting with the opening of the border and the establishment of diplomatic relations.\footnote{European Commission, \textit{Turkey-2005 Progress Report}, Brussels, 9 November 2005, SEC (2005) 1426, European Parliament, \textit{Joint Motion for a Resolution on the Opening of Negotiations with Turkey}, 27.9.2005.} When Turkey eventually accedes to the Union, it will also become party to the PCA between the EU and Armenia. Now that the EU’s neighbourhood policy also includes Armenia, Turkey will need to adopt the same framework between the EU and Armenia, in its bilateral relations.

Turkish foreign policy is especially security driven, with respect to the situation of the countries to its south. In case of Turkey’s accession to the EU, the EU’s eastern border will be Turkey’s eastern and southern borders. This is also the reason why Turkey’s accession is widely disputed by some as carrying the EU’s eastern border to the “Middle East”. However, by or even before accession Turkey will have to apply Schengen rules to its Eastern and Southern neighbours, as was done by the CEE Countries to their eastern (non-EU acceding) neighbours. Turkey too will have to live through the same problems as the CEEC did and will try to implement EU rules while preserving close human and trade links with its neighbours.

Increasing instability in its other southern neighbour, Iraq, has made it all the more important for Turkey to contribute to stability in Syria. For this reason, Turkey chooses to enhance trust and good neighbourly relations with Syria, while contributing to a reform process in the country. However, the US does not welcome Turkey’s dialogue-centred policy towards Syria, which the US perceives as a potential threat. Such a divergent view of its neighbour country by its closest military ally brings Turkey closer to the EU rhetoric of problem solving by dialogue, building good neighbourly relations and reinforcing mutual trust.\footnote{Kiriçi, Turkey’s...,op.cit, pp.75-79} A similar disagreement also persists between Turkey and the US about how to deal with Iran. Again on this issue Turkish foreign policy rhetoric is similar to that of the EU about the primacy of diplomacy and dialogue. A Europeanised Turkish foreign policy should perhaps be expected to be more in disagreement with the US than it is today. There is an increasing gap between the America and European perceptions of world politics, the role of international law and international organisations. A Europeanised Turkish foreign policy
should be expected to respect international law and organisations and adopt such a rhetoric in its foreign policy. One certain step in this direction as a requirement of EU membership would be the adoption by Turkey of the Statute establishing the International Criminal Court, which the EU supports and the US is strongly against. Another problem that Turkey will be facing with respect to international law will be its rejection of UNCLOS, on the grounds of its conflict with Greece in the Aegean, to which the EEC is a party. However, this problem may be expected to be solved in the wider framework of the solution of the Aegean problems.

Previous research about the influence of EU membership on new member states has stated an increase in the areas of interest in foreign policy. The same can be expected of Turkish foreign policy with respect to the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean is not conceptualized as a totality in Turkish foreign policy. There is no single comprehensive definition or conceptual appreciation of the Mediterranean region in Turkish strategic thinking. The Mediterranean is perceived as composed of the Middle East, Greece and Cyprus, the Balkans, and Europe. In particular, the concept ‘Mediterranean’ means ‘Eastern Mediterranean’ in Turkish strategic thinking. This is primarily because ‘Eastern Mediterranean’ displays a variety of problems that are perceived as important threats directed against Turkish territorial integrity and vital national interests. Taken together, the problems with Greece, the Cyprus problem, the Arab-Israeli conflict and its spillover in the region, Iraq and Iran, constitute the main preoccupations of Turkish foreign policy in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, the Western Mediterranean, from which Turkey does not anticipate any serious direct threat, is not considered a priority area,\(^61\) and should be expected to rise as a region of interest for Turkish foreign policy in the process of becoming an EU member.

**IV. Conclusion**

The accession process to the EU is to bring about a change of position in many aspects of Turkish foreign policy, firstly because Turkey’s foreign policy is to change from being one of a non-EU country to becoming one of an EU member state. Being a member of a wider Union, Turkish foreign policy will comprise many new issues or current issues to a wider extent than before.

The first expected change in foreign policy rhetoric should imply an inclusion (or a process of inclusion) in a new ‘we’ group and thus an identity transformation. A new member

country defines its security with respect to EU membership. Europeanisation of Turkish foreign policy undoubtedly is coupled with a redefinition of Turkish identity and its interests and represents a major transformation. It necessitates the forging of an atmosphere of trust between Turkey and Greece for the solution of their disputes, as well as the building of confidence between the Turkish policy-makers and their counterparts in the EU.

The Turkish case also shows that the Europeanisation of a candidate country’s foreign policy does not only stem from the need to adopt the declared norms, but also from the improved domestic conditions to open foreign and security policy priorities to debate and to make choices out of democratic debates. However, the uncertain prospect of accession for the candidate countries also makes it difficult for both their governments and the public to complete the identity and interest transformation. However, the Europeanisation theory for candidates states that the longer the pre-accession process prevails, the more difficult it becomes to reverse the membership prospect. Thus, no matter how challenging Turkey’s pre-accession process proves, it brings along a certain convergence of views between the parties, and brings about a transformation of self-perception. For these reasons, as long as the pre-accession process continues, it should be expected that Turkish foreign policy rhetoric and substance will converge in time with that of the EU. Further questions for research should be on how this transformation takes place within the actors that shape Turkey’s foreign policy, whether they experience the same transformation of ideas, norms and behaviour as their counterparts in previously acceded countries did, and what similarities and differences are to be observed in Turkey’s experience of Europeanisation. Such a comparative analysis would enable us to correctly discern the factors that make the Turkish case unique and to say whether certain aspects of Turkey’s pre-accession process are not as unique as we think.

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